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Learning to do, doing to learn: An exploration of teacher knowledge and learning through the narratives of trainees on a CELTA (Cambridge English Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) course

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

Abstract

It is a widely held view that theory and practice are the two core elements of a teacher's knowledge. What is less defined is how the two interact during the process by which teachers learn to be teachers and whether a case should be made for one being more important than the other. Academics have sometimes queried the notion of practice being a part of knowledge because of the difficulty of quantifying it in a tangible manner. Instead knowledge constructs that are theory based are preferred. The practice of asking participants on a teacher education course to reflect critically on their classroom actions is often used to generate theoretical knowledge from the practical.

In my research I examine the nature of teacher knowledge from the perspective of participants on a teacher education course using interviews and email correspondence over the duration of the course and up to one year afterwards. I also explore the views of the researcher as teacher educator through a research artefact or scrapbook. From the data collected it seems that teachers undergo a continuous process of theory making from their practical experience and value this self-generated "practice theory" as the most important constituent of teacher knowledge. Their declarative knowledge is a way of acting in the classroom, but it goes beyond simple replication of actions they observe or are instructed to perform. A "practice theory" is constructed from moments of practice which are congruent with pre-formed views of teaching from their experience as learners and is validated by their personal constructs of success, including the response of their own learners.

In looking at how teachers gain this knowledge, this thesis questions the paradigm of co-operative social learning which is often assumed to exist on teacher education programmes. Data suggests that course participants act as individuals seeking to survive a difficult process and exhibit a loyalty to their peers which renders the learning relationship with tutors less benign than is often assumed. This in turn calls into question the acceptance of critical reflection as a key part of teacher learning. The thesis also examines processes which are common to teacher education programmes such as observation and structured practice, and proposes that learning teachers' experience sometimes contradicts what is often assumed to be good practice.

The thesis highlights some considerations for teacher educators. It proposes an increased valuing of the practical and the existence of a practice theory, one that can provide knowledge constructs for teachers. In addition, it suggests a refocus for some activities on teacher education courses to make them more congruent with the real experiences of trainees.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the thesis

1.0 Introduction

> *We need someone to direct and reassure us this is possible. And I don't think I'm that person. I may have been a catalyst for rebellion, but a leader should be someone with conviction, and I'm barely a convert myself. Someone with unflinching courage, and I'm still working hard at even finding mine. Someone with clear and persuasive words, and I'm so easily tongue-tied.*

> Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* p150

> *We think that it might be best to build you, our rebel leader, from the outside … in. that is to say, let's find the most stunning Mockingjay look possible, and then work your personality up to deserving it!*

> Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay* p51

The Hunger Games, a best-selling trilogy of novels and successful series of films, is partly about the making of a reluctant heroine, Katniss Everdeen. The extracts above highlight the tension between existent pre-requisites for heroism and a person's perception of the inadequacy of their own characteristics. There is also the solution offered that we might be able to make heroines, construct them like a fabricated artefact and their innate characteristics will grow into that pre-constructed artefact.

This contrast between the inherent and the constructed also finds an iteration in the often discussed question: *Are teachers born or made*? In the majority of societies there is some belief in the fact that teachers can be "made". Generally, those learning to be teachers go through a structured training process which, it is hoped, enables them to gain the competence to carry out the role of a teacher in different educational settings. Such a structured process is usually referred to as teacher training or teacher education. It could be said that the process attempts to build teachers from the outside in.

This study looks at one example of teacher training; a course aimed at "making" teachers of English: the Cambridge English Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA), a pre-service teacher education course for

English language teachers. The CELTA course is an established and internationally recognised introductory programme for those who wish to teach English to speakers of other languages. Approximately 12,000 people complete the course each year spread across over 300 centres worldwide. Course participants or *trainees* undergo a minimum of 120 hours of training designed to "make" them into teachers.

In this study I investigate the process which trainees experience on a CELTA course to gain insight into what and how they learn on this course. The study contributes to existing discussions on the nature of teacher knowledge by considering views articulated by learning teachers and drawing some conclusions as to the processes which impact on teacher learning. I explore participants' definitions of knowledge and provide insights into how practical knowledge contributes to teachers' theoretical frameworks. I also explore the nature of teacher learning on the course and reveal ways in which the relationships between individuals in the course setting contribute to the learning process, thus questioning some established paradigms of practice within teacher education. In summary, the study deconstructs the "making" of teachers on this specific course and through this deconstruction I reveal more about the nature of teacher knowledge and the processes by which teachers learn to be teachers.

1.1 Background to this study

In this section, I explore some of the reasons I am interested in the area investigated in the study and how this interest developed into a focused study. This background information provides insight into researcher motivation and through this acknowledges perspectives and biases that might be present in the research. An understanding of my journey towards the research frames some of the research decisions which are explored in the following chapters.

My interest in the process of teacher training or education stems from a long enduring (since I was twelve years old) desire to be a teacher. It was my first and almost sole choice of career and since embarking on this career, I have never given consideration to a career change; I am what is sometimes called a "career teacher". My first experience of being trained or educated as a teacher was not a positive one. I followed a course at an Irish university to become a secondary school teacher in

Ireland. The course was similar to the PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate in Education) that is the most common route for teachers in the United Kingdom to gain a teaching qualification and accreditation for secondary schools. My disillusionment with the training experience stemmed from the fact that the individuals who were teaching the course were lacking in strategies to engage us as students and the relationship between the theoretical sessions we were attending and our classroom teaching practice seemed to be minimal. They were two separate elements of the course that were delivered and assessed completely independently. I persevered largely through the support of my father, also a career teacher, who explained to me that once I was in a real teaching situation it would be nothing like the one I was experiencing on my course. In other words, the only thing that sustained me was the knowledge that my teacher education bore no relationship to the actual job of teaching.

Shortly after my course, I attended a two-week intensive course to learn how to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL), with a view to gaining summer employment. The contrast with my previous experience was stark. The tutor on the course provided actual teaching strategies and all theory was linked to the practical act of teaching. After a number of years working as an EFL teacher, I attended a DELTA (Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults) course. This was a more comprehensive year long course but had similarities to my two-week introductory course in its focus on practical teaching skills and the embedding of theoretical knowledge into classroom practice.

These experiences of learning to be a teacher continued to preoccupy me. At times I felt that I should ignore my experience of the PGCE as it was irrelevant and simply concentrate on what I had learned on my EFL course. Yet I was aware that the PGCE course probably represented some kind of norm in teacher education and that there were many teachers whose only experience of teacher education was the one I considered ineffective and irrelevant.

1.2 Developing the focus of this thesis

As I gained more experience as a teacher I wanted to be involved in training and developing other teachers. Through running small workshops and mentoring other

teachers where I worked, I began to develop the skills to support others. My opportunity came when I moved to the UK and began work in a large Further Education College which was interested in starting the CELTA course. I was supported to undergo the "trainer in training" process to become a CELTA trainer. As part of this process I observed a CELTA course being delivered and gradually took on the role of teaching on the course while under supervision. This process allowed me to become familiar with the history, structure and special features of the CELTA course.

The CELTA was created in the sixties based on a model developed by John Haycraft at the International House school of English language teaching. It was given a more formal accreditation by the RSA (Royal Society of Arts) awarding body and then jointly administered by the RSA and UCLES (University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate, the predecessor of Cambridge ESOL) until it was finally taken on by Cambridge ESOL as the sole awarding body. There is a formal syllabus and an assessment process set by the awarding body. Trainees complete six hours of teaching practice with volunteer learners and are assessed on this practice. They also have to complete four written assignments covering knowledge about English language and English language pedagogy. At the end of the course a trainee can be awarded one of four grades: Pass "A", Pass "B", Pass or Fail. The grade is largely dependent on trainees' achievement in the teaching practice element. The number of course hours is also stipulated, but centres delivering the course can decide on the way they wish to structure it. The more common structure is four weeks intensive, but some courses run for three or six months part-time. Trainees pay a fee for the course, though this varies between centres. The course is well recognised and valued in English language teaching communities and trainees who successfully complete the course have a good chance of gaining employment.

My experience of working on CELTA courses seemed to crystallise my curiosity about the process of teacher learning. From the outset, it seemed to me that there are certain elements that are less common when compared to other teacher training courses which might contribute substantially to teacher learning. On CELTA there are taught elements, or input sessions, and these cover knowledge about language as well as pedagogical topics. This is because most trainees coming on to the

course will not have a subject specialism in English Language, unless they have studied linguistics. Unlike other courses, the CELTA therefore combines knowledge about the subject as well as how to teach it. This is in contrast to teacher training courses where trainees already have a qualification, usually a degree, in their subject and now wish to learn how to teach it.

A further interesting element on the CELTA course is that input sessions and the practical teaching sessions take place within the same closed group. Within the course structure trainees teach volunteer students who have been recruited to provide practice for the CELTA trainees. The group learns and practises together with groups of trainees teaching a lesson together, though in separate 30-60 minute slots. The trainees plan the lessons together and observe each other teach. The trainers see all the teaching practice and can adapt the input sessions according to the emerging needs of the trainees. Trainees are able to put into practice what they have learned in the taught sessions and receive immediate feedback on it. This differs from many other teacher training courses where trainees do their practical teaching on a *placement* or *practicum*. On a placement they work alone or with a mentor and much of their teaching is not observed by peers or trainers. Assessment is usually carried out at regular intervals by the trainer, who visits the trainee in their teaching practice situation, which is external to the course.

The final feature of the CELTA course which interested me is the workings of the teaching practice group. This is a subgroup of the course cohort, usually consisting of four-six members, depending on the size of the whole group. The groups are allocated at the beginning of the course and the groups plan and teach together over the duration of the course. Feedback on teaching is organised in this small group and there is the expectation that all trainees will reflect on, and comment on their own and others' teaching during this feedback session. The teaching practice group spends a substantial amount of time together over the duration of the course planning and discussing teaching as well as watching all the lessons given by other members of the group. It would seem to offer much opportunity for learning about teaching. As well as observing their peers, trainees have to observe experienced English language teachers to help inform their own practice. Some of these

observations can be done via videoed lessons but some have to be "live" observations in the classroom.

During my training as a CELTA trainer and my work as a tutor on the course, I continued to feel that the course was a model that contained elements of considerable good practice. I noticed the transformation of individuals who, on the first day, could barely manage a single task in a lesson, turn into confident and expert teachers whose lessons resulted in tangible learning. This impression was reinforced by graduates of the CELTA course. A very experienced maths teacher, who had only taught English language for a year after his CELTA course, explained that he had "learned more on my four-week CELTA than on my year-long PGCE". He felt that his teaching in general, not just English language teaching, had somehow benefited from the CELTA in a way that it had not from his PGCE. I showed this quote to an audience of about ninety people at a talk I gave at an international conference of English language teachers five years ago and asked how many people could identify with the sentiment. About three quarters of the audience raised their hands.

I have outlined thus far some of the formative experiences I have had as a learning teacher and as a teacher trainer. These led me to a point where I wanted to investigate the CELTA course in some way in order to understand why it seemed to me to be such a positive example. It was almost a desire to unlock some kind of key that could then be used on other teacher training courses. I felt that if I understood what and how trainees were learning on this course, I could improve their experience and also extrapolate the findings to other courses. A further experience, which I will now relate, gave me a framework within which I believed I could investigate the learning on this one specific course.

While I was undertaking a module of study on professional development, one of the trainers presented us with a picture of an elephant family and asked us to describe the process by which baby elephants learned to be adult elephants. It was an engaging way to introduce the concept of "Communities of Practice" as postulated by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in their 1991 book *Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* The book describes, through a series of case study examples, how various groups of people learn to take on a role through a process of

13

observation, trying out, watching a "master" and "peers" and gradually doing parts of the new role until they moved from peripheral participation into full participation in and full membership of the community of practice. I felt a "light bulb" moment as this seemed to describe exactly the way trainees learned on a CELTA course. What was missing, however, in Lave and Wenger's model of peripheral participation, was a clear explanation of how the different case study subjects actually moved from the periphery towards the centre. This is what I wanted to investigate in my research. I wanted to have a better understanding of how the CELTA course moved trainees from the novice, at the edge of the communities of practice, towards the centre, gaining the skills and knowledge of the master, the experienced teacher/trainer.

The course processes and elements described earlier, which are features of CELTA, seemed to match well with some of the features of Lave and Wenger's case studies (Lave and Wenger 1991). The course has people in the "master" role, trainers, who are always experienced and qualified teachers and who have undertaken an assessed trainer training programme. There are additional "masters" in the experienced teachers whom the CELTA trainees have to observe in English language teaching. The "peers" are the other trainees in the group, but more specifically, the peers in the teaching practice group with whom the trainees plan together, teach together and receive and give feedback together in the post-teaching practice feedback session. The course structure gives trainees the opportunity to teach a little and then gradually increase their responsibility for teaching longer stretches and planning more independently as the course progresses. I therefore felt I had a potential framework for formulating the focus of my study and the eventual focus of this thesis.

1.2.1 The focus of this thesis.

The focus of this thesis is a consideration of perceptions of teacher knowledge and teacher learning on a specific teacher education experience: the CELTA course. Both knowledge and learning are considered since understanding anything about the learning process requires an understanding of what is learned, or what is desirable to learn.

The study follows the learning experience of twelve CELTA trainee teachers on a course at the beginning of their teaching careers. In the study, participants are encouraged to articulate their views about teacher knowledge and to describe their learning processes. In this way, the thesis is an investigation from the learners' perspective using the learners' voices and narratives.

The study considers the origins, nature and impact of the existing knowledge which trainees bring with them onto a teacher training course, in particular, it looks at whether this existing knowledge is purely an awareness of teacher behaviours or whether it contains an understanding of a pedagogic rationale. It then explores participants' views of what constitutes knowledge they wish to gain on the course and the nature of the knowledge they believe they have gained by the end of the course. It therefore provides an enhanced understanding of teacher knowledge from the point of view of the recipients of that knowledge.

The study also examines the process teacher learning on this specific course. It does this through an interrogation of the different learning events provided by the course and participants' perception of these events and their impact on their learning. The approach taken could be described as "microscopic" or "forensic" as the different elements of the course are scrutinised through the lens of participants to draw conclusions as to what occurs and how occurrences engender learning.

As outlined above, the CELTA course is delivered as a group learning experience where no trainee works in isolation. Therefore the study considers the learning to be socially situated and investigates the learning relationships which participants build with their peers and tutors on the course. Conclusions are drawn as to how these relationships provide or detract from opportunities for learning and therefore impact on teacher knowledge gained on the course.

1.3 Defining concepts of (teacher) knowledge

Concepts of knowledge and learning are extremely broad and it is necessary to define them more narrowly in relation to the focus of this study. In the following two sections I provide short overarching definitions of these two concepts which are extended in chapters two and three. I also consider the way values are placed by society on different definitions of knowledge because such values are crucial to how

the outcomes of this study might be implemented in CELTA courses and more widely in teacher education programmes.

In the section heading I have placed the word "teacher" in brackets as it is to be assumed that concepts of teacher knowledge will have some similarity to concepts of knowledge in general. I do not want to suggest that teacher knowledge is a completely separate and unrelated knowledge without the characteristics we would ascribe more broadly to knowledge. However, as the focus of the research is on the learning of teachers, then it is important to consider what teacher knowledge might be. There are numerous long-standing and current debates in teacher education about what constitutes teacher knowledge and there is much focus on the supposed dichotomy of "skills" and "knowledge". The former relates to the practical *doing* of teaching, the latter to theoretical understanding *about* teaching. Debates are often framed under this dichotomy with various labels, often *theory* and *practice.* Little consensus has been reached as to how one might impact on the other, if at all.

If we consider the way both aspects of this dichotomy are viewed, then the term "knowledge" is usually used for the cognitive construct, a repository of facts and theories about teaching that can be applied in various contexts. This knowledge is explicit, can be scrutinised by others and is based on outcomes of research where the parameters are acceptable to experts in the field. It has features of a positivist perspective of knowledge, since it refers to theories of how people learn and principles of how teachers should teach based on studies of learning situations. This definition of knowledge is embedded in common approaches to teacher education.

> Historically, the education of teachers has been predicated on the notion that knowledge about teaching and learning can be transmitted to teachers by others, usually in the form of theoretical readings, university-based lectures, and/or professional development workshops.
>
> Johnson 2009:8

Thus one definition of knowledge is a repository of theoretical information about the act of teaching.

A second definition of teacher knowledge is the one signified in the dichotomy by words such as "skills" or "practice". It is often rendered in the literature by the terms "practical knowledge" or "craft knowledge" (Eraut 1994:65). This definition is concerned with the knowledge about the doing of teaching and may not be objective and identifiable, but remain tacit to the teacher.

It is interesting to consider the use of the term "knowledge" from a linguistic perspective. Where a non-theoretical kind of knowledge is meant, then this is usually described by adding a pre-modifier to the term "knowledge", for example, craft knowledge or practical knowledge. The unqualified or base form of the term, or the head word in the noun phrase, is *knowledge* meaning the repository of information. Any other form needs an additional epithet to explain its nature. This linguistic pattern is often mirrored by the value that is placed on different forms of knowledge. The repository of information *about* teaching is often regarded as the "base form" and is often seen as more important or having more value than any knowledge related to the *doing* of teaching. Reservations about this latter knowledge are expressed clearly by Eraut:

> The nature and status of this practical knowledge is by no means agreed, and its separateness from discipline-based knowledge may be more apparent than real. Four major issues for debate are the explicitness of practical knowledge, its generalizability, its scope and its morality.

> Eraut 1994:65

Such reservations highlight the fact that it is the nature and usability of practical knowledge which is called into question, whereas reservations about theoretical knowledge are likely about whether it is correct or is congruent with theoretical findings. In other words, we question knowledge *about* teaching to ensure that we make accurate pronouncements, we question knowledge of the *doing* of teaching because we dispute its very existence, its value and its applicability.

If we consider the CELTA course, which is the context for this study, then the aims of the course fall clearly within the realm of practical knowledge. This is evident from the syllabus and the fact that trainees can only access higher grades on the course through a better performance in the practical teaching element. There are, of course,

elements which relate to knowledge about teaching. There are four written assignments which focus on theories of English language pedagogy. The input sessions deal with the theoretical perspectives that underpin practice. However, the syllabus and assessment focus heavily on practical teaching skills. One of the criticisms levelled at the course is that it simply provides a "toolkit" approach, a selection of techniques which trainees use without much understanding of why and, therefore, without the ability to adapt to other contexts and new challenges. This criticism would echo the reservations of Eraut above about the scope and generalizability of practical knowledge.

Definitions of teacher knowledge are not universally presented as dichotomies. One definition which attempts to bridge the gap between skills and knowledge is the concept of Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK) (Freeman 2002, Golombek 1998). PPK is described as knowledge which allows the teacher to make decisions in the classroom based on both experiential knowledge (the *doing* of teaching) and theoretical knowledge (the understanding *about* teaching). PPK is an appealing concept as it acts as a coverall to describe what teachers know. It recognises that teacher knowledge will contain fragments of practical skills combined with pedagogical understanding. The challenge is to try to identify the relationship between these two elements. It would be a facile conclusion to draw that teachers need a "bit of theory" and a "bit of practice". However, PPK recognises the fragmented nature of teacher knowledge, the fact that at any given moment teachers may draw on learning they have gained both from theory and from practice.

As has been explored in this section, definitions of teacher knowledge fall along a continuum of that which is external, objective and defined, to that which is internal, tacit and personal. This study contributes to these definitions in a number of ways. It proposes new insights based on the perspectives of the learning teacher. Consideration is given to both the practical and the theoretical and the extent to which they might coexist and work together. The views of participants also provide a better understanding of the nature of practical knowledge, thus extending our understanding of this knowledge and how it might be operationalised in teacher education programmes.

1.3.1 Defining concepts of (teacher) learning

The second focus of this study is the learning of trainees on the CELTA course. In order to provide a context of overarching concepts, I now consider definitions relevant to the discussion of teacher learning. Again, I have put the word "teacher" in brackets in the section heading as I expect that concepts of learning in a more general way will find resonance in any definition of teacher learning.

A significant concept for any study of teacher learning lies in the fact that we have all experienced teaching and teachers for a substantial amount of time in our lives as learners in school. We therefore have established prior knowledge of what teachers do and what teaching involves. This concept is explored by Lortie as an "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie 2002). It acknowledges that anyone who joins a teacher education course, even without any formal prior teaching experience, will have paradigms of teacher behaviour from their experience as a learner in school. They are more likely to want to replicate the teacher behaviours they liked, although they may have no understanding of the reasons behind these behaviours as they are not privy to the teacher's planning and teaching decisions. Often this prior knowledge of teaching is considered to be a limiting factor in teacher learning because of the lack of full understanding which a teacher gains when they are in the position of a learner.

> One of the consequences of this apprenticeship period is that, whereas people entering other professions are more likely to be aware of the limitations of their knowledge, student teachers may fail to realize that the aspects of teaching which they perceived as students represented only a partial view of the teacher's job.
>
> Borg 2004:274

Thus any study of teacher learning will need to acknowledge that such learning does not start on the first day of a teacher education course.

Teacher learning is also characterised by learning with and from others. Teachers and learning teachers rarely, if ever, learn on their own. In the case of this study, the required collaborative activities of the CELTA course mean that individual trainees

work with peers and tutors and the course syllabus identifies different collaborative processes, such as joint lesson planning and teaching, as making a contribution to learning. It is therefore important to acknowledge social learning as an important concept for this study. Social learning theory recognises that our cognitive development is an interactive or mediated process (Johnson 2009) where we learn through engaging in social processes. Johnson highlights the importance of the creation of learning within a social space, which for this study would be participation in the CELTA course. She identifies an examination of the participation of teachers in social activity as the key to understanding teacher learning:

> … the goal of interpretative research is to uncover how people participate in and constitute social reality. When this epistemological perspective is used as a lens through which to look at teachers teaching, the central research question becomes: How do teacher participate in and constitute their professional worlds?

> Johnson 2009:9

Johnson's view resonates well with Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of situated learning mentioned earlier in this chapter, where learners gradually move from the periphery of participation towards expertise.

In the previous section of this chapter, I explored the perceived dichotomy between theory and practice in teacher knowledge. A similar dichotomy presents itself in relation to teacher learning. Practical learning, no less than practical knowledge, presents a number of contested concepts. If teachers are learning a set of behaviours, then this could be simply seen as the accumulation of strategies without any understanding. Bourdieu's (1977) notion of learned ignorance, where knowledge is divorced from its theoretical principles provides a useful exploration of the limitations of practical learning. Likewise, Eraut's (1994) expresses the concern that individual behaviours learned as part of practical knowledge may remain as isolated behaviours. In this way, practical learning may turn out to be the acquisition of an infinite number of situation-bound techniques or strategies.

Important concepts for consideration in relation to teacher learning, therefore, include an understanding of the nature and impact of prior knowledge as well as the

processes through which both theoretical and practical learning might take place. Recognising that learning takes place with others on a course means that concepts related to theories of social learning are also of relevance.

In the last two sections I have provided some headline definitions of concepts of knowledge and learning to contextualise the further emergence of my study. I now provide a more detailed account of the process by which my general curiosity about these areas emerged into a fully formed plan for my study and how I developed three research questions which I hoped to answer through the research.

1.4 How the research questions and defined focus of the study emerged

As I began my research journey, my reading provided a background context within which I would carry out this investigation. I would now like to summarise how my own thoughts and my background reading fused in the process of suggesting the research questions and more defined focus for the research.

The first step was to develop a better understanding of the nature of teacher knowledge. The literature suggested that this could include practical elements. The concept of PPK (Freeman 2002, Golombek 2009, Gray & Morton 2010, Tsang 2004) certainly offers recognition of the practical doing of teaching. PPK could be said to be a hybrid model, where the learning of practical behaviours in the classroom is presented as one element of a teacher's learning. There is also recognition that the learning of routines (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005, Reeves 2010) or scripted elements of a lesson was an important part of the teacher's learning. These views coincided with my own experience of working on the CELTA course, where trainees used prescribed routines to teach lessons and seemed to learn from doing this.

I realised that discussions of practical knowledge in the literature also highlighted its potential limitations (Eraut 1994, Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005). Darling-Hammond and Bransford highlight how the learning of practical strategies can be helpful but not sufficient. They argue that they do not give the teacher the "diagnostic skill to analyse situations and adopt different strategies" (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005:360). This echoes Eraut's (1994) argument explored earlier in this chapter that practical knowledge means that teachers accumulate a series of

practical strategies separate from a theoretical framework and thereby rendered of less use. I began to appreciate some of the contested quality of practical knowledge.

I felt, therefore, that is was important to find out what teachers who were engaged in the learning process thought about what they wanted to learn. By asking them to articulate what the felt constituted teacher knowledge at the start and by the end of the course, I could contribute to the discussion of the nature of teacher knowledge and the relationships between practical and theoretical knowledge. I could ascertain whether teachers felt they were learning individual classroom behaviours without an underpinning understanding or whether the practical knowledge was more complex than this and if so, what constituted its complexity. The first research question which emerged was, therefore:

1. *What do teachers and teacher trainers conceptualise the nature of learning on initial teacher education courses to be?*

Given that I have emphasised my focus on trainees' views, it may seem strange that I would include trainers in my question. My initial thoughts on this were that asking trainers would provide a different perspective which would serve to foreground the contributions of my participants. As I discuss in the section below on the research questions, in the end I concluded that this would not serve to develop my research and my reframed questions omitted the trainer perspective.

My second focus was to examine the learning process of teachers on the course. As discussed earlier in this chapter, in my role as a CELTA trainer on other courses, I had observed the journey of trainees from first day to last day of the course and I concluded that some learning was taking place. My perspective only allowed me to see that we were putting trainees through a range of processes, such as observing other teachers, reflecting on their own teaching as well as reading about teaching and writing assignments. I was unable to identify whether any or all of these processes impacted on their learning and to what degree.

In my initial, very general curiosity about the CELTA course, I did not consider the notion of prior knowledge to be of significance. My schema for the course was that of an *initial* training experience with some assumption on my part that trainees entered

the course with no previous training. Although activities on the course included some exploration of the trainees' prior experience of teachers, as a trainer I did not fully recognise the extent and potential impact of the schemas about teaching and teachers which trainees brought with them. As I began to explore possible areas to focus on, Lortie's (2002) concept of the apprenticeship of observation offered me a path to understanding the way these existing schemas come to influence teacher learning. A point that seemed particularly pertinent was the fact that Lortie envisaged that learning gained from being a learner for a number of years was uncontested and did not include an understanding of the reasons or rationale behind teacher behaviours. It seemed to be a knowledge with deficits, similar to the way practical knowledge is presented as a less than complete knowledge.

In the literature, discussions about the impact of prior knowledge conclude that there is some immutability of this prior knowledge and it can prevent trainees learning anything that is not congruent with what they already know about teaching. There is agreement that it acts in a manner akin to a filter and that all new knowledge presented on a course, such as CELTA, is taken on by trainees through their existing schema (Breen et al 2001, Phipps and Borg 2009, Tillema 1998). It seemed, therefore, that any consideration of learning must include a consideration of what trainees brought with them to the course.

While acknowledging the importance of trainee prior knowledge, an exploration of the impact of the course processes would mean a recognition of the social learning paradigm presented by the course context. Trainees participate in a number of processes which include collaboration with peers and their tutors. A point to examine is whether *participation* by trainees in the course processes constitutes learning as described in Lave and Wenger's (1991) model of peripheral participation, or whether participation is limited in its ability to give the learner the opportunity to apply learning from one situation to another (Greeno 1997 Edwards 2005). I look at the different elements of the course in which trainees participate and examine closely how participation engenders learning.

My second research question, which was felt to encompass the impact of prior knowledge as well as the different learning events on the course was, therefore:

2. What practices or processes contribute most to the learning of teachers?

In this question, there is room for incorporating the potential for a negative impact, for example, if prior learning was as immutable as has been suggested in the literature. My key focus was on impact, rather than on what kind of impact.

The final area of focus of the research could be seen as a sub-theme of the one just mentioned above. The social learning context of the course suggests that trainees will learn in collaboration or co-operation with others. As I began to teach on CELTA courses in my career as a CELTA trainer, I was stuck by the amount of working together which was included on a typical timetable. This contrasted with other models of teacher education where the trainee worked in a real teaching environment and was mostly working with a mentor and occasionally with other teachers. The CELTA course included many more deliberately constructed group learning opportunities. This led me to an understanding that one valuable area to investigate was an examination of the extent to which a social learning model was applicable to the CELTA course. Vygotsky's (1978) notion of mediated learning where the knowledgeable other would support the learning of the child (Chaiklin 2003) as well as Bourdieu's (1977) views on how working with others allows us to reproduce rather than replicate what we observe (Grenfell & James 1998) provided a potential focus for looking at the way trainees on a CELTA might work with tutors and their peers.

In my initial reflections, I approached the social learning model as epitomised by the CELTA course with a predetermined positive regard. I was convinced that all the individuals working on the course were there to promote learning. However, when considering some of the critical perspectives of social learning in discussions of the working of communities of practice, (Barton & Tusting 2005, Hughes et al 2007) I began to appreciate that I needed include potential discord in the relationships and that the perceptions of individuals in the social group might not be benign. I would therefore consider interpretations which would signal the negative impact of others or a less than positive impact of learning in a social group. My final research question was, therefore, aimed at including both positive and negative influences.

3. How do people (e.g. peers, trainers) involved in the training processes influence learning?

In this section, I have outlined the emergence of the areas of focus from my initial curiosity around learning on the CELTA course integrated with emerging concepts from my consideration of literature related to the areas I was interested in investigating. These led to the formation of three research questions, which I have provided in this section and discuss further later in this chapter. At this point I would also like to highlight how this study also involves a journey on the part of the researcher, as I feel this in an important element of the journey towards the research findings.

1.4.1 The parallel journey of the research and the researcher

It may be an unusual scenario, but although I was passionately interested in pursuing conclusions to my curiosity about teacher knowledge and teacher learning, I was less than convinced about the methods I was going to use to make this pursuit. From an early stage in the process, I recognised that my questions were not going to be answered by using a quantitative research approach. I considered initially that I might undertake a survey of a large number of CELTA trainees. Even by attempting to formulate the kind of questions that would go into such a questionnaire, I realised that it was not possible to provide answers in a binary or scale manner to the areas into which I sought insight.

I was therefore faced with a research dilemma. My methodological preference was for a quantitative approach, my research motivation was an area which defied quantitative findings. In order to address this dilemma I engaged in some activities which led to an evolutionary change in my feelings about methodology.

My first approach was to use a trial group of participants early on in the research. To an extent this was designed to convince *me* that the output of narrative interviews would provide *data* which I could work with. Although I was aware that such interviews would generate text, I was unsure as to whether the text would release data that could be mined for insights into my research questions. I was reassured by a preliminary review of initial findings from the trial group interviews.

The second strategy was simply to engage with reading and to find a theoretical perspective with which I could be comfortable. I found a middle ground in the mixed method perspective (Dörnyei 2007) and was reassured by a paradigm that might

allow me to pursue a quantitative activity alongside my qualitative study. This freed me from a reliance on qualitative date, even though in the end, it was this data which provided me with more than enough to generate my findings. The reassurance that I was not tied to this data gave me the freedom to engage with it.

The final step in my commitment to a qualitative methodology was the resolution of my disquiet with the keeping of a research diary. I fully acknowledged the perspective that the researcher is part of the research, but the recording of this gave me much discomfort. My solution was to use something I have called a scrapbook, or research artefact, in which I could story my own narrative in a non-verbal narration. I used it to record moments in the research where a particular event led to an insight which moved my thinking in the study forward. The qualitative nature of the scrapbook allowed me to remain more comfortable with a more qualitative methodology.

Although my journey as a researcher is not part of my findings on teacher knowledge and teacher learning, it is a parallel output to the study. I feel it is important to mention from the outset as it frames some of the discussion in Chapter four of this thesis when I consider my methodology in depth.

1.4.2 From initial to final research questions

As discussed above, the initial curiosity which ignited my interest in the research and the insights provided by my reading led to the framing of initial research questions. It could be argued that having pre-existing questions pre-determines some of the findings. The dilemma around having a priori questions which might serve to detract from emerging findings are discussed in later in Chapter four of this thesis. However, it seems counterintuitive to begin a process that involves questioning existing knowledge without any questions. Every attempt was made to keep the questions as open as possible so that different areas of teacher knowledge and teacher learning could emerge from my process. To reiterate my initial research questions provided earlier, these were:

1. *What do teachers and teacher trainers conceptualise the nature of learning on initial teacher education courses to be?*
2. *What practices or processes contribute most to the learning of teachers?*

3. How do people (e.g. peers, trainers) involved in the training processes influence learning?

I have already outlined that my first research question included teacher trainers as well as trainees. Although committed to reflecting the views and perspectives of those who were learning, I thought that the trainers' views might throw into sharp relief the views of trainees. Trainees' views could be compared and contrasted with trainers' views of the same issue. The difficulty of incorporating the two sets of views into the research, however, gradually became apparent. The views expressed by both groups may have been congruent with each other, opposite to each other or a mixture of both. The focus of the research would then become the potential discord between the views rather than finding insights into the views. It was therefore decided that the research would only capture the views of trainees.

It is to be expected that the initial questions posed as an orienting framework for the research would not necessarily be the questions that were answered by the research. The framework allowed data to be generated but was never intended to predetermine the findings inherent in that data. As initial findings emerged the research questions were reframed to be more specific to the context of the three CELTA courses which participants attended and to encapsulate areas that were closer to the ones addressed by trainees in their narratives.

Research questions reframed:

1. *What constitutes the knowledge of English language teachers for participants on these CELTA courses?*

2. *What are the key processes that promote participants' learning on these CELTA courses?*

3. *How do the relationships between peers and with trainers influence participants' learning on these CELTA courses?*

1.5 The outcomes and importance of this research

As suggested by my review of definitions of teacher knowledge and learning, there has been continued debate about these issues in the context of teacher education. It is therefore important to consider why my study is of value and what new knowledge it might contribute to the debate.

A piece of research which looks at the CELTA course can be seen as relatively distinct since, despite its international popularity (it is undertaken by about 12,000 people worldwide every year), relatively little research has been undertaken into the processes of the course. Those studies that have been done "hardly seem commensurate with the scale of the training activity and its significance for the profession." (Ferguson and Dunno 2003:26). Thus my investigation, considering a teacher education course of widespread popularity but under researched, may offer a different view of teacher knowledge and learning.

My thesis also throws significant new light on the nature of teacher knowledge. I am able to provide a clearer, participant generated view of the nature of practical knowledge, highlighting the procedural nature of that knowledge where the "moves" of teaching are paramount. I have found out that it is this procedural knowledge that is desired, valued and validated by participants. I demonstrate that this knowledge acts like a grounded theory of practice for participants and that they use evidence of success to adapt and regenerate given "moves" of teaching which began as prescribed procedures. I therefore provide some evidence of the importance and value of a focus on techniques and scripts and show that these are neither necessarily confining nor reductive.

I also address the origin and nature of the prior knowledge which teachers bring with them to their training course from their prior experience as learners or from other contexts. Contrary to views in the literature which suggest that this knowledge is devoid of any understanding of pedagogic principles, I illustrate that participants have an emerging understanding of what they believe good teaching is, but also why it is good. This provides them with a framework of what they want to learn and how they would like to behave as teachers in the classroom.

In looking at the learning of teachers I adopt a more micro-level analysis of what is happening on the course than has been carried out before. Other studies tend to be focused on something that could be called a *before and after* phenomenon, where trainees' views are sought before the course, sometimes during and then after the course to ascertain what changes have taken place as a result of the course. (Busch 2010, Lamie 2004, Mattheoudakis 2006, Peacock 2001 and Urmston 2010). In a

sense, once the trainee enters the *tunnel* of the course, our view is obscured and we are interested solely in the emerging trainee as a result.

My thesis uses the narratives of the trainees to actually explore *how* changes occur. The study, therefore, opens up the *tunnel* of the course and allows for a detailed viewing of how trainees interact with course processes and explore some of the reasons why they emerge as they do at the end of the course. I provide a more detailed understanding of how common teacher education processes, such as the observation of experienced teachers and the providing of feedback on trainees' lessons actually impact on learning. I generate a more exact description of how prior learning and the disposition of participants can make them less able to notice and learn from others. I also highlight the manner in which participants move from their prescribed procedure to a modified one. By highlighting the detail of these learning events I am able to suggest how teacher educators might be able to further develop their programmes to enhance trainee learning.

As part of the investigation, the nature of the relationships within the course setting, including power relationships, are considered. Hitherto, there has been less consideration of the potential for unbenign relationships in a teacher education context. As the teaching profession is subject to more and more scrutiny, judgment and inspection, gaining insights into how being assessed and judged as a teacher impacts on learning is felt to be a very timely outcome. I provide some understanding of how the perceived expertise of the trainer undermines the value of peer feedback but also restricts participants' willingness or ability to articulate honest reflections on their own and others' teaching.

My experience with other teacher education courses suggests that change is slow and evolutionary within the practice of teacher education. This can lead to some lack of questioning of key tenets of practice. Since this study considers the experience from the trainee perspective, it is able to offer critical questions around the impact and function of some elements of teacher education courses. By allowing the trainee to articulate what "works" for them, the study can bring into relief those "givens" in practice that can remain unchallenged in the hands of tutors whose interest lies in perpetuating them.

29

1.6 Summary of the study

I have up to now provided an account of the professional and personal contexts from which this study has emerged. I have highlighted how my own experience of the CELTA course led me to embark on the study and acknowledged the potential biases which can stem from my interest in the course. I have also provided discussion of some of the key underpinning conceptual areas which will remerge through the thesis. I now summarise the content of the thesis providing an overview of the research process and the content and structure of the chapters.

1.6.1 Context, participants and methods

The research was carried out with twelve participants attending three separate part-time CELTA courses. Two courses took place at a UK university, the other took place at a UK College of Further Education. The first set of data was gathered with four participants studying January to May 2011, the second with six participants studying January to May 2012, with further interviews with participants after completion of the course between June 2012 and May 2013. The final data set was gathered with two participants on a course which ran October 2014 to March 2015. The decision to interview participants on a part-time course was largely pragmatic. The structure of the part-time course, with many "free" days between the required days of attendance as well as the less intensive pace, suggested that participants might have more time available to be interviewed and have more time for ongoing reflections that might contribute to the research data.

The first two courses where participants took part were delivered at the institution where I work. This allowed ease of access and provided me with the time needed to collect the data built around my own work schedule. I knew the main course tutor and was able to share the aims of my research with him to reassure the training team that my enquiry was focused on the learning of trainees rather than any judgment of the quality of the course itself. The final two trainees were taking the CELTA at the same time as they were completing a PGCE qualification at the institution where I work. I was able to interview them when they attended their PGCE classes. For ethical reasons discussed in Chapter four, I chose courses where I had no involvement in the teaching or assessment. I felt that any tutor role I would take

on might impact on the contributions made by participants because my relationship with the participants would be one of tutor and trainee rather than researcher and participant.

Throughout the period of the research I continued with my role as a teacher trainer and specifically as a CELTA trainer on a four-week intensive course in June 2013, not at the institutions where I carried out the research. I also worked as a CELTA assessor, which involved visiting a number of other courses to validate assessment decisions and included meetings with trainees. Insights from these activities were recorded in my research scrapbook and form a parallel set of data.

The participants in the study were not all beginning teachers. A number of them had experience of teaching in a less formal setting, such as one-to-one cello lessons or leading group sessions for a dieting group called Weight Watchers. One participant had more extensive teaching experience working in a Further Education College, but this was not teaching English language or any language related topics.

The data comes from interviews with these participants at three key points in their course. The first point, importantly, was before they had done any of the teaching practice element of the course or after their first or second lesson, although they had seen some videos of English language teachers. The second interview was approximately mid-way through the course and then finally at the end of the course when participants were experienced with different levels of English language teaching. I was also able to interview three participants one year after completing the course. Two of them had undertaken some English language teaching in the intervening time.

1.6.2 Summary of the chapters

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. In Chapter one I have introduced the focus and context of the study. In Chapters two and three I provide a discussion of the literature relevant to themes of the study, namely knowledge and learning. In Chapter two I focus on concepts of knowledge and learning in a more general sense in order to highlight key epistemological views relating to the various interpretations of what knowledge is and how it is acquired or learned. Chapter three continues this exploration, but with a more direct focus on teacher knowledge and teacher learning.

In both of these chapters I reiterate the point that it is often difficult to separate what has been written about knowledge and learning since a view of knowledge will presuppose the way it is learned. For this reason I have structured the review of literature into two differently focused views of knowledge and learning rather than looking at knowledge and learning separately.

In Chapter four I explore the methodological decisions I have made while undertaking this research and explain the process by which I gathered and analysed the data. In so doing, I provide a discussion of my chosen methods as well as the challenges posed by using a qualitative research paradigm. Chapters five and six contain an analysis of my findings. Chapter five considers findings related to teacher knowledge and in particular provides insights into the nature of practical knowledge for the participants in the study. Chapter six focuses on the insights gained into how participants learned on their CELTA course and therefore into the nature and processes involved in teacher learning. In Chapter seven I draw together the key findings and discuss the potential implications for teachers and teacher education programmes, including the CELTA course.

Chapter 2: Changing views of knowledge and the social learning paradigm

2.0 Introduction

As outlined in the final section of the previous chapter, this chapter will discuss concepts from the literature on knowledge and learning in a more general sense, i.e. not applied specifically to teachers or teaching. The purpose of this is to provide a consideration of the overarching paradigms of knowledge and learning which pertain to areas in this study. These paradigms are then related to literature about *teachers'* knowledge and learning in Chapter three.

The very breadth of the topics *knowledge* and *learning* provides a challenge for the researcher. It would be impossible to address everything that has been written and choices about aspects to include immediately result in the exclusion of others. In relation to the concept of *knowledge*, the choice of areas to focus on in this chapter provide a kind of pre-echo of what is to come in Chapter three. In this chapter I will consider the nature and historical origins of positivist views of knowledge, where knowledge is assumed to be observable, quantifiable and objective as well as nascent ideas in relation to practical knowledge or the knowledge of practice. These two concepts of knowledge underpin much of the debate around teacher knowledge and thus provide one of the foundation paradigms of this study.

In making choices about which areas of learning to consider here, a useful lens is suggested by the fact that the study investigates learning within a taught programme of teacher education, where participants are working within a group. It is therefore valid that a main focus is on literature which addresses learning in a social context. Thus I devote much of this chapter to consider views of learning which could be broadly identified as *social learning theory*. In so doing, I have adopted the term "social learning" as a general term for those perspectives which focus on learning with and from others. Where there are other terms used by those putting forward a learning model, for example, *socio-cultural* learning or *situated* learning, I acknowledge this in the discussion. Therefore *social learning* is used more as an umbrella term throughout, with different tenets of social learning being named as they are identified in the literature.

It is acknowledged (Edwards 2005, Engeström 2001) that within any social group there is the individual who will react to and interact with the group and the knowledge that is presented to them. My consideration of social learning within the literature does not preclude views relating to the role of the individual in the learning process. At the outset of this chapter I acknowledge the contested nature of theories of learning and one feature of the debate are views about the primacy of individual as opposed to the impact of the social group. Therefore, I refer to the role of the individual within the different models of learning discussed.

As mentioned at the end of Chapter one, in both this chapter and Chapter three, views about knowledge and learning are not presented as distinct. Any definition of learning presupposes a view of what constitutes knowledge and vice versa. Therefore, each argument put forward in the literature about *how* learning takes place also addresses the notion of what knowledge is, sometimes by default and sometimes in a more deliberate manner. For this reason, there is no attempt in this chapter to separate considerations of knowledge from those of learning; they are mostly addressed together.

I have acknowledged the breadth of literature sources which consider concepts of knowledge and learning and the challenge of extracting a focused review relevant to this study. Of no less challenge is the length of time historically within which discussions of knowledge and learning have taken place. Thus this chapter has a somewhat chronological structure over time starting with very early epistemological perspectives. In line with such a time-related structure, in this introductory section I now include three concepts which both chronologically and conceptually offer an epistemological foundation within which the rest of this chapter and the next can find resonance.

2.1 Aristotelian principles: Epistēmē, Technē, Phronēsis

In order to frame discussions of knowledge, and therefore to a certain extent learning, I now examine Aristotle's three main areas of knowledge, Epistēmē, Technē and Phronēsis. These three concepts will find recurring reiterations

throughout this chapter and the next and it is therefore of value to provide a brief definition at the outset.

Epistēmē is the term used by Aristotle for theoretical knowledge which is based on observations of the world from outside. It considers "the general, principal, eternal and regular aspects of life" (Saugstad 2005:355). It admits no variation as it is a collection of observable truths. This knowledge is closely related to the notion of scientific knowledge or later positivists' views of objectively existing knowledge.

Technē was used to define that knowledge which is "to improve man's ability to produce and act in the practical world" (Saugstad 2005:335). It is knowledge that involves experience and the ability to act in a particular situation and may therefore admit variance. Technē is related to the idea of a practical knowledge and presupposes an interaction with the lived life.

Phronēsis is the knowledge required to act morally in situations; "a kind of morally pervaded practical wisdom" (Eisner 2002:381). It is what allows us to make good decisions about what to do and works together with technē to allow us to act in the best way in any situation.

The categories proposed by Aristotle are made even more relevant by the historical and social context in which they were generated.

> Aristotle lived in a transitional period between the cultures of orality and literacy. His categories of knowledge are therefore of educational interest today, as they refer to the types of practical knowledge which tend to be neglected in a culture of literacy, but still remain important parts of the learning process.
>
> Saugstad (2005:353)

It could therefore be expected that, as we work within a highly literate society, we may be drawn towards placing a higher value on epistēmē or theoretical knowledge. As this study looks at the knowledge and learning of teachers, who are engaged in the mostly practical occupation of *teaching*, it is of value to interrogate such potential biases. The categories provided by Aristotle may draw our attention to the value of a wider range of knowledge types.

2.1.1 Rationale for the focus and structure of this chapter

As with any review of theoretical perspectives, as one area of focus is chosen another is, by definition, excluded. This difficulty is not unusual, though is potentially rendered more extreme by the fact that this study considers such frequently examined concepts as knowledge and learning. The rationale for making choices in the field of study of education is described by Greeno (1997) as both theoretical and practical.

> Regarding theory, we can consider which perspective seems more promising for developing an explanatory system with broader scope and more coherence. Regarding educational practice, we can consider which perspective is more likely to generate research that will inform discussions of educational reform more productively.
>
> Greeno 1997:6

My choice of focus in relation to knowledge is on the potentially conflicting views of positivism and knowledge as practice. Since positivist views of learning are historically older, these are situated at the start of the chapter. I review earlier positivist views of knowledge and learning and influential theories which retain the idea of knowledge as an external artefact passed from the knower to the learner. This provides a counterpoint for the emerging view of knowledge suggested by literature dealing with social learning, where knowledge is constituted as social practice. Thus, the consideration of knowledge as practice is intertwined with the discussions of the different iterations of social learning.

The quasi chronological structure of this chapter has already been mentioned. Such a structure reflects the tendency of theorists to build on, or refute, previous views. It is also to acknowledge the fact, implicit in social learning theory itself, that any theoretical perspective will be engendered from its social and historical context. For example, we cannot discuss some of Vygotsky's precepts without also considering the impact of the political ideologies through which his work was generated and informed.

The tenets of social learning theory are considered though viewing some of the key principles introduced by different theorists. Links are made within the development of each conceptual framework. For example, Bourdieu's (1971) notion of *habitus* finds a later reiteration in Lave and Wenger's (1991) exploration of *reification*. Vygotsky's (1962, 1978) concept of *mediated learning* forms a backdrop for exploration of *communities of practice*. They are considered separately because each finds form in a different cultural, geographical and historical research context. Acknowledging the different contexts is congruent with a study which itself is using social learning theory as a paradigm, where learning and therefore the creation of knowledge is *situated* within a social context.

2.2 The positivist paradigm and the Cartesian world view

A useful starting point for considering a positivist view of learning, which focuses on knowledge as concrete, describable and capable of being imparted, Aristotle's epistēmē, can be found in the 17th century writing of Rene Descartes (2010). Though historically distant, Descartes' views are intrinsic to understanding the notion of knowledge as an artefact. Insights into Descartes' views of knowledge are most easily discernible in his mathematical works. He provided new ways of describing geometrical features through algebraic formulae; he provided a scientific description of the world. His work underpins the later development of calculus and is embedded in many engineering processes today. It also illustrates the basis of a Cartesian view of the world, where knowledge is that which can be scrutinised and categorised through scientific principles with learning though individual agency. This view has influenced thinking in the Western world about what knowledge is, as well as how it is learned.

For Descartes, scientific approaches to knowledge were superior to those whose thinking was based more on conjecture and discussion. He confessed to being "delighted with the mathematics, on account of the certitude and evidence of their readings", but "compared the disquisitions of the ancient moralists to very towering and magnificent palaces with no better foundation than sand and mud" (Descartes 2010:104). Such views are reflected in positivist epistemological perspectives on knowledge. The echo of Descartes is audible in this explanation of positivism:

> Positivism is rooted in the belief that … knowledge is considered to be objective and identifiable and represents generalizable truths. In other words, knowledge is out there and can be captured through the use of scientific methods.

> Johnson 2009:7

The view of knowledge as "out there" and able to be captured suggests it is something than can be transmitted to another person, akin to the handing over of an artefact. Thus positivist views of knowledge suggest a transmission model of learning, where those who are in possession of these pieces of knowledge transfer them to those who are as yet ignorant of this knowledge.

2.2.1 The "I" of Descartes

We can identify a further point of interest in Descartes' writing in his most famous and most quotable revelation.

*Cogito ergo **sum** / **je** pense donc **je** suis / **I** think, therefore **I** am. (*My emphasis.) As Descartes looked to prove the existence of the mind, he turned to his own doubt as proof.

> … whilst I thus wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who this thought, should be somewhat; and as I observed that this truth, I think, therefore I am (COGITO ERGO SUM), was so certain and of such evidence that no ground of doubt, however extravagant, could be alleged by the sceptics capable of shaking it.

> Descartes 2010:413

His proof that we, or rather our minds, exist also points to some tenets of his view of knowledge which are of relevance here. Firstly, truth (or knowledge) is somehow observable, we can see it, if even metaphorically. Secondly, the responsibility for observing truth and of gaining knowledge lies with the individual, the "I" of the quote. This suggests that a Cartesian learning experience is a matter of individual agency. The conscious act of the individual, the agency or responsibility of the learner in the act of learning is all important.

The final point that arises from Descartes' premise is the link between thinking and identity. *Being* is seen to occur as a result of *thinking*. It is the cognitive act that confirms our existence. In the light of some of the discussions in later chapters concerning the learning of *doing* as a part of teaching, it is interesting to forefront the Cartesian link between being and thinking as a unique relationship. There is no place in a Cartesian world view for *facio ergo sum*, je fais donc je suis, I do, therefore I am.

2.2.2 The pendulum swings of learning theories

It is not the intention here to discuss in detail the plethora of learning theories that have influenced educational practice. Many publications (Harasam 2012, Illeris 2008) provide comprehensive perspectives on the full range. However, it is of interest to note the chronological development of different theories and the pendulum swings, where each successive theory finds its origins in the critique of the previous one. The relevance in providing an overview here is, firstly, to illustrate the fact that the nature of learning remains contested and therefore insights that might be provided by this study will contribute to the ongoing debate. The second point that is illustrated by the overview is the continued emphasis on the individual as the agent of learning. This provides further contextualisation for the discussion of social learning which features prominently in other parts of this chapter.

In order to provide a cogent summary that will add context to the chapter rather than turn it into a potted history of learning theories, two main overarching concepts are described briefly: behaviourist and cognitive views of learning. These two overarching terms have numerous sub-aspects and theories which will not be explored here. However, these two perspectives on learning provide a backdrop for features that emerge during the main focus of this chapter. For example, behaviourism contextualises the notion of imitation discussed in the section on mediated learning and cognitive learning is remerges in discussions participation where the question of the generative nature of learning is addressed.

Behaviourism as an explanation as to what happens in the human mind when learning takes place dates back the work of Pavlov in the 1890s and Skinner in the 1950s. A behaviourist view describes learning as the acquiring of behaviour patterns. This occurs through repetition and reinforcement (both positive and negative). In

order for learning to take place the learner receives a stimulus to which they respond. Repetition of this stimulus and response accompanied by reward (or punishment, when there is an incorrect response) results in the appearance of a new behaviour, conditioned through the impact of stimulus/response.

> Behaviourism asserts that all behaviour, no matter how complex, can be reduced to a simple stimulus-response association and new behaviour occurs through classical or operant conditioning; or the modification of old behaviour through rewards and punishments; or imitation of observed behaviour, called modelling.

> Woollard 2010:21

Thus for behaviourists, learning was a matter of acquired behaviours. This manner of learning could include theoretical knowledge (epistēmē) as well as practical knowledge (technē). Theoretical knowledge would be learned through rote learning-like activities, while practical knowledge would be gained through repetition of the desired practical action. Repetition and reward for the replication of positive behaviours were important in the behaviourist model.

In the 1960s, Western theories of learning looked to accommodate and value the human brain for its role in the process of learning. Cognitive theories considered the processes inside the brain to explain how new knowledge was acquired. The mental processes of recognition, recall, analysis and understanding were recognised as important to study rather than confining our understanding of learning to the individual's response to a stimulus. The work of the developmental psychologist, Jean Piaget, provided some of the foundations for this view of learning. Looking at the way aptitude tests were used, he began to question the focus on the answers given, the response, and suggested that what was more important was "the process of reasoning that children used to arrive at the answers." (Kolb 1983:12).

Piaget's conclusions about the development of the child and the way a child learns illustrate a significant feature of cognitive learning, that the key factor in learning is the individual's cognition. During the final stages of a child's development,

> … knowledge is represented in symbolic terms, symbols capable of being manipulated internally with complete independence from experiential reality.

> Kolb 1983:13

One constant in the development of behaviourism and cognitive views of learning is that they "focus on learning as 'product' and 'acquisition'" (Fuller 2007:18). Knowledge is transmitted in a structured manner with a hierarchy of complexity. Although there is recognition that the transmission is mediated by a teacher figure, who is an expert, the learning is seen as a stable entity which can be articulated and later tested. Such a view of learning seems to focus theoretical knowledge or epistēmē as the dominant model of knowledge as it is the category of knowledge that can be more easily transmitted in the way described.

Of further significance is that behaviourism and cognitivism subscribe to the notion that "an individual learner constituted a natural agency of learning" (Kozulin et al 2003:2). They all look to the individual as the partaker of knowledge, mostly given to them by a person in the role of teacher. We return to the Cartesian view of knowledge that is out there, quantifiable and transferable to another. The transfer happens from individual to individual. What we do not find in any of the above theories is the agency of others, a recognition that learning, no less than life, occurs in a social setting, with others. This agency of others is key to the social learning perspective, to which we now turn.

2.3 We participate, therefore we are

Social learning theories diverge from those mentioned in the overview above in that they recognise that all humans interact with others in a variety of social situations and this interaction contributes to learning. This perspective assumes that:

> Human cognition is formed through engagement in social activities. Consequently, cognitive development is an interactive process, mediated by culture, context, language and social interaction. Knowledge of the world is mediated by virtue of being situated in a cultural environment.

> Johnson 2009:2

As Bruner (1996:123) noted, "your chances of winning a Nobel Prize increases immeasurably if you have worked in a laboratory with someone who has won one". Not because of any reputation gained, but by the mere fact of being able to partake in the community of intelligence. Something rubs off on you as you circulate in the sociocultural community which you are part of.

The role played by the social setting of the individual in learning was given centre stage in the works of Vygotsky writing in the 1920s. Many of the concepts that form Vygotsky's writings offer some explanation of what happens in our interaction with others which is helpful for this study. Some of Vygotsky's theories are only being more widely accepted in education in the late 20th and early 21st century and this can perhaps be put down to the fact that they "offered answers to the questions only recently formulated in Western psychology and education" (Kozulin 2003:15) or the large number of interpretations that have been given to some of his key concepts (Chaiklin 2003:44). Two concepts that are particularly relevant for consideration here are *mediated learning* and the *zone of proximal development*. Both offer a potential paradigm for considering how others impact on the way we create knowledge and learn.

2.3.1 Mediated learning

Vygotsky was concerned with the issue of human development and looked mainly at development in childhood, where the process is "more intense and most explicit" (Davydov & Zinchenko 1993:99). Nevertheless, his insights can be considered with regard to learning in other age groups. In developing the concept of mediated learning, Vygotsky was focused on the parent or carer as the mediator. It is the *process* of mediation that is interesting for consideration in this study and is articulated through the example in the next section of this chapter.

Vygotsky's work over a number of years crystallised the notion of learning as a social activity and the claim that higher mental processes in the individual have their origin in social processes. (Wertsch 1985). Within these social processes, mediation (*oposredovanie*) was a key concept. According to Vygotsky, "all the higher psychic functions are mediated processes" (Vygotsky 1962:56), He pointed to the "crucial role played by parents, peers, teachers and the community" (Kozulin et al 2003:2).

2.3.2 An example of mediated learning

Vygotsky's writings have numerous examples of mediated learning from his observations of children interacting with adults. An example from Wertsch and Stone's study cited by Kozulin (2003) illustrates the relevance of the concept to this study. In this example a mother helped her two-year-old child complete a puzzle by referring to a model puzzle when asked by the child for advice, rather than giving the advice directly. By the end of the activity the child had learned to refer to the model puzzle herself. In Vygotsky's terms, the child had appropriated the necessity to consult the model and had therefore learned a way of approaching the solving of the puzzle. (Kozulin 2003:19).

The example highlights the features of the mediated learning paradigm. There is a rejection of the positivist idea of delivering knowledge. The mother does not tell the child how to solve the puzzle. Instead the mother engages in the practice of solving the puzzle and the child, though experiencing this practice, learns to engage in the practice herself. The learning is more than just copying, since the mother's actions cannot simply be replicated to solve the puzzle. The child must use the mother's actions to build its own approach, depending on the changing nature of the puzzle. The mother and child have co-created the learning. Inherent in the process is some observation and noticing on behalf of the child and some deliberate repetition or explicit action on the part of the mother.

2.3.3 Mediation, scaffolding and limits to their application

The process of guiding the child to learning, as exemplified by the example above, is also referred to as *scaffolding*. As Vygotsky (1962) observed the learning of children over time, he used the term *scaffolding* to describe how the child was guided through a series of activities to learning.

The term is much used in current education practice to refer to classroom strategies and is often misused to equate simply to helping a learner or doing part of an activity for them. However, an isolated example of support is not necessarily scaffolding or mediated learning. Palinscar and Brown, in describing how they used scaffolding to develop their learners' ability to deal with texts, offer a succinct explanation. The

explanation echoes much of Lave and Wenger's (1991) *Peripheral Participation* model of social learning which will be explored later in this chapter.

> Children first experience a particular set of cognitive activities in the presence of experts, and only gradually come to perform these functions by themselves. First an expert guides the child's activity, doing most of the cognitive work herself. The child participates first as spectator, then as a novice responsible for very little of the actual work. As the child becomes more experienced … the adult gradually cedes her greater responsibility. The adult and child come to share the cognitive work, with the child taking initiative and the adult correcting and guiding where she falters.
>
> Palinscar and Brown 1984:123

Palinscar and Brown looked at learners' ability to understand and summarise texts and found that "reciprocal teaching, with an adult model guiding the student to interact with the text in more sophisticated ways, led to a significant improvement" (1984:117). They were able to highlight some of the strategies used to mediate learning. Key to the success of these strategies was the person in the teacher role guiding the learner to see how the solution was achieved rather than telling them the solution.

There is, however, an inherent difficulty in the exploration and application of mediated learning as a paradigm. This difficulty lies primarily in the fact that "the parameters of human mediation turned out to be too numerous and context-dependent to allow for a simple classification" (Kozulin 2003:19). The example above of the child learning to complete the puzzle under the guidance of their mother illustrates the fact that learning was achieved through a process in which the mother mediated, but the elements of that process are not fixed or describable. Even in Palinscar and Brown's study cited above, the strategies at work in the classroom are clearly described, the "mediational means" (Kozulin 2003:20) were less clear.

However, whilst the difficulty of working with a theoretical paradigm due to its complexity is sometimes cited as a reason for rejecting it as useful, there is still value in considering a perspective that offers the chance to understand learning more fully. Human mediation in learning is complex, as it involves the interaction of two or more

human beings whose inner thoughts we cannot capture and analyse. A way forward would seem to lie in exploring steps or stages in learning to see if we can extrapolate identifiable elements. Studies of mediated learning in particular contexts and curriculum areas (Palinscar and Brown 1984, Rogoff 1995, Bliss, Askey and Macrae 1996) have tended to focus on the steps in the mediation process. Rogoff's (1995) identification of *apprenticeship, guided participation* and *appropriation* as the stages in mediated learning is one example of that analysis. Attempts to name the stages have thus been made and this seems to suggest that the way to a clearer understanding of the whole may lie in an analysis of the parts.

2.3.4 Tools and signs

A potentially less difficult concept in terms of understanding and application is Vygotsky's notion of symbolic mediation. Vygotsky identified the use of symbols and signs as well as language in learning, all of which we internalise as psychological tools that help us in our cognitive development. Vygotsky used the example of tying a knot in a handkerchief to remind one of an important date. Linking two instrumental activities (tying the knot and saying the date) ensures that we remember. This concept of *priem* – method, device or trick, are signs used by humans to improve their performance. Such signs are "social artefacts designed to master and thereby improve our natural psychological processes" (Van der Veer and Valsinger 1991:217).

Vygotsky differentiated between tools and signs for their role in learning. The tool was the process through which the individual mastered the universe, as in the example above where the child mastered the puzzle. The sign was the way in which this mastery was embedded in the individual's memory.

> The tool's function is to serve as the conductor of human influence on the object of activity; it is *externally* oriented; it must lead to change in objects. It is a means by which human external activity is aimed at mastering, and triumphing over, nature. The sign, on the other hand, changes nothing in the object of a psychological operation. It is a means of internal activity aimed at mastering oneself; the sign is *internally* oriented.

> Vygotsky 1978:55

Vygotsky's exploration of both tool and sign offers a dualist approach to learning. We learn a method or way of doing something and store it in our memory through a sign.

Vygotsky's writings are generally seen as making a major contribution to the development of social learning theory (Edwards 2005, Johnson 2009). However, the distinction marked by Vygotsky in the extract above between internal and external activity is an example how the individual and the individual's cognition can act within a social learning construct. The identification of an internally oriented activity seems to recognise the agency of the individual in creating this sign or memory device. There is acknowledgement of the *cognitive* effort of the individual as well as the tools developed in the external activity within a social group. Thus even within a social learning paradigm, the intent and effort of the individual to act plays an important role.

It could be argued that since Vygotsky viewed the most significant symbolic tool in the development of the mind to be language, the notion of developing signs is no longer relevant once the individual is an adult expert user of language. Vygotsky viewed the development of a child's language ability not as a parallel development or the by-product of cognitive development but as an intrinsic part of cognitive change. He argued that "literacy changes the entire system of the learner's cognitive processes" Kozulin (2003:23) and that the way in which we attach language (symbols) to our world is key to our cognitive development.

An adult, however, will encounter not only new language to describe new situations, but also new meanings of language to encode new knowledge. An everyday example of new meanings can be seen in the verbs "to medal" and "to podium" in the sporting arena or a "ship" to describe a relationship between fictional characters in social media. These verbs describe processes which existed, but are now stored in our minds through the creation of new language or signs.

2.3.5 Signs at work and the notion of memes

Further examples from modern life illustrate why it would be inappropriate to assign Vygotsky's notions of symbols and signs solely to the explanation of learning for a child. Examples of the power of symbols in learning and in knowledge creation can be seen in the way we use linguistic *mantras*. The world of self-help books contains

a number of titles that parcel knowledge into salient phrases that not only have emotional appeal, but also act as triggers for us to access the knowledge at times of need. Titles such as "Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway" (Jeffers 2007), "Willpower: Rediscovering our Greatest Strength" (Baumeister & Tierney 2012) provide a short linguistic "knot" that teaches or reminds us of the knowledge that is within the book. The success of the "Sunscreen Song" (Luhrmann 1999) with its myriad of well-honed platitudes lies in its ability to find linguistically memorable mini archives of knowledge: "Do one thing everyday that scares you", "Don't be reckless with other people's hearts, don't put up with people who are reckless with yours". We are drawn to these mantras because they mediate the knowledge we need to solve our problems in a neat symbolic phrase.

Richard Dawkins has crystallised the notion of signs for the new digital era. He has coined the term *meme* to describe how we transfer ideas through imitation.

> We need a name for this new replicator, a noun that conveys the idea of a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of *imitation* … Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation.

> Dawkins 1989:192

The example given by Dawkins is that of a scientist who writes or lectures on a new idea. This idea is then taken and spread by those who read or hear it and they replicate the idea in their writings or lectures. With the development of social media, the opportunities for spreading new ideas has grown exponentially and the existence of *internet memes* is well recognised and much referred to in online discussions. These may not always be scientific ideas, but their spread illustrates the transfer of an idea through a social process using some kind of sign.

From a myriad of online memes I have selected one example which echoes Vygotsky's idea of *sign*. At the 2012 Olympic Games, McKayla Maroney gained a silver medal in gymnastics in an event where she hoped to win. As she accepted her

medal, she gave a rueful half-smile, acknowledging both her pleasure at winning a medal and her disappointment at not winning gold. The smile became a sign for this combination of emotions. The internet was flooded with pictures of people imitating the smile, including President Obama. For a short time it was imitated on television shows and used without accompanying commentary to simply represent the experience of simultaneous joy and despair.

Internet memes, however, embody the notion that the individual can alter the original idea, as with the photographs taken by others of the Maroney smile with different backgrounds and contexts. Whereas Dawkins' original idea was that of a *replicator* in the Darwinian sense, internet memes demonstrate the individual's ability to take on an idea and alter it, spread the altered idea that is in turn further altered.

Meme theory is a relatively new description of how ideas spread in society and it has been somewhat appropriated by the world of social media. As Aunger explains, memes need to be "rescued from the Airy-Fairy-Land in which they now exist" (Aunger 2002:64). Memes are mainly linked to the social sharing of ideas that are non-academic, some might say, trivial. They are also ephemeral, coming into existence and disappearing quickly, sometimes overnight. The importance of considering meme theory here is as an acknowledgement of the spread of ideas or learning that depends on sharing, imitation and modifying the original to create a new idea. This concept is revisited in Chapter three when the use and modification of scripts as a tool for teacher learning are considered.

2.4 The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

A second important theoretical model proposed by Vygotsky (1978) is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is closely linked to the idea of (human) mediated learning as it describes the potential for the child to move from their existing state of knowledge to a state where they have increased knowledge as the result of the intervention of another individual. If mediated learning focused on the process of learning, ZPD considers the potential of the learner to learn.

The development of the concept of ZPD has its origins in Vygotsky's dissatisfaction with the way in which a child's development or mental age was calculated through the use of tests with the results used to determine the instruction and even the

educational setting the child would be allowed to access. His main thought was that such tests showed what a child has learned or is able to do up to this point and does not give any information about the potential development of the child in the future. He maintained that such an approach led to "pedagogic pessimism" (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991:328) where no account would be taken of the child's possible capability for learning.

His proposal was that what we should measure is not just what the child can do alone in a test, but also what the child can do with the help of an adult. This would give us two measurements. The difference between these two measurements is the Zone of Proximal Development:

> It is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.
>
> Vygotsky 1978:86

Teaching would be to engender processes that would take the child across the gap to the top of their ZPD.

> What the child is able to do in collaboration today, he will be able to do independently tomorrow.
>
> Vygotsky cited in Chaiklin 2003:40

It may be that this pedagogic optimism was born out of a desire to link learning to the notion of the *collective* inherent in the Marxist ideology of his time (Edwards 2005).

There are two important aspects within the concept of ZPD which are important for this study. The first is that the child cannot bridge the gap on their own; learning relies on the agency of others in partnership with the individual. This reconfirms the need for a knowledgeable other to assist them in their move through the ZPD. However, within the model the level of competence of the other person involved in mediation is not as important, as it is less valuable to consider the *knowledgeable* person in the mediation process but rather the impact of their assistance. This

contrasts with Lave and Wenger's (1991) model discussed below, where the different roles of the *master* (knowledgeable) and *peer* (as knowledgeable as the learner) are considered as part of the learning process.

The notion of a ZPD as pedagogic optimism is recognised and suggests a kind of unlimited potential in the learner as Chailkin describes:

> The common concept of the zone of proximal development supports or inspires a vision of educational perfection, in which the insightful (or lucky) teacher is able to help a child master, effortlessly and joyfully, whatever subject matter is on the day's program.

> Chaiklin 2003:42

Whilst a focus on the potential is an important one, there remains an outer boundary to the ZPD beyond which the child or learner may not be able to progress, even with the assistance of another. Vygotsky's concern was in gaining recognition for that space beyond the learner's current position. This study will also explore what happens when the learner is provided with a guided opportunity to move beyond the top limit of their ZPD and whether this opportunity is a step too far.

2.4.1 ZPD and imitation

A further aspect of ZPD which provides some clarification for aspects of learning explored in this study is in the way it helps us to understand the difference between imitation and learning. On a teacher education course such as the one investigated in this study, where part of the learning lies in *doing* the activity of teaching, it would be easy to categorise a teacher's use of a particular strategy as simple replication of an action they have observed. As explored in the section above describing an example of mediated learning, Vygotsky's experiment showed that the child was not simply mimicking or replicating the actions of the mother but following the way the mother acted and applying the principles to her own puzzle.

Vygotsky identified the ZPD as one of the essential mental phenomena that make us *human*. Based on colleagues' experiments, he concluded that primates had no ZPD. Work with chimpanzees had shown that they could learn by imitating actions that were modelled for them. However, they could only imitate things that they could

already do. They could not go beyond their level of existing learning even if activities were modelled for them. Their ability to take on new behaviour was limited by their cognitive development. In contrast, a human can "imitate a series of actions that go far beyond the boundaries of his own possibilities but they are, however, not infinitely large". (Vygotsky quoted in Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991:334)

Chaiklin (2003) argues that we need to consider Vygotsky's use of the term differently and in a way that is more useful to this study. He explains

> Vygotsky used the term *imitation* to refer to situations in which a child is able to engage in interaction with more competent others around specific tasks that the child would otherwise not be able to perform alone, because of the presence of maturing psychological functions.
>
> Chaiklin 2003:52

Thus ZPD could be seen as the ability, not to replicate, but to construct new learning. If the child has the ability to go beyond simply repeating what they see the adult doing, then this evidences their potential for learning this new task.

A similar view of replication is seen in studies of language acquisition (Lightbown and Spada 2006). Looking at transcripts of child language, Lightbown and Spada showed that although they may repeat language they hear adults using, they are able to generate new structures that they have not heard. This generative quality indicates the child's ability to go beyond simple replication.

On a teacher education programme such as the one considered in this study, observation of other teachers is an inherent part of the process experienced by participants. Vygotsky's concept of ZPD suggests a framework for understanding how this observation might be facilitating participants' development from their potential to engage in teaching to learning to teach. It could also provide more clarity as to whether and how participants move from simply replicating what they see to creating new knowledge based on what they see. ZPD provides a framework for discerning the differences between imitation and learning.

2.5 Bourdieu and the social artefact

Vygotsky's concepts discussed in the previous sections suggest some aspects in our understanding of how an individual and a *knowledgeable other* interact in the process of learning. Vygotsky's views do not restrict learning to knowledge as an artefact that is an external, tangible, transferable entity in the positivist sense. To provide further discussion of concepts within social learning applicable to the study, I will now consider an important contribution to a theoretical model for understanding knowledge and learning in this study: Bourdieu's concept of *habitus.* The notion of habitus and how it is created explored in this section indicate a view of knowledge as social practice. Thus, neither theoretical nor practical knowledge (Epistēmē and Technē) are excluded forms of knowledge.

The genesis of Bourdieu's theory of practice was not to explain learning, but to seek to contradict the accepted opposition of subjectivism and objectivism in the behavioural sciences (Wacquant 1998). The opposition was based on the two traditions in the study of culture. Structuralists, like Levi-Strauss, viewed the social context as having a fixed and predetermined impact on knowledge, whereas the functionalists considered the individual agent as the creator of knowledge (Wacquant 1998). As a result of an ethnographic study of social practices in the region of Kabylia, Algeria, Bourdieu published *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (Outline of a Theory of Practice) in 1972 which tried to find a middle ground between these two perspectives. Although his focus was not to develop a theory of *learning*, concepts which were developed provide relevant insights into how we learn in a social group and thus contribute to the discussion of social learning.

2.5.1 The co-creation of knowledge

As described in the previous paragraph, the genesis of Bourdieu's "Theory of Practice" has its roots in finding a congruence between an immutable impact of the social group on knowledge and learning and the striving of the individual to resist or influence what is learned. Bourdieu's conceptual model provides further insights into the agency of the individual in learning, working with the influence of others in the social context but not in a simple process of acceptance and replication. This echoes

the role of the individual act considered in Vygotsky's notion of signs within mediated learning.

In his argumentation, the key to reconciling the oppositions of subjective and objective is in Bourdieu's view that observed social structures "can and should be seen as constituting and dynamic, not static" (Grenfell & James 1998:11). Our social environment and the norms of behaviour that they engender certainly impact on our knowledge creation, but we are also agents of that knowledge creation and we reproduce rather than replicate these structures. There is a generative quality to social learning because different individuals are involved in the generation or construction of that knowledge. Grenfell and James explain that this process is not just simple imitation because it:

> … comes about not so much through the replication of actions but its reproduction. Reproduction implies both variations and limitations in what is and is not possible in the behaviour, thought and physical action of people.
>
> Grenfell & James 1998:12

Many printed definitions of habitus, by Bourdieu and in translations accentuate the generative quality of the creation of habitus.

> The habitus, the durably instilled generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus.
>
> Bourdieu 1977:78

> … a system of durable and transposable dispositions through which we perceive, judge and act in the world.
>
> Wacquant 1998:220

> … la disposition cultivée, l'*habitus*, qui permet à chaque agent d'engendrer, à partir d'un petit nombre de principes implicites, toutes les conduits..

(*the cultivated way of being, the habitus, which allows everyone to create / generate their behaviour based on a small number of implicit principles*)

Bourdieu 1971:43

… incorporated dispositions

Brubaker 1993:214

In all of the above definitions it is clear that our learning through practice is active. The notion of "disposition" involves interaction between the individual and society. Our habitus *generates*, and *creates*; it does not simply lie impassive. It renews itself through further interaction with the social situations in which we engage. As such, the habitus is formed both through our experience of existing social practices as well as the potential changes of that practice when we apply underlying principles to our current situation. There are mutual contributions from established practices and our own interpretation of that practice. The dynamic quality of the creation of habitus described by Bourdieu suggests that mediated learning in adults may also take on the form of rejection of a modelled pattern of behaviour as the individual seeks to interpret accepted practice to their own situation. Here we find echoes of Aristotle's Phronēsis, or the knowledge needed to make decisions as to what practice is appropriate for a given situation.

Bourdieu also applied the notion of this dynamic knowledge creation to the social context of a teaching and learning environment when he considered the pedagogy of acquiring a practice. A practice, which was a *metier*, or profession, was acquired thus:

> … only by practising it at the side of a sort of guide or trainer, who assures and reassures, who sets an example and makes corrections by specifying, in a particular situation, precepts directly applicable to a particular case.

Brubaker 1993:216

This view of learning reaffirms the idea that there is a dialogue of knowledge creation between the teacher and learner, where the teacher exemplifies, but the learner then does not just imitate, but carries out their own actions which are then subject to more

input by the teacher. The description suggests an ebb and flow of knowledge creation and mirrors some of the features of the *legitimate peripheral participation* model proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) and discussed later in this chapter.

2.5.2 Language as a sign

Like Vygotsky, Bourdieu recognised the role of language or discourse in the creation of knowledge. For Bourdieu, discourse sustains the habitus by providing a *discourse of familiarity* which those in a social group would use to describe and explain social practices (Bourdieu 1977). When the member of the social group tries to explain practices to someone outside the social group they use outsider-oriented discourse, where specific examples are not mentioned but a quasi-theoretical reflection is offered.

Bourdieu, however, also viewed the discourse of practice in a slightly more negative light, focusing on its inadequacy in describing the lived reality of practice. In an example, he considers how the anthropologist studying social practices might gain misinformation. He explores how the expert, or native, through the very attempt at explaining the practices of their world provides a reconstruction through discourse that is inadequate in describing the real experience:

> Because the native is that much less inclined to slip into the language of familiarity to the extent that his questioner strikes him as unfamiliar with the universe of reference implied by his discourse, … it is understandable that anthropologists should so often forget the distance between learned reconstruction of the native world and the native experience of that world, an experience which finds expression only in the silences, ellipses, and lacunae of the language of familiarity.

> Bourdieu 1977:18

Such reservations about the role of discourse contrasts with Vygotsky's more positive view of the role of discourse as the ultimate creator of signs through language. However, Bourdieu's points bring into relief a salient element of teacher education programmes such as the one experienced by the participants in this study. In a formal learning setting the knowledgeable other, in this case the tutor, will

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usually attempt to explain teaching or teacher knowledge using a discourse of familiarity which may contain terminology or conceptual lexis. Considerations of how effective this discourse is in contributing to learning may be informed by some of the questions raised by Bourdieu. He elaborated some of the issues by developing the idea of *learned ignorance* and this concept is explored in the next section.

2.5.3 Learned ignorance

Bourdieu was not uncritical of the learning that occurs through social practice. His idea of habitus continued to recognise the existence of a purer form of knowledge, perhaps closer to the Cartesian artefact or Aristotelian Epistēmē. His concern was that the knowledge gained through practice could become what he called a *native theory* (théorie indigene) and Bourdieu identifies this as learned ignorance, "a mode of practical knowledge not comprising knowledge of its own principles" (Bourdieu 1977:19).

In describing the development of learned ignorance, Bourdieu highlighted issues relevant to teacher education as outlined in the previous section. The master, or expert, in order to explain their unconscious or tacit practice constructs a series of *moves* or "artificially isolated elements of behaviour" (Bourdieu 1977:19). In doing so, the expert draws attention to key moves rather than the principle from which these moves and, more importantly, all equally possible moves can be generated. Thus the generative quality of habitus is undermined since what is learned is one move rather than the reasoning behind that move. Using a metaphor from linguistics, Bourdieu compared learned ignorance to a "semi-learned grammar" (Bourdieu 1977:20). By not understanding the whole grammar, the learner is unable to generate new language/practices.

Bourdieu judged native theories as potentially dangerous. He was primarily concerned with the impact on the expert, who would become ignorant of the objective truth about their practical mastery. He also highlighted that native theories can "set up social practices or norms" (Bourdieu 1997:19) which take away understanding rather than adding to it. In other words we follow a practice without understanding the theory behind it. For an investigation into learning about teaching, the notion of learned ignorance highlights the need to acknowledge a difference

between the *moves* of teaching and the *principles* behind the moves. His concern finds a further reiteration in some of the questioning of concepts of practical knowledge which are discussed in Chapter three.

Bourdieu's concern about learned ignorance can be linked back to the categories of knowledge as defined by Aristotle and outlined at the start of this chapter. Epistēmē, a theoretical knowledge, Technē and Phronēsis a practical knowledge and knowledge of how to apply it well to a situation, are all part of Bourdieu's habitus. Although he incorporates different forms of knowledge, the concept of learned ignorance confirms a preoccupation with the fear that the separation of the moves (practical) from the theory means we are in danger of learning one without the other and it is the theoretical knowledge whose absence is deplored. I will return to topic of separating moves and theory in this chapter when considering the notions of reification and repertoires and in Chapter three when considering the value of scripts and procedures in professional learning.

2.5.4 Yesterday's man (or woman)

A further aspect of Bourdieu's view of social learning which is illuminating for this study concerns the notion of the accumulation of knowledge over time. As humans we are part of different social groups throughout our lives. It is recognised in the social learning paradigm, therefore, that learning is not restricted to the time frame that might be investigated in a study of learning. Bourdieu (1977) recognised that the ongoing interplay between society and the individual which forms and reforms our habitus does not just take place in the present. One of the features of habitus was that it "mediated between past influences and present stimuli" (Wacquant 1998:220). In other words, part of the social context that impacted on our knowledge creation is the knowledge that has been accumulated over time and is in us at that moment when we encounter new knowledge:

> In each of us, in varying proportions, there is part of yesterday's man; it is yesterday's man who inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result.

> Bourdieu 1977:79

In Bourdieu's view, it is the accumulation of prior learning that is dominant over present learning. His argument above is that the quantity of past experience will overwhelm that of the present. The recognition accorded to prior knowledge is important in the investigation of the nature of the impact of what the learner brings to a new situation. Bourdieu's identification of the longitudinal nature of learning is an important consideration for this study. Its importance is investigated in detail in Chapter three when considering the fact that most individuals have a lifelong experience of the notion of *teacher* and *teaching* through the act of being a learner. They have accumulated much prior learning before they even begin to experience the formal event of a teacher education course.

2.6 Learning as legitimate peripheral participation

Both Vygotsky and Bourdieu offer paradigms of social learning that would provide useful models for understanding the learning of trainees on a teacher education programme as investigated in this study. To augment these insights, I now consider a model of learning in social groups which could be said to be closer to the group experience in this study: *legitimate peripheral participation* proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991). As is discussed below, the model provides a clearer paradigm of the process of learning and it offers more insights into the roles of others who might contribute to our learning. In addition, the model was conceptualised in contexts that are more closely related to professional learning, which is considered in depth in Chapter three.

2.6.1 Communities of practice and participation

The concept of *communities of practice* as proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) described how specific groups of people act as a learning environment, where the new or newer members of the group learned through gradually participating in practices, a process which Lave and Wenger described as *legitimate peripheral participation*.

> Legitimate peripheral participation is not itself an educational form … It is an analytical viewpoint on learning, a way of understanding learning.
>
> Lave & Wenger 1991:40

The proposed paradigm of learning in communities of practice through legitimate peripheral participation elicits a range of views in the literature, from its having an "immediate appeal and perceived usefulness across a range of situations" (Barton & Tusting 2005:2) to being "one of the most influential concepts to have emerged within the social sciences during recent years" or "a contested concept in flux" (Hughes et al 2007:1). There is no doubt that there are some shortcomings to the paradigm as a model of learning. There are, however, a number of important features that contribute to the analysis of learning in this study.

The initial conceptualisation by Lave and Wenger focused on clearly defined social groups: Yucatee midwives, Vai and Gola tailors, meat cutters and non-drinking alcoholics to name a few. The members of these groups were typically "old timers" or "masters" who were experts in the practice of the group and "newcomers", who were not (Lave and Wenger 1991:92). Through gradual participation in the practices of the masters, they learned different skills but also began to assemble a general idea of what actually constituted the practice of a community, what the everyday tasks were, how they should dress and speak and what they needed to do in order to become full participants of the group.

Wenger later extended his examination to the work place practices of the claims department of an insurance company (Wenger 1998). This later publication described the learning in communities of practice in a more comprehensive manner. The subtitle of this work: learning, meaning and identity, underlines Wenger's view that learning involves the creation of meaning and the development of identity. The two key processes necessary for this to happen were *participation* and *reification*.

2.6.2 Participation

The concept of learning through experience is not new. Kolb (1983) and Schön (1983) among others have provided paradigms of learning through doing by experiencing a situation and then reflecting on it. The notion of *participation* is both broader and more substantial than simply having an experience. For Wenger, participation involved the action, the relationships with people in the community of practice in which the action took place and the way individuals carried their actions with them outside of the immediate context where the action took place.

> … participation goes beyond direct engagement in specific activities with specific people. It places the negotiation of meaning in the context of our forms of membership in various communities. It is a constituent of our identities. As such, participation is not something we turn on and off.

Wenger 1998:57

Wenger expected participation to take place within the boundaries of a community of practice. He recognised also that there could be "boundary encounters" (Wenger 1998:109) where there would be visits to other communities of practice. There could also be the introduction of new forms of practice by the participation of someone who comes from another community and who brings new ideas with them; a form of participation Wenger called *brokering*. Thus, a community of practice was not necessarily a closed group or a bound context. There was opportunity for learning from other groups, either through participation or by exchange of practice.

2.6.3 Limitations of participation

Fuller offers a critique to Wenger's model based on points that are of relevance to this study. The first is to question the "adequacy of participation" (Fuller 2007:22). Making participation the prime source of learning ignores the fact that learning will likely involve some acquisition of a knowledge product, artefact or Epistēmē. Even the claims processors in Wenger's study attended some formal training and encountered a form of knowledge more akin to a positivist view of a theoretical entity rather than simply practice. It is therefore to be expected that there will be some cognitive engagement with this theoretical knowledge by those in the community of practice which can go unrecognised in a focus on participation. If we propose that participation is the sole origin of learning then we may not consider a deliberate learning of theoretical concepts. This critique echoes Bourdieu's concern discussed above with learned ignorance. By concentrating on participation we may be limiting our investigation of learning to the accumulation of moves rather than moves combined with the theoretical underpinning.

A second limitation lies with the definition of the community of practice in which individuals participate. Wenger's model suggests a "container concept" (Fuller 2007:23) where there exist communities with a boundary, albeit with the opportunity

to learn from other communities through exchange and participation. However, using the example of a school teacher, Fuller illustrates that someone might be a member of the community of their department, the school and of the community of school teachers, which might be national or international. In addition, those within a community may have the feelings of *belonging* to different communities of practice and feel the draw of different practices that may impact on their learning. Fuller's critique of the more static notion of the community of practice is also related to the question of learning and identity, which I explore at the end of this chapter. For this study it is important to note that a community of practice can have very fluid boundaries and that those in the community may have a different sense of where they belong, what their values are and even whether they have a shared goal. On a teacher education programme it is easy to assume that all are focused on the development of the trainee teachers. In the section below on the impact of power on learning, I highlight the fact that the more benign quality suggested by the word "community" may not, in fact, reflect what happens in practice.

2.6.4 Participation and cognition

The concept of participation can lead us to think that in order for learning to take place a person must simply take part in an activity with a group. This might suggest that the individual is a passive observer. It is important to explore the role of cognition within participation to avoid the "blind non-cognitive alley in the study of learning" (Edwards 2005:51) in which participation is the only pre-requisite to learning. As discussed above, both Vygotsky and Bourdieu recognised that the individual was the co-creator of learning. Learning accordingly would be generative in that the individual would need to develop knowledge necessary to be able to use learning from one situation and apply it to a different one. Greeno (1997) and Edwards (2005) considered a key weakness of the participation model to be the problem of transfer, or "how patterns of knowledgeable behaviour are built up in one setting and applied to a new setting" (Edwards 2005:56). It is important not to limit the consideration of learning to simply doing what is observed in one given situation. Rather the individual participates and observes, but then has to engage cognitively to make decisions about what to apply in a new situation and how to apply it. Thus the ebb and flow between the social group and individual cognition is preserved.

Otherwise social learning becomes pure replication without change, modification or development.

2.6.5 Cognition and discord

A pertinent example of how the individual may have agency in participation is in the way they might disagree or refuse to participate fully, using discord as part of their cognitive engagement. Fuller (2007) makes the point that participation engenders an image of harmony and stability and can lead to enculturation. Participation can suggest that the participant does not have the ability to transform practice and represents a more conservative view of learning. Engeström (2001) proposes a model of participation which he calls *expansive learning*. In this model, participants begin by recognising and learning the norms but then some individuals begin to question the norms and, through this, create new learning. The model is based on a study of learning in a hospital setting.

> As the contradictions of an activity system are aggravated, some individual participants begin to question and deviate from its established norms. In some cases this escalates into collaborative envisioning and a deliberate collective change effort. … A full cycle of expansive transformation may be understood as a collective journey through the *zone of proximal development* of the activity.

> Engeström 2001:137

Engeström's model reimagines the theme which has run through this chapter; how social learning theory can admit the individual to the process. For Engeström the tension is mitigated by recognising and valuing the need for the individual to contest what the social norm is. Discord and disagreement are part of the core processes of learning. Whereas for Vygotsky learning was cooperative and collaborative and Bourdieu recognised the joint role of individual and social group, but emphasised that the individual will reformulate and adapt as necessary to a situation; here we see the individual's right to reject and contest in a very deliberate manner. It suggests that any investigation of learning needs to consider processes by which knowledge was prevented from reaching an individual through that individual's own volition.

Expansive learning also provides a different way of envisaging Vygotsky's notion of ZPD. As highlighted earlier in this chapter, Vygotsky imagines the journey from what the child can potentially do to what can be done with the assistance of a more competent person. Such assistance is given to promote the learning of the child. Expansive learning on the other hand acknowledges that the journey may be accomplished by engaging

> multi-voicedness, where a multitude of views and interests negotiate and conflict, creating trouble and innovation.

> Botha 2011:64

Such conflicts "tend to motivate innovation and change" (Botha 2011:66) and contribute to learning. The existence of these conflicts is also more congruent with the world of an adult, who will encounter different views and perspectives rather than those in the protective company of the parent or carer. The value placed on discord in expansive learning suggests that an investigation of occurrences of conflicting pieces of knowledge may provide a helpful lens through which learning might be better understood.

2.7 Reification

In considering participation as an origin of learning, one critique echoed Bourdieu's disquiet with the idea that concentrating on moves (practical knowledge) might lead to the ignorance of the overarching theoretical perspectives which validated these moves. If we think of Bourdieu's moves as participatory acts, I now consider one of the means by which the individual may apply learning from one participatory act to another and potentially create new knowledge. Vygotsky explored the use of *tools* and *signs* as a means of fixing new learning within the learner. An extension of this process can be found in Wenger's concept of *reification* which is:

> producing objects that congeal … experience into 'thingness'.

> Wenger 1998:58

Wenger expresses how reification involves making the abstract concrete. We endow the practices we observe with an objective label that makes it our identified reality,

we *reify* a practice. Reification involves the observation of something that happens in our community of practice, parcelling it in a linguistic package and thus making this practice into a concrete entity that we can take out and apply to other situations. Edwards (2005) also acknowledged the way in which using terms that carried key concepts was part of the process in which participants made sense of these concepts. Giving practices a name helped the individual to understand them and to learn them. In his study of the claims department of an insurance company, Wenger (1998) recognised that reification could also happen through a physical object, such as a computer programme or a form. These objects act as a standard incarnation of practice and facilitate the individual's participation in that practice. It could also be argued that they bind the individual to that practice.

The power of mantras and memes was discussed earlier and reification as a concept is no less powerful. In understanding this power, I was struck by the illustrative example of the acclaimed play and film, "A Few Good Men". The example, by the seriousness of its context, seemed to encompass the influence of reification on learning and the potential for enculturation engendered by participation.

During the trial of two marines for assaulting another marine, the defendants claim that they were asked to administer a "Code Red", an established form of internal discipline within the marine corps. This is contested by the prosecution, who claim no such code exists.

Captain Jack Ross (JR) for the prosecution questions Corporal Barnes (JB), a marine stationed with the defendants at Guantanamo Bay (Gitmo) asking him to identify where in the marine handbook he can find the instructions for a Code Red.

> **JR:** Corporal Barnes, I'm a marine, is there no book, no manual or pamphlet or set of rules or regulations that lets me know that as a marine one of my duties is to perform Code Reds?

> **JB:** No Sir, no book Sir.

> **JR:** No further questions.

Lieutenant Daniel Caffey (DC) (for the defence) – taking the same book previously presented: Corporal, would you turn to the page in this book that says where the Mess Hall is.

JB: Well Lieutenant Caffey, that's not in the book Sir.

DC: You mean to say that in all your time in Gitmo you've never had a meal?

JB: No Sir, three squares a day Sir.

DC: I don't understand. How did you know where the Mess Hall was if it's not in this book?

JB: Well I guess I just followed the crowd at chow time Sir.

Sorkin 1992

The prosecution argument lies in proving that there is no such thing as a Code Red, while the defence insists that Code Red was a real practice, not found in any handbook but reified by the community of practice made up of the marine squadrons stationed in Cuba. The example of the eating facility is used to illustrate the point that the marine in question has knowledge that is not written down but is nonetheless present. This knowledge has come from observing the community's practice, following them to the eating facility. More powerfully in the play/film is the idea that the illegal practice of disciplining a marine through torture is knowledge throughout the ranks because it is a practice engaged in by all, but never spoken about or written down. It is reified knowledge and all the more horrific because of this.

In the workplace and within teaching, practices are often reified in a range of *procedures* for carrying out professional practice. The use of procedures and scripts is discussed at more length in Chapter three. However, it is worth noting here that such procedures exemplify Vygotskian signs, acting like the knot in the handkerchief, reminding the individual of the correct practice to follow.

2.8 Benign and unbenign relationships

For learning in a community of practice to be a success, the relationship between the masters and newcomers should support the learning process. Lave and Wenger

(1991) also identified the role played by *peers* or *near peers*, those who were closer to the newcomer in terms of knowledge. In many of their examples, peers played as important a role as the masters in the learning of the newcomer. As mentioned earlier, the very use of the term "community" suggests a group which is unified by commonality, be it values or shared goals and outcomes.

One of the critiques of the model of peripheral participation is its lack of exploration of the "unbenign" (Hughes et al 2007:11) quality of relationships and the one between the master and newcomer in particular. Lave and Wenger (1991) assume that the masters' role is one of support and that they have a vested interest in the success of their learners. In fact, in some learning situations the opposite may be true. For example, the success of a newcomer in a role may actually usurp the position of the master. It is of note that Lave and Wenger's work (1991) focused on groups who were learning what could be described as less competitive practices. It could therefore be assumed that the masters were invested in the development of the newcomers to take on a future role as master. Within current contexts of work, for example, the development of an employee's skills might pose a real and significant threat to the status and continuing employment of their peers and bosses. We can, therefore, not assume that members of the community of practice have benign motives.

Fuelling the potential for the relationships within a community of practice to be unbenign is the fact that there is not an even distribution of power (Barton & Tusting 2005, Hughes et al 2007). The master is likely to have some control over whether the learner is successful. This control often finds its realisation in assessment; the master is given the role of assessing the performance of the newcomer and evaluating the success of their practice. In some cases, the need of the newcomer to succeed is very strong and this gives increased power to the master. Such an imbalance of power between master and newcomer is likely to impact, for example, on how the learner reacts to advice or accepts the behaviours the master is exemplifying as valid or not.

The importance of such power in a community of practice is frequently highlighted. (Barton & Tusting 2005, Hughes et al 2007). The masters have the ability to confer legitimacy on the newcomers. If learning is to be a negotiation, then clearly some of

the negotiators have more power than others. It is therefore possible that newcomers will engage in imitation and not reproduction in the Bourdieu sense. This might be because to actively change what has been instructed or modelled risks disapproval from those in the community with the power to legitimatise, or in an assessed programme of study, award a pass grade. Newcomers/learners may not wish to contest or question the knowledge they are presented with and thus lose out on opportunities for expansive learning as described by Engeström (2001) and discussed above. The opportunity to question the norms presented in the practice of the community is limited as is the possibility for the individual to engender more "expansive learning" (Engeström 2001). Another possibility is that the learners will adhere to the norms in the community when under scrutiny, but will not transfer these norms to their learning and will forget the practices when they move to another community of practice.

A further aspect of power relationships within a community of practice is the presence of competition. This is significantly impactful when we consider an example from sport (Owen-Pugh 2007) but no less present in other learning situations. Whereas Lave and Wenger (1991) saw learning processes as comodifying, a study of practices in sport shows the importance of competitive working both as a positive influence on learning and also the trigger of emotion and complex affective states that result from the "comparative evaluation of self and other" (Owen-Pugh 2007:89). Communities of practice can work to expel or marginalise those newcomers who do not perform to the required standards. It is easy to think of competition in a learning setting where sport is involved, but less obvious to think of it in a more traditional classroom based setting with adults. It would be naïve, however, to make an assumption that relationships within any social group are purely altruistic and that everyone is invested in the learning of others.

2.9 Learning and identity

In many of the sections in this chapter which explore social learning, views are expressed that learning is partly the development of identity. Wenger (1998), Edwards (2005), Hughes et al (2007) all see learning as a path towards the construction of an individual's identity. Wenger explains:

Because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming – to become a certain person or, conversely, to avoid becoming a certain person. Even the learning that we do entirely by ourselves eventually contributes to making us into a specific kind of person. We accumulate skills and information, not in the abstract as ends in themselves, but in the service of an identity.

Wenger 1998:215

The link between learning and identity is also apparent in the literature on professional learning that is considered in Chapter three. The notion of *professional identity* or even a narrower *teacher identity* is raised frequently in the literature. Fuller's (2007) view that we all participate in different communities of practice highlights the fact that identity is not necessarily a bound entity.

I experience some difficulty with the use of the term identity and in particular with its place in this study. I have recorded an example from my own learning experiences in my research scrapbook to explore this difficulty. When undertaking a leadership training programme, I was asked by the facilitator, as part of an awareness activity, to write down the answer to seven questions. He then proceeded to ask the same question eight times: "Who are you?" In recreating my answers, I remembered the following:

1. Woman
2. Educator
3. Animal lover
4. Runner
5. Leeds United fan
6. Positive thinker
7. Irish

(scrapbook)

These answers framed a discussion about our own identity in relation to the way we treat others who may be different. I found that the answers, in retrospect, crystallised my difficulties with the notion of identity in this study. The multifaceted nature of my answers highlights the multifaceted nature of identity. Some aspects relate to

learning, some are a result of geography (7) or happenstance (5). There is a physical (4) element as well as cognitive ones. This complexity is, of course, the nature of being human. However, it also creates considerable difficulty in matching identity with the narrow experience of learning in one specific context. It might be possible to discern aspects of the growing identity of one person, in a specific situation, with a specific group, at this time, in this organisation. Such a concept seems to reduce the notion of identity to the absurd.

We can find this complexity and absurdity represented in the way individuals present themselves on social media. Social networking interfaces ask participants to produce a profile. In my scrapbook I recorded examples from my Twitter timeline of those I follow. They include: cyclist, columnist, divinity, runner, fan, welder by day, rogue, mother, book-lover. Such words are epithets ascribed by individuals to themselves, an indicator of their self-appraised identity. Whilst there is an element of fun and perhaps audacity in all of these epithets, they are an illustration of the complex and mutable nature of identity, even when we are defining it ourselves.

I will address the concept of professional and teacher identity more fully in the next chapter. I wished to outline at this stage a concern in a more general sense with using the concept and term "identity creation" as a representation of learning.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the insights gained from the literature on constructs of knowledge and how we learn in a general sense, not specific to teachers or teaching. I have mentioned some of the key strands of the existing paradigms of learning. My focus throughout has been on how we learn as part of a social group, interacting with others. As discussed at the outset of this chapter, this is because the learning of my participants is indeed *situated.* They are participating in a course where they work with others and where they take part in the practice of teaching.

A number of key components of social learning have been highlighted as being pertinent to this study. The role of mediation in the Vygotsky sense of guidance by an individual as well as in the Lave and Wenger sense of peripheral participation is seen as important to understanding how trainees may learn through being guided in

their practice. Tools and signs, in particular, the reification of practices though naming, are also seen as important.

The chapter also sought to recognise that a focus on social learning did not ignore the role that the individual plays in the learning process. The potential tension between the individual and the social group was highlighted both in terms of a collaborative co-creation of learning as well as a more combative relationship in the notion of expansive learning.

I the next chapter I turn to literature which provides insights into professional, and more specifically, teacher knowledge and learning. The concepts and paradigms discussed will relate back to those discussed in this chapter. Thus this chapter has provided the foundation concepts key to understanding knowledge and learning as explored in this study. Chapter three provides further explication of these concepts within the context of what it means to know and learn as a teacher.

Chapter 3: Concepts of professional knowledge and learning

3.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter I considered a selection of views of knowledge and learning in a more generic sense. At the centre of this review, acting as fulcrum around which other theoretical perspectives pivoted, was the theme of social learning, highlighting how individuals learned with and through others. This view of learning was given pre-eminence as it recognises the role played by the social context and the individuals in the social group where learning takes place. It represents well the situation of participants in this study who are engaged in a group learning activity, namely a teacher education programme.

As emphasised in Chapter two, more general views of knowledge and learning were discussed in order to provide foundation paradigms relevant to this study. Thus in this chapter some themes re-emerge, this time within literature related to the knowledge and learning for professions in the broader sense and to the teaching profession in the narrower sense.

The use of the term *professional* here relates specifically to the idea of knowledge and learning that enables an individual to engage in a professional role, for this study; the profession of teacher. It is the "propositional knowledge that underpins or enables professional action" (Eraut 1994:15). This distinction between professional knowledge and knowledge considered in a more general sense is explained by Lave and Wenger (1991) through the example of the difference between learning physics and learning to be a physicist.

> … in most high schools there is a group of students engaged over a substantial period of time in learning physics. … There are vast differences between the ways high school physics students participate in and give meaning to their activity and the way professional physicists do. The actual reproducing community of practice, within which schoolchildren learn about physics, is not the community of physicists but the community of schooled adults.

> Lave and Wenger 1991:99

Thus, learning the *subject matter*, physics, is distinct from learning the *profession*: physicist. It is the latter learning of the profession and the way professional communities give meaning to their activity which is considered in this chapter.

3.1 Structure of the chapter

This study takes place within a very specific context, a teacher education programme with distinctive features. In the first chapter I outlined the origins and current parameters of the programme, recognising that it is one of a plethora of programmes which "makes" teachers of English language and of other subjects. To acknowledge the importance of this specified context I first look at literature which considers the processes of teacher education courses. I look at research on this specific CELTA course and other courses, to look for insights as to how a course focus can help with the understanding of teacher learning. Thus the first part of the chapter considers the context within which learning to be a teacher might take place.

Having established relevant insights gained from the literature on the course context, I then move on to consider views in the literature on what constitutes teacher knowledge and learning. I deal with the context initially and separately in recognition of the fact explained in Chapter one that the course itself has specific features which set it apart from other courses. Thus I explore what insights can be gained from looking at the course as an object of study itself.

When dealing with knowledge and learning, as was the case in Chapter two, I do not necessarily separate insights in both areas. As stated a number of times, taking a particular view of knowledge assumes a certain view of learning and vice versa. As Freeman explains:

> One involves the developmental question of how individuals learn to teach; the other involves the epistemological question of how teachers know what they know to do what they do … Clearly these two areas of research are interrelated and inform one another. In fact, one might well argue that it is difficult to conceptualize how teachers learn without some notion of what it is they are learning; thus that the process and its focus or object are mutually defining.

Freeman 2002:1

The sections on knowledge and learning begin by considering concepts of *earlier* knowledge, that is to say the *prior* knowledge which participants bring with them to a programme. It is an important area to consider since the profession of teaching, as opposed to other professions, has the more unusual feature of being familiar to everyone who has attended school. Discussion of the extent to which this prior knowledge interacts or interferes with learning on a teacher education course is salient to this study.

The subsequent sections consider the different iterations of the theory/practice dichotomy that permeates much of the discussion about professional learning. This debate in the literature echoes the three Aristotelian categories of Epistēmē, Technē and Phronēsis discussed in Chapter two. I consider views that favour different types of knowledge as the more important element of teacher knowledge. I then explore models which seek to move to a better understanding of practical knowledge as well as the role of reflective practice, espoused in the literature as a potential tool for unifying theory and practice. At the end of the previous chapter I addressed the concept of identity and some of the difficulties I experience in using it as a tool and a term for examining learning. Building on these points, I then further explore what has been said about professional or teacher identity in relation to learning and discuss potential relevance to this study.

3.2 The course perspective

The first area to consider is literature which examines teacher knowledge and learning by considering the instrument of learning: the teacher education programme or course. In Chapter one, I highlighted the fact that participants in this study would be taking the same course, which was homogenous in most of its features. The similarity of context could, in itself, throw up specific areas worthy of investigation. In the literature there have been studies that are contained within the remit of one course. Many of these are focused on the development of teacher beliefs, an area considered in some depth later in this chapter. Urmston (2010) has looked at the development of beliefs and knowledge on a BA in teaching English in Hong Kong. Busch (2010) looks at the same phenomenon on a second language acquisition

course in California, as does Mattheoudakis (2006) looking at a specific English language teaching programme at a Greek university.

In these studies, the course itself is largely incidental to the study and its outcomes. The course provides the place and context within which the participants reside rather than an object for exploration in itself. One reason which may render a focus on the course as uninteresting is the probable lack of homogeneity in the variety of teacher education programmes across school sectors (primary, secondary, tertiary) not to mention across countries. Thus conclusions about one course would be difficult to replicate in another setting.

It is recognised that each CELTA course will be unique as it will take place at a specific institution with a unique group of people. However, there is an expectation of some similarity due to a prescribed syllabus, a prescribed set of course activities and centralised quality assurance, all of which allow for some consideration of how the course as an entity contributes to learning. I will therefore now consider some of the studies which have explicitly investigated the CELTA course as a context and then discus some of the outcomes of these investigations.

3.2.1 A homogeneous setting: the CELTA course

As outlined in the introductory chapter, there is a dissonance between the large numbers of people undertaking the CELTA course, about 12,000 a year, and the "dearth of published research into the phenomenon" of such courses (Ferguson and Donno 2003:26). The imbalance between the importance of the CELTA course in terms of volume of participants and its appeal as a focus of research may rest in its relatively short length or its strong focus on practical teaching skills. Nevertheless, studies that have been done provide some insights into how research from the course perspective might provide theoretical paradigms that could be useful for this study.

3.2.2 The length and structure of the course

The first theme from studies about the CELTA course which emerges from the literature is a focus on the short length of the course, which, it is suggested, limits trainees' learning to a bound set of classroom skills. The course format is sometimes

74

criticised for being a *toolkit* approach to teaching, where teachers learn a set of techniques which they can bring out to use in each teaching situation. This theme is important to explore as it reframes the concepts considered in the previous chapter around the use of *tools* and *signs* (Vygotsky 1978), learning reduced to a series of *moves* (Bourdieu 1977) and the notion of *reified practice* (Lave and Wenger 1991).

Ferguson and Donno (2003) investigated the place of the CELTA course in English language teacher training in a more general way. They highlighted the fact that the short length of the course limited its effectiveness. In particular, it did not allow trainees to experience the range of contexts in which English language teaching can be found and that its explicit focus on English language knowledge may favour the native English teacher. Hobbs (2013), through looking at the syllabus as well as undertaking the similar Trinity TESOL course as a trainee, investigated the survival ethos of the course. She gathered data from one group of trainees undertaking the course and compared this with views of trainees who had completed the course two years previously and had been working as English language teachers. She concluded that the "performance-based philosophy of the course" (Hobbs 2013:163) meant that trainees' primary concern was survival and the acquisition of "survival skills and the 'what' of language teaching" (Hobbs 2013:172), which she felt was a negative aspect of the course. A similar criticism Hobbs makes to the Ferguson and Donno (2003) study is that this focus makes the course more likely to favour the native speaker, as little time is devoted to exploring bilingual teaching and different teaching contexts. Again the conclusion is that the length of the course limits its effectiveness as important issues such as "different teaching contexts, further study into explicit language awareness, and longer supervised teaching practice" cannot be accommodated. (Hobbs 2013:173).

The limitations of time available on the CELTA course highlighted in the Hobbs and Ferguson and Donno studies accentuates the notion that what trainees may learn is something reductive; it is not the full learning that is necessary to fulfil the professional role of a teacher. We return, therefore, to the question of whether the learning is *generative*, whether what is learned can generate new knowledge through being applied to new situations. As discussed in Chapter two, a critique of *participation* as a model of learning is that the individual only learns what is used in

one act of participation and is not able to reuse it in another context. The focus on the limitation of time on the CELTA course in these studies further underlines the importance of investigating the possible generative quality of participants' learning.

3.2.3 Learning and discord

Engeström's (2001) model of *expansive learning* within communities of practice, explored in Chapter two, recognised the importance of discord, where participants begin to reject some of the learning they are experiencing and through this process of rejection create new learning. Hobbs (2013), in looking at the way trainees sought to implement survival strategies on the course, identifies the element of performance, where trainees were acting out the types of teaching activity expected and therefore likely to win favour with the trainers, who were assessing them. The idea of performing to win favour contrasts sharply with a paradigm where individuals are encouraged to critique and reject the new knowledge they are presented with.

The performance element highlighted by Hobbs is further examined in Brandt's study of the feedback element of the course and to highlight the fact that although it is meant to enhance the development of trainees' skills, trainers identified the need for "collecting evidence to justify grades, at the expense of developmental feedback" (Brandt 2006:361). The recommendation of the study is that trainees should be allowed more time for practice within pre-service courses generally, though not specifically within the specific short, intensive, pre-service TESOL courses such as CELTA. The recommendation suggests that increasing the opportunity for practice would reduce a performance focus. Although Brandt does not specifically identify more discord as a corollary of more practice, an opportunity for more focus on trying things out rather than replicating desired behaviours in the classroom supports the view that more discord might be generated.

3.2.4 Innovations within the homogeneous CELTA model

Some studies of the CELTA course, rather than highlighting its limitations, suggest innovations that could be implemented to improve its effectiveness. Consideration of these innovations also provides insights into learning on the CELTA.

In Lave and Wenger's (1991) conceptualisation of a community of practice, the members were the master, the new participant and the new participant's peers. Fuller's (2007) view was that we need to consider the different communities of practice an individual may belong to and consider wider communities. Gray's (1998) study of the CELTA suggests an innovation that encourages us to expand the membership by including individuals who seem initially on the outside of the community.

In his study, Gray used language learners' diaries as a part of feedback to trainees on one CELTA course. He used the diaries as another form of feedback and trainees were able to see the views of their learners as part of the feedback sessions. He found that allowing learners to input directly into the feedback on trainees' lessons generated a dialogue that is not normally present on the course. This dialogue allowed trainees to "plan more effective classes based on learner feedback and learner needs" (Gray 1998:36). The conclusions support the idea that we can benefit from including those who are impacted on by the work of the community of practice in our consideration of learning. In Lave and Wenger's (1991) seminal study, for example, no account is taken of the mothers who formed the practice base for the Yucatee midwives learning in their community of practice.

Innovation can also involve the deliberate foregrounding of implicit features of the course. Hockly's (2000) study introduced a very deliberate attempt to make trainer modelling, where lessons *for* trainees would provide a template *of* the lessons which trainees would teach, an integral part of the course. On most CELTA courses trainers are encouraged to teach the input sessions using strategies that the trainees could use in their own lessons. Hockly tried to do this in a very deliberate fashion, structuring sessions with specific activities trainees could use later. Her motivation was her belief that an apprenticeship model of teacher education receives "bad press" as it seems to "foreground the acquisition of techniques at the expense of reflection and discovery" (Hockly 2000:118). On two CELTA courses she experimented with a "cyclic, model-based approach" (Hockly 2000:120), where trainees were exposed to deliberate modelling of teaching strategies when they were in the role of learners during the input sessions of the course. The positive impact of the modelling as outlined by Hockly suggests that the acquisition of techniques is an

important aspect of teacher learning and that viewing an expert using these techniques can lead to learning. These points will be revisited in the section on scripts and routines and on imitation in later sections of this chapter.

3.2.5 The individual within the specified context

The studies considered above illustrate that taking a course perspective can provide some insights into aspects of teacher learning. Two further examples of studies based on a CELTA course highlight insights gained by constraining research within the boundary of one learning event, the course.

Borg's (2005) case study of the development in pedagogic thinking of a pre-service teacher follows one trainee on a CELTA course and looks at her development, including the impact of her pre-course beliefs. Through interviews over the course, Borg concludes that "in terms of beliefs about language and language learning … there was not a great deal of change in general ideas" (Borg 2005:13) and then offers some conclusions as to why this might be the case. The study is an example of considering professional learning as partly constituted by a change in beliefs and illustrates that the perceptions of individuals (in this case, one) on one learning event can provide valuable insights in the understanding of learning.

Gray and Morton (2010) have considered one *part* of the CELTA course and examined its impact on teacher learning. They analysed the collaborative planning activities of trainees and tutor in the *preparation activities* for their teaching practice. Through analysis of the interactions during the lesson planning activity they considered how much knowledge was developed and concluded that there was a strong focus on "knowledge of instruction" (Gray and Morton 2010:314), but that the process contributed significantly to the development of their identity as English language teachers. This study shows that there is some interaction between the learning of practical teaching *actions* and the wider development of teacher knowledge. It suggests a potential synergy between practical and theoretical knowledge that adds to the discussion on the theory/practice divide explored later in this chapter.

3.2.6 A course perspective: some conclusions

From the outset it has been argued that an important element of this study is its specific context and it is recognised that there are likely to be context-specific findings from the investigation of participants' knowledge and learning. It is valid, therefore, to highlight literature where the same course context, the CELTA, was investigated. While it is fully acknowledged that each course occurrence is unique, an overview of research into the CELTA reveals some interesting outcomes related to teacher learning.

Firstly, the outcomes show us the possibility of broadening or revisioning paradigms of learning within the course, as in Gray's (1998) work on including trainees within the concept of communities of practice. It also allows for a more focused view on one aspect of the learning process (Hockly 2000, Gray and Morton 2010), which, through their very narrowness, can help us dissect some of the learning concepts by allowing us to see singular examples. These studies support the approach of encouraging participants in this study to identify and discuss singular incidents of learning which they experience.

As a final point, these studies show an investigation of the course construct and processes as a worthwhile focus. There is much recognition in the previous chapter, and in this one, of the potential impact the individual person and the social group have on learning. These studies suggest that perhaps the constructed processes they go through on a CELTA may also play an important role.

3.3 Teacher knowledge

Much of the literature which investigates a course, as outlined above, focuses on the experience of trainees. Studies look at how the course or specific elements impact on trainees and, in some cases, suggest why this impact may not be a very positive one. Having established a potential value in looking at some of the processes participants may undergo, I will now discuss views of teacher or professional knowledge, something course participants and tutors hope to gain during the process of the course. The first aspect to consider is the teacher knowledge that participants have before they start any course of learning. The notion that participants new to the profession of teaching already have considerable knowledge

of teaching is well recognised in the literature and it is to the nature of this knowledge and its impact on learning during a teacher education programme that I now turn.

3.3.1 Teacher knowledge and the "Apprenticeship of Observation"

> We play school … Grace is always the teacher, Carol and I the students. We have to do spelling tests and sums in arithmetic; it's like real school, but worse, because we never get to draw pictures. We can't pretend to be bad, because Grace doesn't like disorder.

> Margaret Atwood   *Cat's Eye* p. 61

> What child cannot, after all, do a reasonably accurate portrayal of a classroom teacher's actions?

> Lortie 2002:62

From our earliest school-going years we acquire a view of what teaching is and what teachers do. We see this in children's role plays as described in the novel extract above. An important concept for consideration of teachers' learning is that of the Apprenticeship of Observation. This concept, proposed by Lortie (2002), describes how all of us have prior knowledge of teaching gleaned from our experience as a learner. He used the expression "Apprenticeship of Observation" to describe the activity of experiencing teachers and teaching from the point of view of the learner, estimated to be 13,000 hours on average in a lifetime.

What we observe during our long hours in the classroom as learners is not, according to Lortie, a reliable source. Speaking about the learners as observers Lortie comments;

> They are not likely to make useful linkages between teaching objectives and teacher actions; they will not perceive the teacher as someone making choices among teaching strategies. There is ample indication of affective response of liking and disliking, identifying with or rejecting, but there seems relatively little basis for assuming that students make cognitive differentiations and thoughtful assessments of the quality of teaching performances.

> Lortie 2002:63

The metaphor frequently used in discussions of the apprenticeship of observation is that of a *front of stage* view of teaching, without access to the myriad of decisions made in the production of a lesson; without access to the *backstage* view.

Lortie maintains, however, that despite its unreliability, the apprenticeship of observation is, nonetheless, very powerful.

> The student's learning about teaching, gained from a limited vantage point and relying heavily on imagination, is not like that of an apprentice and does not represent acquisition of the occupation's technical knowledge. It is more a matter of imitation, which, being generalized across individuals becomes tradition. It is a potentially powerful influence which transcends generations, but the conditions of transfer do not favour informed criticism, attention to specifics, or explicit rules of assessment.

> Lortie 2002:63

Lortie maintained that from this observation we all possess a range of beliefs about what teaching is and what teachers should do. These beliefs constitute a knowledge base; a sort of paradigm of what teaching is, responsible for the "preconceptions that student teachers hold about teaching" (Borg 2004:274). These beliefs about teaching echo Bourdieu's (1977) idea of *learned ignorance* discussed in the previous chapter. However, in this case it is not the experts in teaching who are diluting their knowledge to a series of unprincipled customs and behaviours, but rather the observers of the moves of teaching who are drawing conclusions about teaching and the teacher.

It is interesting to note that Lortie did not see a role for discourse in the learning of teachers. He did not envisage the emergence of a professional discourse as a vehicle for learning. Unlike some of the perspectives on learning described in the previous chapter, where language and discourse were intrinsic to learning, Lortie did not believe in a significant role for language once the teacher was in a placement or working context.

> Teaching is not like crafts and professions, whose members talk in a language specific to them and their work. Thus the absence of a common

technical vocabulary limits a beginner's ability to "tap into" a pre-existing body of practical knowledge. Without such a framework, the neophyte is less able to order the flux and color of daily events and can miss crucial transactions which might otherwise be encoded in the categories of a developed discourse.

Lortie 2002:73

It is recognised that knowledge gained from the apprenticeship of observation is likely to be different from the knowledge that is accessed through participation in a teacher education course. The literature highlights some of the key differences. The knowledge gained from the apprenticeship of observation has been described as "ready made recipes for action", "an intuitive understanding" (Borg, 2004:275) or "private theories", "rules of thumb" (Eraut 1994:59). This is in contrast to the more "public theories" (Eraut 1994:62) which are normally included in a teacher education programme. These would be based on research, published and therefore open to being contested. The private nature of what is gleaned from our observations is more likely to make this knowledge tacit and therefore uncontested.

Johnson extends the concept of teacher knowledge gained through observation to include, not only our experiences as a learner, but the "sum of the individual's prior experiences, the sociocultural contexts in which the learning takes place" (Johnson 2009:9). This suggests that any life experience can contribute to what Johnson describes as "largely unarticulated, yet deeply ingrained notions" about teaching and learning (language). (Johnson 2009:10). Eraut agrees that this knowledge base will include "knowledge of people" and "theories of human behaviour which will influence decisions taken in the classroom". (Eraut 1994:60). Such a widening of the concept to something akin to an apprenticeship of life relates well to Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *yesterday's man* [*sic*] being present in all of us. Part of this residue from the yesterday of our lives is a set of beliefs about what a teacher should do.

Eraut's distinction between private and public theories discussed above resonates some features of Aristotle's categories of knowledge. The public theories, based on research, relate to Aristotle's idea of theoretical knowledge, which had an objective and observable element. The private theories, which individuals glean from their

82

apprenticeship of observation, could be viewed as having elements of a practical wisdom or Phronēsis. Lortie would argue that the lack of understanding of the reasons behind teacher-observable behaviours would deem the knowledge lacking in wisdom. It may be, however, that our observations lead us to draw wise and valid conclusions about the teacher role and the moves of teaching. As we sit in our lessons observing our teachers, the conclusions we draw may constitute a cogent and insightful piece of knowledge.

3.3.2 Knowledge and belief

The supposed deficiencies in the conclusions we draw from our apprenticeship of observation have been highlighted above. It is suggested that insights are "gained from a limited vantage point … relying heavily on imagination" (Lortie 2002:63). Investigations into these insights tend to call them prior *beliefs* (Busch 2010, Lamie 2004). A belief may seem to be distinguishable from real knowledge in the sense that it has a subjective element and possibly an emotional one; the holder has an attachment to that belief.

However, I argue here that even if these beliefs are distinguishable from knowledge, they can be considered as part of that knowledge due to the potentially powerful impact they have on the learning of any teacher. The beliefs might be flawed, incomplete and tacit, but they nonetheless exert an influence over action and learning. Their impact is similar to learned knowledge and therefore they should be considered as part of teacher knowledge. Pejares recognises and agrees with this view:

> … cognitive knowledge, however envisioned, must also have its own affective and evaluative component. The conception of knowledge as somehow purer than belief and closer to the truth or falsity of a thing requires a mechanistic outlook not easily digested.

> Pejares 1992:301

The complexity of teacher knowledge means that keeping a more holistic view helps us to arrive at some conclusions as to what teachers might learn (Freeman 2002, Darling-Hammond & Bransford 2005). Part of that complexity lies in the fact that

knowledge and beliefs both exert an influence on any new learning. Although we may say that "beliefs are seen roughly as referring to personal values, attitudes and ideologies, and knowledge to a teacher's more factual propositions" (Verloop et al 2001:446), teacher knowledge has also been described as encompassing both of these.

> ... in the label "teacher knowledge", the concept "knowledge" is used as an overarching, inclusive concept, summarizing a large variety of cognitions, from conscious and well-balanced opinions to unconscious and unreflected intuitions. This is related to the fact that, in the mind of the teacher, components of knowledge, beliefs, conceptions, and intuitions are inextricably intertwined.
>
> Verloop et al 2001:446

My argument, therefore, is that we may identify what an individual gains from observing teachers as a belief, since we have no means of contesting or scrutinising what it is they believe and whether it demonstrates an understanding of teaching decisions, or is simply a form of learned ignorance in Bourdieu's (1977) sense. However, participants on a teacher education course will bring these beliefs with them and these beliefs will interact with the new knowledge gained on the programme. Since the interest of this study is the holistic view of what constitutes teacher knowledge and how teachers learn, it would be unhelpful to focus on whether the underpinning of any teacher action is a belief or knowledge. The important feature is that it impacts on what the teacher does and forms part of their learning.

3.4 Changing beliefs gained from the apprenticeship of observation

The most common way teacher beliefs gained from the apprenticeship of observation have been investigated is through a consideration of how these beliefs have *changed* as a result of formal training. The focus on change assumes that whatever trainees bring to the course needs to be acted upon by the course and altered in some way. In addition, a focus on change may hinder the development of an understanding of that change, namely, learning. As Desforges comments, teacher

education programmes "need to be based on an understanding of the mechanism of change rather than the milestones." (Desforges 1995:388)

Wideen et al (1998) point out the fact that researchers approach the issue of prior knowledge "to change beliefs rather than build on them". (Wideen et al 1998:144). In fact, they argue that researchers and teacher educators come to a training course with equally fixed beliefs about teaching. These beliefs may, in turn, have resulted from their own apprenticeship of observation or are based on a given *syllabu*s or *set of standards* that define what good teaching is. The desire to change the beliefs of their trainee teachers seems strongest when the trainee holds beliefs that promote a more didactic teaching approach, suggesting a belief by teacher educators that there is something intrinsically wrong with this approach.

The number of studies which approach the issue of prior knowledge as a *before and after* view are numerous and underline the interest in change discussed above. A common tool used in these studies is a *Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory* (BALLI). Busch (2010) Lamie (2004), Mattheoudakis (2006), Peacock (2001) and Urmston (2010) all use this tool to identify the beliefs trainees hold prior to starting the course. They then administer the BALLI at the end of the course and the changes are noted. Focusing on change evidences an underlying assumption that change is desirable and promotes the view that trainees' beliefs are inevitably wrong. The strongest articulation of this view is Peacock's 2001 study with a group of English language teachers in Hong Kong. He states that "it is important to work on any **mistaken** trainee beliefs" (my emphasis) (Peacock 2001:177) and goes on to conclude that:

> It is important to investigate trainee teacher beliefs and then work on them if necessary, because detrimental beliefs may affect their teaching, and therefore, their students' language learning for decades.
>
> Peacock 2001:181

Peacock's identification of *detrimental beliefs* that trainee teachers may hold is in stark contrast to the notion of Engeström's (2001) expansive learning model discussed in the previous chapter, where *discord* between the learner and what was

being learned was seen as key to generative learning. Considering beliefs as material to *work on* rather than work with suggests an intolerance of discord.

The application of the concept of apprenticeship of observation in the literature indicates that a focus on change alone can lead to an overemphasis on seeing the course as a means of *fixing* what is wrong with trainees' beliefs about teaching. A more useful approach is to consider *how* prior knowledge interacts with new learning, leaving open the possibility that such interaction allows for rejection and disharmony. This approach in the literature is now discussed.

3.4.1 Teacher prior knowledge and learning on the course

> So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."
>
> F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, p. 192

Moving away from a focus on how we can change teachers' beliefs, a consideration of the way in which beliefs interact with learning can provide a useful way to work with the notion of the apprenticeship of observation. Phipps and Borg acknowledge that "an extensive literature on teachers' beliefs exists, both in education generally and specifically in relation to language teaching" (Phipps and Borg 2009:381). Their summary includes some of the issues discussed above in connection to the apprenticeship of observation and others which will now be considered. Their key points are that beliefs about teaching:

> … may be powerfully influenced by teachers' own experience as learners ... act as a filter through which teachers interpret new information and experience ... may outweigh the effects of teacher education … can exert a persistent long-term influence on teachers' instructional practices … are ... not always reflected in what teachers do in the classroom … interact bi-directionally with experience … have a powerful effect on teachers' pedagogical decisions … strongly influence what and how teachers learn during language teacher education … can be deep-rooted and resistant to change.
>
> Phipps and Borg 2009:381

The strength and impact of prior experience outlined in the quote where beliefs "may be powerfully influenced (positively or negatively) by teachers' own experience as learners" (Phipps and Borg 2009:381) has already been discussed in the previous section in relation to Lortie's initial concept. What is of further interest here is that teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning:

> … act as a filter through which teachers interpret new information and experience ... (and) ... strongly influence what and how teachers learn during language teacher education"
>
> Phipps and Borg 2009:381

Phipps and Borg, in mentioning a filter, have begun to explore the mechanism by which prior knowledge and new learning interact. As stated in the previous section, an understanding of the process of interference or impact may provide a useful area of investigation in this study. It is therefore pertinent to consider further literature on the *way* prior knowledge and beliefs interact with the new learning which may be presented on a teacher education programme.

3.4.2 The immutability of prior knowledge

A starting point for considering the interaction between prior knowledge and new learning is the view that there is little or no interaction at all. This view of immutability is well represented in the literature. The "ingrained" or fixed nature of prior knowledge is widely acknowledged (Breen et al 2001, Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005, Tillema 1998). Breen et al describe the evolving of teacher "beliefs" formed experientially and therefore resistant to change. They maintain that what trainees have experienced concretely is likely to leave a more lasting impression than something they may be told to do or told about on a course.

Some studies are more optimistic about the possibility of ever changing these beliefs (Cabaroglu and Roberts 2000, Borg 2006), whereas others suggest that these beliefs are so resistant to change that it is unlikely we can influence them by putting teachers through a teacher education programme (Holt-Reynolds 1992, Numrich 1996) and that such programmes are simply "weak interventions" (Wideen et al

1998:144). Whether we see these beliefs as immutable obstacles to learning on a teacher education course or not, it is clear that they will act in some way with any learning event on the course. Prior knowledge, stored as schemas of what a teacher does and what teaching and learning is, will mean that course participants "tend to assimilate what is taught into pre-existing schemas" (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005:368).

It could be argued that views of the immutability of prior knowledge represent a pessimistic outlook for the role of teacher education. As a teacher educator it is dispiriting to think that whatever strategies I use, the impact on trainee teachers may be minimal. However, it is also possible to consider that perhaps suggestions that teacher education programmes are *weak interventions* are a result of a lack of understanding of how to make them strong interventions. Such an understanding may be enhanced by the outcomes of this study.

3.4.3 When prior knowledge meets new knowledge

Although there is much discussion in the literature of how much or little change occurs, less attention is paid to the *way* new and old knowledge interacts. Many use the metaphor of the *filter*. However, a filter can act in many different ways, separating out what is poisonous, what is too big, what tastes different. The metaphor already suggests that it is the complexity and nature of the interaction which is possibly more interesting than the way the filter *blocks* knowledge.

One piece of literature which investigates the interaction process and which is of particular relevance to this study is Cabaroglu and Roberts' study of 25 student teachers on a PGCE Secondary course in Modern Foreign Languages teaching. (Cabaroglu and Roberts 2000). Although the study is concerned with the inflexibility of beliefs, it problematises some of the issues around a focus on *change* which I have also highlighted above. The validity of using inventories such as the BALLI is questioned as they do not capture individual variations. It highlights that where "no significant difference appears in 'before and after' mean scores … there has been movement at individual level." (Cabaroglu and Roberts 2000:389).

Their study characterises the individual interactions between trainees' prior knowledge and their new learning. The first overall comment is on the constant interaction between the personal and the formal:

> … a constant traffic between personal meaning-making and the social validation or invalidation of these meanings. Thus student teachers' beliefs reflect the ways in which they make sense of an evolving identity: 'self-as-teacher'. They also mediate how they interpret information about learning and teaching and how they translate that information into their classroom practices.

> Cabaroglu and Roberts 2000:388

The two concepts here that are particularly interesting are "traffic between" and "mediation". These illustrate the constant to and fro between the personal belief and what is being presented in formal learning on the course which comes through in this study. The concepts also echo Bourdieu's (1977) conceptualisation of learning social practices through mediation, recognising the agency of the individual as discussed in the previous chapter. Cabaroglu and Roberts' findings identify different ways that trainees' beliefs can develop over the course, illustrating the complexity of the *filter* that has been often cited in other literature as a generalised description of what happens.

Other literature which attempts to decipher the way trainee prior knowledge interacts with new learning, focuses on the dual cognitive, or information-based, component and the evaluative, or opinion-based, component of the belief (Pejares 1992, Tillema 1998). On the one hand an individual will have an experience that will create a piece of information about the world, in this case teaching. The individual will form an evaluation of this information, which is likely to have an emotional element. Through this information and evaluation they will filter the new or partially new information that is available to them through the activities on the course. Breen et al (2001), while looking at the development of teachers' practice in a more general way, highlight the process of taking new knowledge into their practice through making a judgement on the new information, akin to the *mediation* mentioned in Cabaroglu and Roberts. Trainees thus develop a "sense of plausibility" (Breen et al 2001:496) by which to

judge whether or not new ideas, information or suggestions can be accepted into the knowledge and belief schema already developed. A suggestion, for example, on how to improve a teacher's practice could be rejected because it does not fit in with the information or evaluation held by the teacher. Tillema has also identified the creation of "valuable and plausible solutions to bridge the perceived discrepancy" between a teacher's beliefs and new, and possibly contradictory, information presented in a course. (Tillema 1998:223). The teacher will, in some way, make the new knowledge more plausible.

It is evident in all the literature considered in the section above that prior knowledge of teaching and the teacher role is an important area to consider. Views differ as to the extent to which this knowledge impacts on learning which might take place on a teacher education course. The more extreme view: very little changes in teachers when they undertake a course, potentially questions whether it is of any value for teachers to do such programmes. On a more optimistic note, other studies recognise that prior knowledge may act as a filter which would mediate, but not necessarily exclude, new knowledge. It is this potential new knowledge that I will now explore as I consider views of what actually constitutes the knowledge of teachers, which may include the beliefs gained from the apprenticeship of observation.

3.5 The Theory/Practice divide: dualism within teacher knowledge

The most significant debate about concepts of teacher knowledge is the notional divide between theory and practice. These two pillars of teacher knowledge are evident in textbook titles, for example the subtitle: "What teachers should learn and be able to do." (Darling-Hammond & Bransford 2005) echoing the fact that teacher knowledge will have some theoretical and some practical content. Where the effectiveness of teacher education programmes is called into doubt "many scholars have framed this problem in terms of a divide between theory and practice" (Korthagen 2010:99), indicating that researchers are concerned that the interplay between both somehow determines the success of such programmes. Notions of knowledge and practice are embedded in government-driven standards for teachers, often using the terms *skills* to refer to practical knowledge and *knowledge* to refer to theoretical knowledge.

The knowledge/practice divide mirrors discussions about knowledge in a more general way across centuries. As outlined in Chapter one, Aristotle's Epistēmē, Technē and Phronēsis identified scientific knowledge (Epistēmē) to be an essential part of wisdom and to be a purer type of knowledge, whereas craft (Technē) included action and the practical ability to produce something and Phronēsis, the wisdom to know how to act. A useful current contextualisation of the theory/practice debate can be found in Freeman's (2002) review of the changing perspectives on teacher knowledge in language teaching and Thiessen's (2000) overview of the development of thinking about teacher knowledge in relation to beginning teachers. Both contexts are relevant to this study.

Freeman looks back chronologically and identifies the 1970s as a time when;

> The teacher was viewed as a doer, as an implementer of other people's ideas – about curriculum, methodology, and even about how students learned.

> Freeman 2002:5

The teacher in this view is an implementer of theory through practice, but has no role in the creation of theory. The teacher does not question views about learning, but seeks to engage in behaviours that are seen as effective in terms of student learning. Thiessen characterises these as "impactful behaviours" (Thiessen 2000:517) because they can be seen to have a positive effect on learning.

Changing perspectives in the 80s and 90s meant that teacher knowledge was seen as a process of decision making. The teacher was seen to be cognitively engaging with theory and used this to make pedagogical decisions about what to do in the classroom. Theory was a means to pick from a range of teacher behaviours. Such a view was embraced partly because it:

> … created an easy, almost quasi-behavioural, unit of analysis that could be applied across multiple classroom settings, content areas, and levels of teaching experience.

> Freeman 2002:5

This period is identified by Thiessen as one where reflective practice became a secure tenet of teacher education, one where:

> Behaviours are not forsaken but instead subsumed by more robust models of frameworks for making sense of, solving problems in, or making decisions about working with students. It is not only concerned with what beginning teachers do, but also with how they think about what they do.

> Thiessen 2000:527

The current situation, as defined by Freeman, is one where "teacher learning is seen as negotiating identity and positioning knowledge" (Freeman 2002:10). The challenge posed by this view lies in the relative straightforwardness of the 1970s model described with easily quantifiable and teachable components and the more nebulous content of teacher knowledge described by Freeman as the current thinking. The complexity of the model and its capability for translation into teacher education content is clear from the description of teacher knowledge as:

> a complex, contingent and amorphous set of relationships among meaning, context of the mind, and public activity.

> Freeman 2002:10

In highlighting the positive aspects of this complexity, Freeman acknowledges the difficulty in implementation:

> The dilemma, then, is how to engage teachers in articulating and publicly representing the complexity of teacher learning

> Freeman 2002:11

This dilemma is of great importance in the way in which the learning of teachers is organised. If much of teacher knowledge lies in the interaction between the teachers' ability to make meaning from knowledge they are provided with on a course and the context of their teaching, then it would seem that this process goes beyond the parameters of a teacher education programme. However, there are some suggestions in the literature as to how we might reimagine teacher education to accommodate the complexity of teacher knowledge.

A solution to the public representation of this complexity lies, for Thiessen, in the way theory and practice is unified in teacher education. Thiessen calls for the theory (propositional knowledge) and practice (practical knowledge) to be combined and argues that the best way is for:

> ... the less prominent knowledge in the context of learning (practical knowledge in university settings, propositional knowledge in school settings) to receive sufficient attention to ensure that beginning teachers have multiple opportunities to integrate knowledge in both contexts.

> Thiessen 2000:529

Thiessen argues for more attention to be given to practical knowledge within the setting where it is less obviously addressed (universities) a more theoretical knowledge to feature in the professional context (school/teaching practice). This solution recognises that each type of knowledge is more "at home" in one of the contexts. A further consideration of how different types of knowledge can be contextualised in a "home" is provided in the next section.

3.5.1 Spectator knowledge and participant knowledge.

Among the labels given to the two sides of the theory/practice dichotomy is Saugstad's (2005) one of *spectator* knowledge and *participant* knowledge. The definitions of each are closely linked to Aristotle's categories but expressed in terms of practice in educational settings. Saugstad defines spectator knowledge as:

> … knowledge of the general and is not directly involved in practical life. Spectator knowledge neither guides action, nor can it be transferred directly into practice, as knowledge's aim is merely to illuminate and to give reasons and explanation.

> Saugstad 2005:356

This clearly echoes the notion of Epistēmē. Saugstad goes on to argue that spectator knowledge has its home in a school like learning setting, something he refers to as "scholastic" learning. Thus, as opposed to Thiessen (2000) he would see

theory as being learned within a formal classroom setting, without the need to refer to practice.

Participant knowledge, on the other hand, is that which is directly related to practical life.

> … participant knowledge is knowledge about both how to act and to produce according to practical life's shifting circumstances. It deals with particular matters in practical life and can never be a general theory on how to act, because this has to be decided in each situation … It is a *doxa* knowledge, which means that it is a casuistic, experienced-based knowledge of the possible and the probable.
>
> Saugstad 2005:357

Saugstad includes both Technē and Phronēsis in his definition as the former imparts knowledge for a situation, while the latter provides an ability to understand the situation correctly. Saugstad acknowledges the fact that situations in which we act are all different and therefore our participant knowledge includes acting in a situation-specific manner.

Whereas spectator knowledge is gained in a scholastic setting, participant knowledge belongs in what Saugstad terms "non-scholastic" settings. This means that "non-scholastic advocates argue that one becomes a professional by working as a professional" (Saugstad 2005:361) or further; "give to school what belongs to school and to practice what belongs to practice" (Saugstad 2005:363). The argument here is about both the place of learning but also, more importantly, the value and acknowledgement given to both types of knowledge. Saugstad advocates for both types of knowledge but warns that:

> If participant knowledge is not taken seriously as a base of knowledge, then the learning and structuring of the practical educational field will become inflexible within scholastic structures.
>
> Saugstad 2005:364

The importance of considering different types of knowledge as forming the base of professional knowledge is also argued by Cole and Knowles (2000), who advocate considering within teacher education:

> That which might be termed global, macro, general, or abstracted theory; and that which could be called local, micro, particular or idiosyncratic theory. In the former category are those theories typically … generated by academic researchers and studied in teacher education programmes and which is intended to have more generalisable applications. In the latter category are those theories that emerge from focused inquiry into individuals' beliefs, values, perspectives, attitudes, ideas and practices, and which are more particularistic or personal in nature.
>
> Cole and Knowles 2000:10

As well as presenting theory and practice as a dichotomy, a divide, the literature also suggests that there is a place for both in professional knowledge. Discussions of whether theory and practice should be addressed in different learning settings show a variety of views. An important conclusion from the literature is that practice or practical/participant knowledge has an important place when considering professional knowledge. It is helpful therefore to consider how such practical knowledge might be explored. To do this I will now look at the paradigm of *personal practical knowledge*, which provides one means of describing practical knowledge.

3.6 Personal Practical Knowledge

For this study into the complex nature of teacher knowledge and how it is learned, the concept of Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK) (Freeman 2002, Golombek 1998, Tsang 2004) provides a useful epistemological paradigm. In the literature the different iterations of PPK focus less on the way theory and practice interact and more on the nature of practical knowledge and the fact that the teacher at any moment will call into play different parts of their PPK to respond to a classroom situation. It presents an articulation of that knowledge that allows a teacher to react to a given situation as in Saugstad's (2005) participant knowledge and the wisdom to understand that situation as in Aristotle's Phronēsis.

3.6.1 Definitions of PPK

Clandinin and Connelly (1986) provided some of the earliest definitions with a strong focus on the relationship between the teacher's past experience and their current actions, which acknowledges the impact of the apprenticeship of observation:

> Personal, practical knowledge is in the teacher's past experience, in the teacher's present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions. Personal practical knowledge is found in the teacher's practice. It is, for any one teacher, a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation.

> Clandinin et al 1997:666

Golombek highlights the emerging and generative nature of personal practical knowledge. PPK is:

> … a teacher's theory about teaching that is contextualized in experience and represents unity among that teacher's beliefs, values and actions.

> Golombek 1998:448

PPK is therefore the knowledge constructed and reconstructed by the teacher from the totality of their experiences, both on and away from a course of training. This definition of PPK recognises the importance of prior beliefs and knowledge discussed in the first part of this chapter. It also recognises PPK as having a fluctuating mixture of elements that is likely to undergo continuous change on a daily basis as the teacher encounters various elements of the course. Most importantly, it recognises that the teacher has agency. The teacher is not a recipient of knowledge but the creator of it. This reflects the points made in the previous chapter about the individual in the social learning paradigm.

PPK is knowledge which gives a teacher the ability to react to an evolving situation in the classroom. It involves situational decision making (Phronēsis) calling on theoretical and experiential knowledge gained prior to any classroom event. PPK is a classroom *skill* but not in the narrow sense of a practical ability to, for example, set up a group activity. It defines teacher knowledge as the ability to integrate the theoretical and the practical in that one classroom moment and act on it. Schulman and Schulman describe this "capacity for intelligent and adaptive action" to be at the "heart of teaching" (Schulman and Schulman 2004:263). Such a focus on the teacher's ability to adapt is pertinent to this study and is revisited later in this chapter in the section on "scripts".

3.6.2 PPK as a model in investigating teacher knowledge

A number of studies have used PPK as a basis for investigating the nature of teacher knowledge. Sun considered PPK as offering "an integrated and holistic framework for the exploration of teachers' experiential knowledge" (Sun 2012:761). Sun's study considered the impact of a teacher's cultural heritage on the development of their PPK and concluded that "teachers' personal practical knowledge is layered and goal-oriented, guided by the dominant image" (Sun 2012:266) and that image is that of an effective teacher as epitomised in the native culture. Chetcuti (2009) considered the gender-oriented aspect of a science teacher's personal practical knowledge. The conclusion was that "although they are supporting a gender-inclusive pedagogy in principle, their classroom practices in fact continue to support the traditional dichotomies between male and female" (Chetcuti 2009:96) indicating that PPK may include contradictory elements, where theory is not borne out in practice.

Gray & Morton conducted an investigation into teacher learning on one part of the CELTA course, the lesson planning sessions. They used PPK to analyse the dialogue between trainees and tutor and the resulting learning. The main aspect of PPK that was addressed in these planning sessions was the "knowledge of instruction" indicating the trainees' need for a "blueprint for action" (Gray & Morton 2010:314).

All of the studies cited in this section indicate that PPK has potential as a means for considering teacher knowledge and teacher learning. By offering a more holistic paradigm that encompasses all that a teacher has experienced and brings to a teaching situation, it allows for a fuller understanding of teacher knowledge.

3.6.3 The challenges of PPK as a model

As discussed in Chapter two, the value of considering practical knowledge as an epistemological entity is not always accepted. Eraut questions the whole concept of "practical knowledge" because it is difficult to make explicit or generalisable (Eraut 1994:65). He critiques Schön's (1987) notion of transforming tacit knowledge into knowledge in action because of the multiple different circumstances in a classroom when this knowledge might be "true". We therefore have an epistemological issue, according to Eraut, of the truth or validity of practical knowledge and this raises the question of whether it can really be called knowledge.

The difficulty of using PPK as a model of teacher knowledge also lies in the multiplicity and complexity of classroom events. Golombek acknowledges the seeming lack of studies that "operationalize PPK" (Golombek 2009:156) by using it as the basis of a teacher education programme. She tempers this by proposing that PPK serves as "a kind of framework through which teachers make sense of their classrooms" (Golombek 2009:157). PPK places the *practical* (doing) within a term that contains *knowledge* (thinking). Returning to the theory/practice divide discussed in the previous section, PPK can reinforce the view that practice on its own, as mere automated actions not necessarily embedded in a conscious cognitive act, is not knowledge. We are therefore in danger of reverting to the view that the action and the ability to do the action of teaching is a lesser form of knowing. Tomlinson (1999) has highlighted this concern in relation to the use of reflective practice and his views are discussed later in this chapter. His comments on the "traditional tendency to see conscious deliberation as vital to intelligent action and capability in teaching" (Tomlinson 1999:407) reiterate the notion of whether we may value propositional knowledge over the capacity for action.

3.6.4 Teacher cognition

Another unifying concept of teacher knowledge is the notion of *teacher cognition* (Borg 2006, 2011, Sanchez & Borg 2014). Described by Borg as "an inclusive term to embrace the complexity of teachers' mental lives" (Borg 2006: 54), teacher cognition encompasses all of what teachers know, believe and think. The concept of teacher cognition also underpins the conceptualisation of teaching "as it is learned and practised rather than as it should be learned and practised" (Mori 2011:452) by moving the focus to what the teacher is thinking and the different domains a teacher is drawing on while undertaking the act of teaching.

Studies in teacher cognition have included a focus on a number of aspects already highlighted in this chapter. One area for consideration has been the difference between knowledge and belief which was discussed in section 3.3.2. The studies referred to in section 3.4 which focussed on the changing beliefs of teachers, the "before and after" construct, also belongs under the broad concept of teacher cognition (Borg 2006:79).

In a sense it could be argued that this thesis is an investigation into the cognition of the participants in that it considers how they conceptualise knowledge and also how that knowledge changes over the duration of the CELTA course. However, having one overarching concept for the investigation is less effective in recognising the potential for a fractured and, what I have termed in Chapter one as a more "microscopic" view of teacher knowledge and learning. Whilst recognising the value of both teacher cognition and PPK as unifying constructs which consider the "sum of the parts", I have set out to focus on the "parts" and in a way "deconstruct" my participants' meanings.

3.7 Craft knowledge and the apprenticeship model of learning
Rather than considering PPK or teacher cognition as a unified model of knowledge which teachers possess, an alternative would be to focus on the practical element of teacher knowledge often referred to as *craft* knowledge. (Eraut 1994, Gilpin and Clibbon 2003). The concept of craft highlights both the nature of practical knowledge,

that it has to do with carrying out actions, but also suggests that any professional learning activity which develops this craft knowledge can have similarities to an apprenticeship.

The concept of apprenticeship as a learning model dates back to the Middle Ages and the employment of unskilled young people by a master craftsman as a cheap resource in exchange for food and board, but, more importantly, formal training in the craft by the master. The model finds a more modern articulation in Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of legitimate peripheral participation discussed in Chapter two. A legacy of the early iteration of apprenticeship is that very association with a craft. Echoing once again the dichotomy between Aristotle's Epistēmē and Technē, the notion of apprenticeship becomes associated with the lower status *craft* and its connection to doing rather than thinking. As highlighted above in the section on studies of the CELTA course, Hockly expresses the view that the apprenticeship model of teacher education receives "bad press" (Hockly 2000:118), because the concept seems to emphasise the practical doing of teaching rather than the acquisition of a body of knowledge and this is considered something *lesser*.

However, the notion of PPK outlined above clearly acknowledges the *doing* as an integral part of teacher knowledge because the teacher constructs their knowledge from the totality of their experiences, many of which will be experiences of doing. PPK, therefore, further legitimises the notion of teacher education as an apprenticeship model of learning. This may not sit comfortably with some teacher education models.

> Contrary to what many teacher educators had hoped, much of the learning taking place in student teachers appeared to have the characteristics of apprenticeship learning … namely a subtle process of enculturation, shaped by language and implicit norms.
>
> Korthagen 2010:99

As outlined in the introduction and in the discussion of the literature focused on the CELTA course, CELTA is perceived, and to an extent markets itself, as a practical, *toolkit* teaching course. It is therefore relevant to this study to consider further literature that looks at ways in which teachers might learn *how to do*. In addition it is important to look at views of the limits to the practical knowledge that can be gained from simply carrying out the act of teaching. The next section considers views in the literature on learning *how to do*.

3.8 Learning to do: routines, techniques and scripts

Criticisms of practical knowledge, or the learning of doing, find their articulation in describing such learning "the gradual accumulation of memories of cases" (Tomlinson 1999:409), where teachers learn a repertoire of teaching strategies that they unpack for various situations. This would mean that the teacher has some kind of toolkit from which they draw out appropriate tools. A tacit element of the toolkit approach is that the teacher does not have an overarching understanding of more general teaching and learning principles.

There is general acceptance that learning a range of teaching techniques is useful but limited. As Darling-Hammond and Bransford point out:

> Routines can be helpful as they free up teachers, but offering only routines doesn't give teachers the diagnostic skill to analyse situations and adopt different strategies.
>
> Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005:360

Darling-Hammond and Bransford call for the development of *adaptive expertise* for teachers to make judgments on a current teaching situation and adapt appropriately. They express the view that this must go beyond a package of strategies. We return to the notion discussed in Chapter two of how *replication* of the moves of teaching is not sufficient for learning if it does not have some *generative* quality, if the teacher cannot change and adapt and create new moves for a new situation.

101

However, it is also acknowledged that providing teachers with routines or procedures for teaching can be generative. An example of how this works is explored by Reeves (2010), who considers the use of scripted instruction which was used as a means of controlling what teachers do in the classroom. Her findings confirmed the usefulness of scripts but that teachers "were not passive consumers" but "began to assert control over the script" (Reeves 2010:252). She demonstrates that providing teachers with routines or procedures for lessons and lesson types does not mean that teachers will simply adopt them without thinking. This is very pertinent for a study of learning on the CELTA course, where importance is placed in the course syllabus and in the assessment on writing fairly prescriptive lesson plans and highlighting lesson procedures.

Teachers themselves recognise the importance of such routines. Clair's study of experienced teachers looked at strategies for more innovative professional development through the use of study groups. Despite some success she was disappointed by the fact that participants "persist in asking for recipes" (Clair 1998:487). She attributed this to the fact that pre-service teacher education programmes stressed the technical side of teaching. Given that the teachers in the study were experienced and at some distance from their initial training, it could also be suggested that experience has taught them to value *recipes* as a framework for their learning and development, something they could adapt, but still a framework.

Thus, if teachers are to gain adaptive expertise it is suggested that teaching routines, procedures, techniques and scripts can provide them with opportunities to use routines and adapt them. An example of how this can work is detailed in some of the writing on medical training that features the notion of "deliberate practice" (Bronkhorst et al 2011). In deliberate practice, meaning-oriented learning is fostered and participants are asked to reflect on and change their routines as appropriate to a given situation. This avoids the "arrested development associated with automaticity" (Ericsson 2004:S73) and ensures that the learning process moves from one entirely depended on a routine and one that allows the teacher (or doctor) to assess a given situation and apply appropriate strategies. Nonetheless, existing routines are valued as the starting point for adaptation and the end point is a newly evolved routine.

3.8.1 Procedural knowledge: uses of the term

I have highlighted in the previous section how the notion of routines or scripts is potentially very pertinent for this study because the CELTA course syllabus and processes include the use of lesson procedures, where trainees on the course are given procedural outlines of how to construct lessons. It would also seem that syntactically the term "procedural" is a better collocate of "knowledge" than any adjective derived from "scripts" or "moves", both of which are used in the literature in relation to discussion of practical knowledge.

Within the field of language teaching, as opposed to language teacher education, the term "procedural knowledge" is used to refer to the implicit knowledge necessary for automatisation of a skill in skill learning theory (Dörnyei 2009, Arnold et al 2015). Skill learning theory suggests that the developing of any skill, including language, "needs to start with some initial explicit – or *declarative* – input, which in turn becomes gradually automatized through repetition" (Arnold et al 2015:9). In this model, the procedural refers to the act of doing which reinforces the earlier more theoretical input.

When looking at procedural knowledge for teachers, it is argued here that the initial, declarative knowledge is in itself a more complex epistemological concept. This is, firstly, because of the prior knowledge about teaching discussed in earlier sections of this chapter. It is less likely that language learners will come to a course with fixed views of what the correct form of the present perfect is, for example.

In addition, it can also be argued that procedural knowledge for teachers can be both declarative and implicit. Thus trainee teachers can receive instruction as to what procedure to follow in a lesson and this can be with or without an underpinning theoretical rationale. They can also acquire procedural knowledge through the act of teaching and thus learn by carrying out an activity they were instructed to do.

Throughout this chapter and in the findings chapters, I therefore use the term "procedural knowledge" to describe participants' knowledge of the doing of teaching.

Such knowledge can be derived from many sources and may not only be gained at the initial stages of learning. The term is used to describe knowledge of the moves or scripts of teaching and the term is sometimes interchanged with both the terms "moves" and "scripts".

3.8.2 A *theory only* model

As there has been much attention paid so far in this chapter to the place of practice and doing, it is also important to acknowledge views that give primacy to the theoretical side of teacher learning. It is possible, for example, that participants in this study articulate the view that the theoretical elements of the course were of more value and dismiss the practical element of teacher knowledge.

In the field of teacher education in general the assumption can be found that teacher learning results "from teaching them valuable educational theories, and … the serial learning of concepts on a scale of growing complexity" (Korthagen 2010:99). This view exemplifies a positivist epistemological view, where teaching is considered as a scientific study. It can be found in courses where teacher learning is felt to occur primarily through the academic content and this is where teacher educators situate themselves, leaving the practical learning to occur in the placement or practicum in an ad hoc manner. My own first experience of teacher education as outlined in Chapter one certainly seemed to align more with this model.

Bronkhorst states that it is an error to design teacher education processes as another academic subject. (Bronkhorst et al 2011). A further note of caution in the treatment of teaching as a science with theoretical truths is the concept of "inert knowledge" as described by Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005:372). Inert knowledge allows a teacher to talk explicitly about an aspect of teaching in a theoretical sense, but does not actually impact the way that teacher thinks or acts in the classroom.

A further illustration of the inappropriateness of viewing teacher knowledge as mostly academic theories can be found in the medical profession. The scientific basis of

medicine is undeniable. Doctors need to know *about* the different scientific disciplines and that knowledge must be comprehensive. However, studies of the training of doctors show that superior performance "is closely related to engagement in practice with feedback during medical training". (Ericsson 2004:73). Even in this highly scientific profession of medicine it could be argued that practical knowledge has an essential place.

3.9 Teacher knowledge as teacher or professional identity

The consideration of teacher knowledge and learning in more recent literature has tended to reframe both concepts in terms of teacher or professional *identity*. (Freeman 2002, Abednia 2012, Friesen & Besley 2013, Hobbs 2012, Pillen et al 2013). A focus on identity in studies of language teachers is felt to provide an important shift away from a "rather exclusive focus on asocial and cognitive linguistic dimensions of second language education" (Abednia 2012:706) and allow for more consideration of critical pedagogy issues and the social context within which teachers work. In the previous chapter I outlined some of my concerns about naming and working with the concept of "identity" and my view that any investigation was ill-placed to reach conclusions about an area which is so entwined with personality and the personal. It is clear, however, that studies of teacher education are becoming more focused on this concept. I would therefore like to consider in this section the areas where such literature might provide useful insights for this study. I will also explain why I intend to continue with the terms *knowledge* and *learning* even in the light of a shift in perspective in the literature.

Looking at identity as a way to frame discussions about teacher knowledge is closely linked to considerations of the tensions teachers may encounter between their own beliefs about teaching and those of the organisation within which they work. It could be termed "reconciling the personal and professional side of being or becoming a teacher" (Pillen et al 2013:86). Examples might be tensions between the way a teacher wishes to teach and the way their mentor models teaching in practice (Pillen et al 2013), or between a methodology being introduced on a national level which is discordant with a teacher's approach (Liu & Zu 2011). A further source of discord

may be a perceived difference between what a teacher is experiencing on their teacher education programme and the lived reality of their teaching practice. The contrast would be between: "Theoretical principles … explicitly expressed in an academic discourse" and classroom-based knowledge which is "expressed in common-sense terms and organised around the challenges associated with their daily practices." (Sutherland et al 2010 456). This last example hints at a conflict in the theory/practice divide explored earlier in this chapter.

The potential for tension and conflict is present in any learning experience and a teacher education programme would not assume that teachers are "empty vessels to be filled with knowledge and skills of teaching". (Abednia 2012:706). The possibility of conflict as actually *contributing* to learning was addressed in the previous chapter when considering Engeström's (2001) expansive learning model. Earlier in this chapter I have looked at how the interaction between prior learning and new knowledge would present an interesting area for consideration in this study. In relation to the definition of identity in the previous paragraph, the nature of the CELTA course means that the work or practical teaching context for learners is actually the course itself. Practice lessons are organised by the course tutors with volunteer learners. There is, therefore, less scope for organisational or national curriculum / pedagogy paradigms of teaching to conflict with participants' prior knowledge or learning on the course. As a result, I would see the reconciling of the personal and professional side of being or becoming a teacher mentioned above as being primarily the tension between prior beliefs and knowledge and new knowledge on the course. It would seem more valuable to frame the discussions in terms of those knowleges and the resultant learning rather than through the lens of identity.

A further feature of the notion of identity in relation to teacher knowledge and learning is that it adds an additional layer of complex description to an already complex phenomena. The nature of this complexity is highlighted in the literature. Professional identity is described as both a product and a process (Pillen et al 2013). It is made up of "a set of sub-identities that later form a somewhat harmonious whole" (Sutherland et al 2010:456) or the "conflicting selves" (Liu & Zu 2011:589) of a teacher. It is recognised that it is possible to have "multiple social identities as

individuals can define themselves in terms of many different social categories" (Friesen & Besley 2013:24). Thus the lens of identity seems to offer a further diffracting layer in the understanding of teacher knowledge and learning.

The diffraction effect is also seen in the challenge of operationalising insights about teacher identity. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Freeman has highlighted the difficulty of "publicly representing the complexity of teacher learning" (Freeman 2002:11) and there is a possibility that the complex nature of identity may be difficult to apply to the activity or process of becoming a teacher. Examples of how the notion of teacher identity has been applied on teacher education programmes underline the difficulty of the notion being impactful on practice. Friesen & Besley conclude that that if student teachers are encouraged early in their training to explicitly examine the dissonance between their beliefs and those of the course, "their professional identity can develop through a productive dialog in contrast to the adoption of rigid and naïve assumptions (Friesen & Besley 2013:29). The study by Sutherland used online discussion to promote "an alternative mechanism where teachers can share their insights and experiences ... (and) ... assist them to appreciate the relationship between theory and practice" (Sutherland et al 2010:457). Abednia's (2012) use of critical questionnaires to draw out teachers' views about their prior beliefs had an impact on some of the group, but not others. These outcomes do not seem to offer a weighty contribution to thinking about the operational side of teacher education.

It would seem, therefore, that the reframing of teacher knowledge and learning in terms of teacher or professional identity stems from the examination of dissonance between the individual and the social context of their teaching practice. This may be between prior learning and new constructs presented on a teacher education programme, or an individual preference for an approach to teaching and a locally or nationally imposed alternative. As highlighted above, the likely focus of dissonance in this study is that between prior knowledge from the apprenticeship of observation and new knowledge from the course. Whether such dissonance is explored under the concept of identity does not seem to add to the validity or quality of the outcomes. For more operational findings for a teacher education programme, the conclusions of studies which use teacher identity as their exploratory paradigm propose actions which would easily be subsumed into the concepts of teacher

knowledge and learning presented hitherto in this chapter. It therefore seems that, while teacher identity is a valid and important construct, its use in this study is not necessarily something that would add to the focus on knowledge and learning.

3.10 Reflective practice as professional learning

Throughout this chapter I have discussed the literature relating to the construction of teacher knowledge. A strong theme which emerges is the relationship between the practical doing of teaching and the creation of knowledge through the theorising of that practice. In order to explore the relationship between theory and practice further, I will now consider the process or tool by which the relationship is often said to be built: reflective practice.

> Reflection involves taking the unprocessed, raw material of experience and engaging with it to make sense of what has occurred. It involves exploring often messy and confused events and focusing on the thoughts and emotions that accompany them.

> Boud 2001:10

A search for key texts relating to reflective practice produces a list that is extensive in both its number and breadth. The literature focuses on principles of reflection as well as the processes and techniques to be used. Texts relevant to teaching and to the health care professions dominate the field. There is a sense that reflective practice has become a kind of orthodoxy in education, an unquestioned concept embedded in all learning which has a practical element.

Most teacher education courses, including CELTA, would ascribe to the notion that they were developing *reflective practitioners*. Such practitioners are seen as able to continue their development after their formal programme of instruction because they are able to evaluate their practice and, through this, ensure it evolves. The concrete reality of reflective practice is less quantifiable.

Being reflective assists teachers' lifelong professional development, enabling them to critique teaching and make better-informed teaching decisions. This axiom is widely accepted in language teacher education contexts, but what it means in practice is not all that clear.

Burton 2009:298

3.10.1 Models of reflective practice

A key contributor to the body of literature on reflective practice, Donald Schön, placed reflective practice within the discussion of theory and practice highlighted above and identified the "crisis of confidence" that arose from the "widening gap between thought and action, theory and practice, the academy and the everyday world." (Schön 1992:119). His proposed model for reflective practice would mediate against the perceived division between positivist scientific knowledge and its practical application in a professional role.

Schön initially proposed two different ways of reflecting. Reflecting *in action*, where the teacher would be aware of the process of teaching as they were doing it, in situ, and be able to make judgements and adjust their practice (Schön 1983, 1987). Reflecting *on action* would be done after practice and require the teacher to look back on a lesson, for example after a lesson had finished. Reflecting on action allows the teacher to draw on factors outside the moment of practice, including the views of others, theoretical reading and feedback from their students.

The sources a teacher could draw on for this reflection on action were further explored by Brookfield (1995). He conceptualised these sources as four "lenses" through which a teacher could view their teaching critically. These lenses: autobiography, critical incident questionnaires, dialogue with colleagues and use of theoretical literature, would all serve to provide a different perspective on teaching and would help in the systematic evaluation that is integral to reflective practice.

Descriptions of reflective practice embody the assumption that it will involve a degree of structured activity. It may range from a recorded thought that an activity went well or did not seem to have a positive student response to a very deliberate setting down of evaluative comments in writing. Brookfield also advocates a systematic and relentless "hunting of assumptions" (Brookfield 2012:7) where the teacher uses a range of techniques to investigate the paradigms they have about teaching in order to evaluate them and question whether these are effective paradigms to work with.

For some the notion of structure is expressed through the idea of "deliberate contemplation" (Fernsten & Fernsten 2006:304) or deliberate practice (Bronkhorst et al 2011). Thus reflection takes on a pre-meditated quality. Teachers should plan for it, carry it out and in some way create a concrete artefact, be it an essay, a piece of research or a verbal account.

3.10.2 Problematising reflective practice

The acceptance of reflective practice as good practice seems universal in literature designed to support the delivery of teacher education programmes. This acceptance makes it more difficult to question. My own experience is pertinent here. One of my enduring memories of my initial teacher education course was writing self-evaluations of each lesson we taught. My strategy was to prepare all my lesson plans and materials at the weekend and also write all my self-evaluations. These would be fictional accounts based on things I guessed would go well and less well in the lessons. I would then simply slot in the relevant self-evaluation after the lesson in my portfolio. This strategy was never noticed by my tutor. As a result my view that the writing of reflective thoughts did not contribute much to my learning and was an artificial exercise done to meet the assessment requirements of the course was fully reinforced.

A fundamental criticism of reflective practice returns to the dualist nature of teacher knowledge and the theory/practice divide. Schön's (1983) idea that reflective practice would unify the two is questioned. A critical view is expressed by Tomlinson.

Schön's emphasis on reflection is assimilable to the traditional dualist model of thought-and-action, according to which 'you've got to think about what you're doing'. That is, this model has recourse to a meta-level consciousness as condition for the intelligence of first-order processes, whether these be physical or cognitive. On such an interpretation Schön would be seen not as breaking with the dualist tradition, as seems often to have been assumed, but if anything as building on and thereby re-emphasising it … Schön … may also have boosted still further the traditional tendency to see conscious deliberation as vital to intelligent action and capability in teaching.

Tomlinson 1999:407-408

The idea that one has to think about something in a deliberate fashion returns to the idea that tacit knowledge, or the automatic, the scripted, the routine, does not count unless it is accompanied by a cognitive process.

Atkinson and Claxton have also challenged the perceived need to focus on more established forms of knowledge and have suggested that we might view practical knowledge as a form of intuition.

The importance of the deliberate, conscious articulation of knowledge, whether others' or one's own, may in the current intellectual climate be overestimated, while intuitive forms of knowledge and ways of knowing have tended to be ignored or under-theorized.

Atkinson & Claxton 2003:2

They suggest that insisting on a declarative reflection of what may have happened in a lesson does not recognise that aspect of teacher knowledge which is more intuitive, but nonetheless valuable.

Mann and Walsh (2013) have also highlighted difficulties with the way reflective practice is operationalised in teacher education programmes. They acknowledge that

a focus on deliberate contemplation (Fernsten & Fernsten 2006) has led to an overemphasis on written forms of reflective practice and that "assessment and evaluation distort the kind of reflection that individuals do" (Mann & Walsh 2013:297). This is particularly pertinent to this study as much of the reflective practice activity on a CELTA course is assessed.

3.10.3 Reflecting in front of an "expert"

A further limitation of reflective practice which may apply to this study is considered by Brookfield in his work on critical thinking. He looks at ways he can promote criticality among his own students and recognises the issue of "impostorship" (Brookfield 2012:222). His students, like teacher trainees, come to his course with doubts about their ability to succeed. They are then asked to be critically reflective about the subject matter of the course. He describes the difficulty of the student, a novice in the subject, being required to be critical.

> If students are just beginning their studies in an area, their experience of being a student, much less of having a basic command of the subject, can be so limited that it's both brutal and confusing to tell them that they must immediately start thinking critically about it. If the student assumes that critical thinking means disclosing one's errors and owning up to one's mistakes, there's another level of emotional stress involved.

> Brookfield 2012:223

Brookfield's discussion of impostorship raises the issue of his own role as the perceived expert, due to his standing and title. He imagines his students' astonishment at being asked to express their critical ideas instead of the expert, their teacher, providing this criticality. The teacher is a quasi-expert and is not an impostor in the process. The tutor as the expert should provide the criticality, as they have both the knowledge and experience; it is their job.

The potential for a dialogic model of reflection is highlighted by Mann and Walsh (2013). They question the predominance of individual reflection and propose a model of reflection which includes "discourse with others (in various collaborative and workplace processes) as well as between different forms of knowledge" (Mann and Walsh 2013:297). Such a model also recognises the importance of verbal and potentially less structured formats of reflective practice. However, it does not seem to fully anticipate some of the issues raised by Brookfield (2012) in relation to the imbalance of power between the parties involved in the dialogue.

Reflective practice is embedded in the CELTA course in the post lesson feedback sessions and a written assignment entitled "Lessons from the Classroom", where trainees look back on their learning over the course. The expectation is that trainees will be able to "demonstrate the ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, to take steps to remedy the latter" (Brandt 2008:43). As with general approaches to teacher education discussed above, the CELTA course structure and syllabus also presupposes that reflective practice is good practice. The questioning of both the rationale for and the structured nature of reflective practice is therefore a pertinent area of enquiry for this study.

3.11 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been on the nature of professional knowledge and, by extension, the nature of professional learning. In the first part, the knowledge any new teacher will bring to a training course as a result of their time as a learner was considered. This knowledge was judged to be powerful, whilst at the same time potentially flawed in its perceptions. The way such prior knowledge interacts with the new learning offered on a teacher education course was discussed and this yielded some insights into the extent of the impact, though with less coverage in the literature of the process of impact.

An issue which underlies much of the consideration of professional learning is that of the theory/practice divide. The iterations of this dichotomy over time were considered leading to the current focus recognising the individual and personal nature of teacher

knowledge. A concept that has proved useful in other studies, that of personal practical knowledge, indicated ways in which emergent teacher knowledge might be scrutinised. In relation to this paradigm, the potential for the use of scripts or procedures was acknowledged.

Finally, the well-accepted notion of reflective practice was discussed and problematised. Reflective practice is often seen as a logical way to bridge the theory/ practice divide and is a relatively highly valued activity in teacher education. It was proposed that a minority view expressed in the literature could suggest that we may wish to reposition the role of reflective practice within the development of teacher knowledge and perhaps question its orthodoxy.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

4.0 Introduction

Consideration of *how* we undertake research can pose even more questions than the object of research. We may reach an idea of what we want to look at and what we might like to find out relatively easily. Decisions around how we will investigate our object are more complex. Research paradigms and strategies are manifold. There are varied ways of analysing any data that is collected. The choices we make in deciding on our research methodology should be based on clear principles, but they are, nonetheless, difficult to make.

In this chapter I will discuss both the principles and the decisions underpinning my research methodology as well as providing a full account of the actual process undertaken to arrive at my findings. In the initial parts of the chapter I will outline some of the choices faced by the researcher. This is partly to highlight how, as a researcher, I have undertaken a research journey that constitutes part of this study. Through decision making around my research methodology, I have changed my perspective on approaches to research, in particular, the use of qualitative methodologies. Since this change occurred parallel to my engagement in the research reported on in this study, it forms part of the study itself.

The overarching decision to be reached at the outset was the use of approaches on a continuum from qualitative to quantitative. Quantitative research is characterised by an attempt to measure reality (Holliday 2007) and use measuring instruments to indicate variables, with numerically assigned values and relationships between variables. It is therefore often used for more positivist research paradigms which contend that there is an observable reality or "discernable world" (Charmaz 2005:508) and is more appropriate to realities which seem better suited to measuring, such as scientific phenomena or countable events. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is a research paradigm that questions the notion of a discoverable reality in order to understand the "interaction of variables" (Miles and Huberman 1994:41) and to interpret a more complex reality.

It may not always be appropriate to juxtapose the two methodologies. For the researcher, a more important consideration is the one posed by Gherardi and

Turner: "what it is useful to count and what is difficult or inappropriate to count at all" (Miles and Huberman 1994:40). This chapter will consider the research methodology against the backdrop of the research questions being asked, since knowing what is to be "counted" is key to any decision made about methodology. As discussed in Chapter one, my research questions in relation to participants taking a CELTA course are:

4. *What constitutes the knowledge of English language teachers for participants on these CELTA courses?*

5. *What are the key processes that promote participants' learning on these CELTA courses?*

6. *How do the relationships between peers and with trainers influence participants' learning on these CELTA courses?*

In the research questions I refer exclusively to "participants" or those who contributed to my research. All of the participants took part in a course with other trainees who did not form part of this study. Throughout this chapter and in the thesis as a whole, I use the term "participants" when referring only to those who took part in my study and "trainees" when referring to them as part of the whole CELTA course group which included others who were not involved in my research.

4.1 Structure of the chapter

In this chapter I will start by considering the broad research paradigms from which I have selected my approach. I will outline some of the overarching issues around the selection of qualitative or quantitative methods and situate my approach within this discussion. I will then move on to consider the strategies used to collect the data in my research and some of the challenges both in collecting the data and analysing it. I will provide some illustrative examples of the coding used for the analysis to demonstrate the methods used to make sense of the data generated. Finally, I will highlight some of the thematic threads and the process by which I extrapolated the key findings of the research from those themes.

4.1.1 A summary of the practical steps

As the following sections will explore the conceptual framework for the research before describing the processes undertaken, at this initial stage it is useful to provide a brief summary of the process to contextualise the discussion which follows.

The research is based on data collected through a series of semi-structured interviews with three groups of participants, twelve in total, who were undertaking three different part-time CELTA courses. The interviews were the texts which formed the participants' narrative of their learning journey. The interviews were carried out at three different points in the course, towards the start, at a mid-point and at the end. Participants were invited to contribute thoughts during the course through email. In addition, three participants were interviewed one year after completing the course. The interviews were then analysed thematically and key findings were drawn out.

In parallel, I recorded my own emerging thoughts on the process and findings through the use of a research scrapbook, where I sought to note key events and thoughts using artefacts. The artefacts included notes, photographs and objects which were chosen to evoke the moment and thought in relation to the process of the research. I discuss the rationale for and nature of this scrapbook later in this chapter.

4.2 Choice of research paradigm

The broad overarching choice of research paradigm in this study is a qualitative one. This choice indicates an epistemological perspective which is congruent with the area that is being researched. This broader paradigm will also situate the choice of methodology. It acts as a driver for further choices. As Denzin and Lincoln explain

> The net that contains the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises may be termed a paradigm, or an interpretative framework.
>
> Denzin & Lincoln 2008:31

The principles behind the choice of paradigm relate to wider considerations as well as to the particular focus of this study. Within the social sciences in general the

reasons for moving away from a positivist epistemological perspective to a postmodern/constructivist/sociocultural one include a questioning of the belief in the regularities of the social and natural world and a distrust of the view that all social concepts can be subject to empirical validation or falsification. Instead of describing a "reality", postmodernism seeks to construct it with all the participants in that reality. Just as postmodernist art "demonstrates a carelessness towards orthodox aesthetic conformity" (Woods 2009:165), so postmodernist social scientists reject the conformity of measured events. As a result of the questioning of measuring and empirical validation a purely quantitative paradigm becomes insufficient to address the constructed reality of the social context.

The choice of research paradigm is also linked to the research questions stated in the introduction to this chapter and type of study to be undertaken. For this study certain factors steer the researcher towards an "interpretive" Miles and Huberman (1994:8) or "postmodern" (Holliday 2007:16) paradigm. Positivist or scientific paradigms see learning as an "internal psychological process", "free from the social and physical contexts in which it occurs" (Johnson 2009:7). This study considers teachers' learning on an initial training course and recognises that learning involves the sum of the individual's past experiences, the social contexts in which they are undertaking the learning and what each individual is going to do with that knowledge. There are some a priori assumptions that learning happens as part of a social context and is therefore socially constructed. It would therefore seem illogical to attempt to apply a form of description of the learning that did not allow the participants to describe context and complexity. My conclusion is, therefore, that a postmodern paradigm, where the participants "reveal meanings" (Dörnyei 2007: 38) rather than undertaking an external measurement is most appropriate to this study.

Within a postmodernist paradigm is the recognition that the researcher in the process cannot be detached from the subject and be objective in a way that positivist paradigms suggest is possible. Instead the researcher brings to the study prior professional experience of what is being studied and by engaging in observation and interviews with participants the researcher immediately becomes part of co-created "slices of reality" (Denzin & Lincoln 2005:4) which will form the findings of the study. The researcher becomes the *bricoleur*, who brings together an emerging

construction rather than an objective observer of phenomenon. When considering research methods and processes, it is therefore important to acknowledge the impact of the researcher's perspective on the research paradigm and the object of the research. Both of these are now explored.

4.2.1 The researcher's cognitive style

The decision to take a qualitative paradigm, though fully justifiable from an epistemological standpoint and in light of the focus of the study, did not initially resonate with my preferences as a researcher. Qualitative paradigms will generate multi-faceted viewpoints but lack the feeling of certainty which quantitative paradigms promise. There is a natural discontent that can be experienced when faced with something partial and not definitive. As quoted above, Gherardi and Turner's reference to: "what it is useful to count and what it is difficult or inappropriate to count at all" (Miles and Huberman 1994:40) does not fully acknowledge that, as a researcher, it is often tempting to view "counting" as an attractive means of undertaking research. The appeal of quantitative approaches lies in its perceived straightforwardness.

This leads to the issue of the "researcher's cognitive style" (Dörnyei 2007:47). For this study I fully recognise that the research questions necessitate the type of data that is best collected using qualitative methods. It would not be possible to examine the concepts related to learning through, for example, Likert scale type surveys. However, many of my prior research activities have used quantitative methods; I have a strong interest in maths and statistics and a personal belief in the value of statistical validity. I enjoy the cleanliness of quantitative data as opposed to the necessary messiness of qualitative. Quantitative appeals to me personally.

To address this discord between my preferences and the more appropriate paradigm for this study a number of steps were taken. In part, the writing of this chapter and the articulation of the reasons a qualitative paradigm can provide a better framework for the study helped as a reassuring strategy. As part of the research process I also undertook a pilot study. This was in part to gather some initial data, but it was also to confirm that a qualitative methodology would actually generate something which

could be identified as data. The success of this pilot study in generating some initial findings was a further step in acceptance of a less appealing research paradigm.

It could therefore be said that one of the outcomes of this study is that I came to "believe in" qualitative research methodology. Although this is not necessarily a finding in the true sense of the word, I feel it is important to acknowledge.

4.2.2 The "I" of the researcher and reflexivity

Within a postmodern paradigm the researcher is fully part of the research setting and impacts upon it in many ways. It is therefore important to consider the ideology of the researcher and the impact on how the research setting is seen, the research participants and what Holliday terms the "culture and relationships" of the research setting. (Holliday 2007:49). The naturalist view that it is possible for the researcher to "suspend preconceptions" (Miles and Huberman 1994:6) and remain detached from the subject is difficult to substantiate. The researcher is a co-respondent in the interviews used in this study and the beliefs of the researcher must be fully explored, recognised and taken into account in any outcomes. In this way the complex reality that is explored in the research is one that is socially constructed by all the participants, including the researcher.

The recognition of the researcher as contributing to, rather than simply carrying out the research, raises the importance of reflexivity; a heightened form of self-reflection. Giddens (1991) describes reflexivity as our ability to use knowledge to monitor our own actions, an activity which goes beyond the act of reflection as we actively engage sources around us to help us "stand back from [our] world and [our] own actions to more effectively monitor and manage them" (Burkitt 2012:459). The notion of "standing back" is a deliberate effort to distance oneself from the ongoing processes of the research in order to continually monitor what is emerging against what is the researcher's own construct about the research context and content.

An important part of being reflexive is "constructing a complex narrative of self" (Warin et al 2006:243) to ensure that there is the fullest awareness of the interaction between the researcher's own position and the activity and findings of the research. In Chapter one I provided an account of my own position as teacher, teacher trainer

and my underlying motivation for the research. Therefore it is acknowledged that as a researcher my own "values, personal history and position" (Dörnyei 2007:39) become an integral part of the study. The only way of assuring as much validity as possible in the research is to acknowledge them from the outset.

As a CELTA tutor and assessor I have experience of a large number of CELTA courses and believe that trainees learn on the course. I believe that the processes on the course are effective in causing this learning. I recognise these beliefs in order to be reflexive in my approach to the research. Burkitt (2012) and Holmes (2010) also point out that emotion can impact on reflexivity by making clarity more "fractured" as we encounter feelings which are "ambivalent, conflicted, or divided" (Burkitt 2012:470). In this study, for example, my inherent positive feelings towards the CELTA experience in general may serve to cloud any emerging findings which question the value of any elements of the course.

The CELTA course syllabus, although not completely prescriptive, largely supports what could be termed a communicative methodology for teaching English language. It is important to recognise that this teaching methodology is not the subject of this research and my views on methodology should not interfere with my interpretation of what the participants are describing to me. Participants may value or dismiss certain activities or approaches they are learning. Their views contribute to the research findings on learning, but they are not interpreted as a judgment on a correct methodology.

The research questions outlined in the first chapter and reiterated at the start of this one were designed by me in advance and could be deemed to be an a priori determination of outcomes. Such an approach, however, need not mean a fixed orienting construct and it was expected that interim analysis of data would produce numerous iterations of the construct. Having an initial framework provides a focus to the choice of instruments for data gathering and an initial guide to thematic descriptive analysis of the data.

Posing initial questions also recognises that no research operates in a vacuum of assumptions and ideas. It may be desirable to approach the research with an "emergent" view, (Dörnyei 2007:38), where all the ideas would emerge from the

different iterations. However, expecting a *tabula rasa* from the research is not realistic and ignores the fact that most researchers undertake their research *because* they have prior knowledge in the field and by necessity, prior beliefs and understanding of the field.

The potential bias of the researcher also underpins notions of confirmability (Meadows 2003, Maxwell 2005). Concerns with confirmability mean that the qualitative research should ensure that the research is "reasonably free from unacknowledged researcher bias" (Meadows 2003:468). I have argued in this section that no research is free from bias and the discussion in Chapter one of how the study emerged as well as my views of the CELTA part of my reflexivity strategy to foreground such bias. Confirmability is also concerned with the detailed and explicit description of the research methods and procedures. By providing detail and examples, the researcher's work can be scrutinised and in some way confirmed as coherent and appropriate. A detailed description is contained in the second half of this chapter and supported by the transcripts of interviews included in appendix 1 and provided as accompanying material. There is also comprehensive discussion of the analysis undertaken to be found in this chapter with each step described and exemplified. Thus readers are able to scrutinise both the findings and the process of arriving at these findings.

4.2.3 Validity

As discussed earlier in this chapter, a quantitative research paradigm reflects a positivist concern with measuring an objective reality. Objective checks of the data collected, which is often numerical or statistical, provide an inherent validity. A concern for the qualitative researcher is the possibility that validity can be compromised since there is a danger that the data collected will be anecdotal and will not be "independent of the accidental circumstances" of the research (Dörnyei 2007:56). The particular mix in a group of participants, location and time, even perhaps the weather on the day data was collected, may all contribute to the individual's interpretation of their reality they are describing. Critics of qualitative methods identify the need for better triangulation of the data collected.

The concept of triangulation is closely related to the quantitative perspective where the same outcome can be evidenced by different measures and then accorded truthfulness. The process is embedded in, for example, medical research, where the use of a control group and an active group provides two different sets of results which can then be compared. From a qualitative perspective, such a model presents problems, as the overarching paradigm assumes the lack of an observed truth which can then be somehow compared with another observed outcome.

For qualitative researchers the notion of triangulation can be better conceptualised as *crystallization*. (Denzin & Lincoln 2008, Guba & Lincoln 2005). In the crystallization process "the writer tells the same tale from different points of view" (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:7). This metaphor of a crystal allows us to see a multi-sided object, offering different views through each side. By being exposed to the different sides, we see a whole whose reality is multi-sided. The crystal acts as the qualitative researcher's triangulation.

> Viewed as a crystalline form, as a montage, or as a creative performance around a central theme, triangulation as a form of, or alternative to, validity thus can be extended. Triangulation is a simultaneous display of multiple, refracted realities.

> Denzin & Lincoln 2008:8

The results of qualitative research will therefore be multi-sided and we see "a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic" (Guba & Lincoln 2005:208). For qualitative researchers, the partial nature of the outcomes is fully congruent with the belief that full understanding is unobtainable, since complex realities do not have simple outcomes.

In this study I am gathering stories of "the same tale" (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:7) of the CELTA course experience through interviews with different participants. Their views will form different sides of the crystal through which I will draw out some overarching findings. While some of these findings are likely to be constituted from overlapping views, it is also expected that individual participants will have stories that are outliers from the central core of the crystal. These stories will not be ignored, but will form another surface that adds depth and forms part of the whole.

There are further measures aligned with the research processes which can contribute to validity within a qualitative paradigm. A taxonomy of validity (Dörnyei 2007, Maxwell 2005) suggests that strategies such as using multiple investigators (descriptive validity), discussing findings with participants (interpretative validity), generalising the findings to other communities (generalisability validity) and considering how accurately the researcher assigns value judgments (evaluative validity) can all help to ensure that findings have validity. Some of the aspects of the taxonomy would perhaps be associated with larger-scale studies than this one, but some have been implemented and are discussed in the sections on the research process later in this chapter.

An important aspect of validity for this smaller study is touched on above in the notion of "evaluative validity" (Dörnyei 2007:57) and expanded on in Dörnyei's notion of "researcher integrity" (Dörnyei 2007:60). Within this concept there are two very practical strategies of leaving an audit trail and examining what are termed "outliers" or cases that go against findings. More importantly Dörnyei highlights the need for thick description (Denzin & Lincoln 2005) where phenomena are described in sufficient detail, including the social relationships and social context of the research setting. As discussed earlier in this section, the gathering of a range of viewpoints in the data, including outliers, helps to ensure that there is thick description and that the complexity of the reality described by participants is acknowledged in the findings.

As discussed in the previous section, another constituent of researcher integrity identified by Dörnyei is the identification of researcher bias. In earlier sections above I have considered the impact of my own views of research as well as my experiences of the CELTA course, the context within which I am carrying out the study. Keeping these views to the fore during the analysis will contribute to reflexivity within the research as it will allow for the researcher to

> come to terms with … the complexity of their presence within the research setting in a methodical way

> Holiday 2007:138

In considering different aspects of validity in relation to qualitative research, it is also of value to question the concept of validity when applied to qualitative research. At

124

the start of this section, I used the crystal illustration to describe how the multifaceted nature of the views gathered in itself represented a kind of validity. It could also be said that the postmodern paradigm is one where "no method can deliver an ultimate truth" (Guba & Lincoln 2005:205) and the enquiry undertaken by the qualitative researcher is for a "nuanced understanding" rather than "generalizable data" (Liu & Zu 2011:591). Thus by recognising researcher bias and by undertaking a systematic analysis of the data practical strategies in relation to validity have been considered. Perhaps further concerns about the trustworthiness of the findings must be acknowledged as an inherent part of a paradigm which does not seek for an external, quantifiable and objective truth.

4.2.4 External validity

A potential difficulty with both qualitative, and to an extent quantitative research, lies in the concept of external validity or generalisability. In other words, how far can the results of a research project undertaken in a specific context be generalised or transferred to other contexts. It could be argued that the purpose of qualitative research is:

> not to generalise but rather to provide a rich, contextualised understanding of some aspect of human experience through the intensive study of particular cases.
>
> Polit & Beck (2010:1451)

Nonetheless, lack of consideration for generalisability can mean that outcomes of research are regarded as anecdotal incidents which have little relevance for other situations. I have outlined in Chapter one that I would hope this thesis would inform the practice of teacher educators and this will only be the case if transference of the findings is possible.

There are a number of ways the qualitative researcher can promote generalisability. One way is to ensure abundant data collection, but more importantly through the "thorough understanding of and engagement with the data" (Polit & Beck 2010:1456). This allows the researcher to identify both consistencies and inconsistencies between cases and thus moves from the anecdotal to the

development of a more analytical generalisation (Polit & Beck 2010, Denzin & Lincoln 2005). The number of interviews and analysis process described in this chapter indicates that the data is both substantive and extensively analysed. I have also described in the previous section the extent to which I have provided a thick description of both participant experiences and their context, which enhances internal and external validity.

Transferability can also be viewed as a collaborative enterprise where the researcher provides "detailed descriptions that allow readers to make inferences about extrapolating the findings to other settings" (Polit & Beck 2010:1453). Firestone (1993) has described the possibility of a case-to-case transfer where findings can be applied to a completely different context. It could be argued that the closer the new context is to the one described in the research, the more likely it is that transferability is possible. I have highlighted the fact throughout this thesis that the CELTA course context is relatively similar in its structure and process regardless of where it is delivered and this would suggest that my findings could be transferable to CELTA contexts. I also argue in Chapter seven that some of the learning events in the CELTA are similar to those on a range of teacher education courses and it could therefore be expected that some case to case transfer for my findings more widely within teacher education would be possible. In acknowledging the limitations of my study in Chapter seven I have addressed both the "range and limitations for application of the study findings" (Malterud 2001:484) as part of my discussion in relation to transferability.

4.3 Choice of research method.

In this section of the chapter I will consider the use of participant narratives of their learning as the strategy for data gathering. A form of narrative enquiry is considered here as the overarching research method. The value of this method will be considered in relation to the area that is to be investigated and the potential limitations of the data generated will be addressed. The focus will then move to the actual research tool which was used to generate the narratives: participant interviews.

A postmodern research paradigm as discussed so far in this chapter fully recognises the challenge of data gathering as an activity, given that we are not looking for numerical measurement, but instead propose that:

> Objective reality can never be captured. We know a thing only through its representations.
>
> Denzin & Lincoln 2008:7

This means we are looking at representations of a reality, and are thus interested in using methods which will generate participant meanings. In line with a qualitative, postmodern paradigm, the choice of method lies within the range of qualitative methodology which can provide participant generated narratives and create meanings rather than describing fixed phenomena.

The method adopted in this study is linked closely to the subject and focus of the research. The investigation is into participants' learning on a teacher education course. The complexity of the process can only be uncovered by the revelations of meanings by the participants through their interpretations of their experiences and actions. Therefore, it is not a question of "what is?" but rather "what do you believe to be?". A tenet of qualitative research is the primacy of meanings that people attribute to their reality and this is true for the participants describing their learning. The interpretive nature of reality can best be gleaned though the search for "thick description" (Dörnyei 2007:130), which is derived from individuals' description of both their meanings and beliefs and the context they are situated in. This interplay between the social context and the individual enriches the findings of the research. Participants provide their narratives of the reality they are experiencing. In this study, the narratives were the stories of participants' learning: they expressed the reality of their learning experience recorded at different points during the learning event; the CELTA course.

The narratives were collected through interviews which allowed the participants' story of their experience to become the reality that is investigated. The interviews could be described as ethnographic in nature (Holliday 2007). The CELTA course is a *natural setting* in as much as it is a model of teacher education that exists as a concept and entity within the world of English Language teacher training. Where the

research will differ from pure ethnographic approaches is that the observation was done through the eyes of the participants by asking them to recount the narrative of their learning. The researcher observed the participants describing their learning and the setting for the interviews (mainly classrooms) mirrored the settings for the participants' experiences. However, there was not any observation of the participants in their course setting, either where they were being taught by tutors or where they were teaching language learners.

This avoidance of a "prolonged engagement" model (Dörnyei 2007:131) where the researcher sits alongside the participants during their experience was due primarily to the focus on participant meaning. The postmodern paradigm means that participants are divulging their reality and not the researcher's. It is also avoided because of ethical reasons. It might have been a more stressful experience for the participants to have another observer in a setting where each observed act can form part of their overall assessment for the course. The intrusion of another person could impact on their performance in lessons and therefore on their overall performance on the course. It was therefore felt that participant data should be their lived experience described outside the context of where they experienced it.

In the section above on validity, I discussed how validity is often associated with the notion of triangulation, or observing things from different viewpoints or standpoints. It could be argued, therefore, that only having the participants' perspectives through interviews misses out on an opportunity to triangulate what they say with the reality of what they do in the classroom or even with what their trainers think about their learning on the course. An example from my study illustrates the rationale behind my choice to only include interviews. A participant commented in an interview that she never took an active part in feedback sessions. At the end of the interview she asked me whether I would be sitting in on any feedback sessions to check if this were really the case. My explanation at that moment crystalised the validity inherent in my choice. I responded that her expressed view that she did not participate was as interesting for my research as any attempt to contest what she had said through another perspective. To take this to an extreme, everything my participants say could be a lie. However, the nature of the lie is as worthy of exploration as any attempt to

assure some kind of truer picture. The research is based on the participants'
narratives and their stories are their own.

4.3.1 Narrative inquiry

The tradition of narrative inquiry in qualitative research into teacher education is
strong (Clandinin & Connelly 2000, Golombek and Johnson 2009, Liu & Zu 2011,
Sutherland et al 2010) and particularly useful in educational settings as it provides an
effective way to understand experience.

> Education and educational studies are a form of experience. For us, narrative
> is the best way of representing and understanding experience. Experience is
> what we study, and we study it narratively because narrative thinking is a key
> form of experience and a key way of writing and thinking about it.

> Clandinin & Connelly 2000:18

Narratives provide an interpretation of events and allow the researcher to examine
some causal networks as the narrator through their story links events, comments on
the origins and results of events and generally suggests not just what happens and
how it happens, but also why.

> Narratives by their very nature are not meant to describe phenomena
> objectively, but rather to connect phenomena and infuse them with
> interpretation. Narratives situate and relate facts to one another, and the
> essence of "truth" is how phenomena are connected and interpreted.

> Golombek and Johnson 2009:308

In a paradigm of qualitative research, narrative inquiry allows the researcher to look
at the experience of individuals within a larger social context. The narrator provides
their meaning within a temporal and defined social situation. For this study, we can
consider the participant who is a trainee on the CELTA course as the individual
within a defined social situation. The researcher gains the story of the individual as
they experience their context, which provides almost a *blow by blow* account of their
experience. The researcher is "concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and

129

telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives" (Clandinin & Connelly 2000:20).

4.3.2 Interview narratives as field text in narrative enquiry

The data collected as part of narrative enquiry is sometimes called "field texts" (Clandinin & Connelly 2000:110). Such texts can be created through a number of different means: interviews, notes in the field of research, journals and letters, to name but a few. Depending on how the texts are generated, the data will be either in the words of the participants or the words of the researcher. One method for generating narratives is for the researcher to "restory" or retell the narrative in the researcher's words. (Clandinin & Connelly 1986, Golombek & Johnson 2004, Liu & Zu 2011). Thus the participants' account becomes retold as a researcher-generated field text.

In this study I have used participants' narratives, the stories told by them as the field text and have not rewritten them as my own narratives. There are both linguistic and research-related rationales for this decision. The individual narrative of a participant as they recount their learning story will contain their own choice of language structures and vocabulary. This choice is integral to their form of expression and therefore the meaning they are creating. To rewrite the story introduces my words and expressions, which in turn inevitably distorts the meaning. I have explored this issue of distortion further in the section on the voice and echo of the interview below.

The second rationale is that by "asking participants to tell their own stories in their own way … the participants' intentions are uppermost". (Clandinin & Connelly 2000:111). I have stated at the outset of this research that my interest is in the perceptions of the participants as to what constitutes teacher knowledge and learning. Thus by allowing their first person stories to form the field text for this study I am remaining more congruent with this aim.

The use of interviews as field texts also recognises that narratives do not have to be interrupted monologues. A story can be created through an interview with the interviewer providing some intervention through asking for clarification or stimulating participants' contributions through initial scene-setting or questions. Some further

considerations about the extent of the interviewer's interventions are discussed below in the section on interview strategies.

4.3.3 The *How, What* and *Why* of narrative enquiry

Narratives allow for some revealing of causal networks. In other words the researcher, when looking at the data, may consider the question of *why* something happened. There are some things to be mindful of, however, in setting out to draw conclusions on the cause and effect relationship between events.

In general, *how* and *what* are considered valid areas of interest of the qualitative researcher (Holstein & Gubrium 2008). In constructing the meanings gained from different stories, the researcher gathers views of what happened and how it happened. Participants provide description of events and processes.

In this study, the *what* of teacher knowledge as interpreted by the participants is considered in relation to their wider worlds of experience. There is also a focus on the *how* of the learning process as described by the participants, looking at how they interact with the CELTA course and its activities. Thus, the areas for consideration in the study reflect the main threads of qualitative interpretive research.

> … the aim of an analytics of interpretive practice is to document the interplay between the practical reasoning and interactive machinery entailed in constructing a sense of everyday reality, on one hand, and the institutional conditions, resources, and related discourses that substantively nourish and interpretively mediate interaction, on the other.
>
> Holstein & Gubrium 2008:187

The qualitative researcher is often reluctant to engage with the *why*, with its slightly speculative activity of interpreting reasons for actions.

> Qualitative researchers typically approach why questions cautiously. Explanation is a tricky business, one that qualitative inquiry embraces discreetly in light of its appreciation for interpretive elasticity.
>
> Holstein & Gubrium 2008:193

131

This "tricky business" of working out some of the causal relationships between the findings of the data is to be approached with caution. However, it is likely that causal relationships will emerge where participants describe not only how something happened, but why. As part of the analysis of this reality, the *why* will be acknowledged as the participants' interpretation of causality. There may also be areas which would lead me to propose a suggested causality. Such proposals will be acknowledged as interpretive and open to other causal explanations.

4.3.4 The use of instrumental case studies within narrative enquiry

I have not taken a case study approach to my research because I am seeking findings about knowledge and learning rather than about individual participants. My study is not *bounded* (Holliday 2007, Denzin & Lincoln 2008) to one case and I have not designed the study to "optimise understanding of the case rather than to generalize beyond it" (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:120).

However, I have anticipated that the narrative of individuals would sometimes provide heightened analysis of a particular aspect of my research. This may be due to the fact that the participant had a particularly memorable experience or that their narrative provides a very full account of a phenomenon that other participants describe in a more general way. For this reason, some of the findings will be presented as *instrumental case studies* defined as:

> A particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization. The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else.

> Denzin & Lincoln 2008:123

Where I encounter a contribution from a participant which presents a more heightened example of something other participants allude to I may therefore draw on this one participant's narrative of an experience and scrutinise this individual narrative separate from the general findings. The *case* is used as an illustrative and insight-giving tool. It serves to heighten understanding not to be the sole focus of that understanding.

4.3.5 Reverse engineering: The narrative of the course

Participant narratives, their stories, will recount their engagement with the social processes on the course and, to some extent, will form an account of the course; they will provide a course narrative. It is therefore useful to consider the course itself as an entity which is being investigated. The CELTA course can be seen as a proxy participant in the research.

A useful analogy to consider how this study would narrate the course itself is the model of research used in software design called *Reverse Engineering*; often a contentious process with much discussion of its legality and morality. The general principle can be defined as:

> Taking shrink-wrapped products and physically dissecting them to uncover the secrets of their design…. In many industries, reverse engineering involves examining the product under a microscope or taking it apart and figuring out what each piece does.

> Eilam 2005:4

In this study, the taking apart under a microscope will be done by the participants. Their narratives will describe their own learning journey. However, because the learning journey takes place within the context of the CELTA course, it is likely that they will also comment on the individual *pieces* of the course and provide some examination of the course processes. The purpose of industrial reverse engineering is to use the secrets uncovered "to make similar or better products" (Eilam 2005:4). Similarly, the research outcomes allow for some suggestions around the structure of the course and similar courses.

As discussed in the previous chapter, other studies of teacher learning have also maintained a focus on one specific course (Busch 2010, Mattheoudakis 2006, and Urmston 2010). The outcomes of these studies have, for the main part, concerned the course participants, but the impact of different course processes has been considered. Studies by Gray (1998), Gray and Morton (2010) and Hockly (2000) have specifically investigated elements of the CELTA course and looked at how innovations within the course structure impact on participants on the course. In

reverse engineering terms, they sought to tinker with the product. All of these studies acknowledge the value of considering the narrative of the course as one of the narratives within the study.

4.4 Interviews as a tool of narrative enquiry

As discussed in the section above on field texts, there are many ways to collect narratives for analysis. For this research, the nature of the CELTA course itself suggested that some methods were less appropriate. The progress of participants on the course is assessed continually and there is the need for individuals to perform to the best of their ability throughout their hours of teaching. It was therefore felt that live observation of participants on the course could interfere with their performance and thus their overall final grade. The lack of any downtime in the teaching on the course places time and personal pressure on all participants. For this reason, the use of a written journal was rejected as it placed an additional burden of work on participants. However, participants were encouraged to provide written reflections via email and some did. These reflections tended to be shortly after one of the interviews, possibly because the discussion at the interviews had prompted more reflection on a particular issue raised in the interview.

The main data collection method used was, therefore, interviews with participants at various stages of the course as well as some after the course once they had gained some experience of teaching independently. Interviews allowed participants to narrate specific phenomena as they experienced and interpreted them.

The way an interview is constructed leads to it being situated on a continuum between unstructured and structured (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, Denscombe 1998). The more structured interview can be seen as almost like a "questionnaire administered face to face with a respondent" (Denscombe 1998:166) where the interviewer has tight control over the questions and the lack of follow-up questions is actually a strategy for ensuring reliability. Each participant has exactly the same experience of the interview. At the other end of the continuum is the unstructured interview, where the interviewer might simply start the theme and the focus is on the participants' own thoughts and words without much or any intervention by the interviewer.

Somewhere along the continuum lies the semi-structured interview; a mix of interviewer interventions and the participant recounting freely and allowed to move away from themes set by the interviewer. In practice, many interviews will slide along the scale from semi-structured to unstructured. These two points on the continuum are different from the structured interview and are more appropriate for qualitative research.

> Allowing interviewees to "speak their minds" is a better way of discovering things about complex issues and, generally, semi-structured and unstructured interviews … lend themselves to in-depth investigations, particularly those which explore personal accounts of experiences and feelings.

(Denscombe 1998:167)

For this study, which seeks to look at complex issues, semi-structured interviews were used. As acknowledged above, a researcher when conducting an interview is working with a continuum. Certainly, where participants engaged in extended, uninterrupted discourse, there was an element of an unstructured interview in the exchanges. Likewise at particular points during the discourse, where I may have asked for more specific detail, the interview became more structured. This is to be expected in the nature of natural spoken interaction and in the section below on the practical implementation of the interview I discuss the need to mirror natural interaction in order to generate the most reliable data. Examples of the interviewer asking for clarification can be seen in the interview transcripts in Appendix 1.

4.4.1 Reality and data: voice and echo of the interview

Any data gathering tool finds limitations in the extent to which it can adequately capture a reality. As Holliday highlights, any data is "already different from the social reality it is taken from" (Holliday 2007:91). As I interview the participants they are physically, temporally and emotionally distant from their experience on the CELTA course, even if the interviews were carried out five minutes after they had taught a lesson.

The study therefore will involve an *interpretation* of the reality of the course. Holliday (2007) uses the metaphor of a series of voices to highlight the different levels of

interpretation. The first voice is the personal narrative of the participant, the second when this turns into data, down to the fifth voice, which is the researcher pulling together different strands to produce an overarching argument. I feel that, potentially, a better metaphor for the interpretation is that of voice and echo.

The participant in the interview describes their experience. Already the description includes a selection of that experience; some things are left out, others added. Just like an echo, the description contains much of the original *voice* of the experience but with new tonal shades. The participant will highlight things that have most impact; they will modify their account in response to the questions that I ask. By recording the interviews, I have attempted to remove another level of *sound interference* in that I am recording all of the echoed experience. My analysis of the data, however, provides a further echo; I will focus on certain themes and distort the *sound* through my analysis. Through these processes I am not creating a new voice, but a voice that has shades of the original and shades of the new, just like echoes. It is therefore important to acknowledge the potential distortions that will inevitably occur during the research process. As highlighted earlier in the section on field texts, my decision not to retell or *restory* participants' interviews is an attempt to avoid further distortion through the introduction of my words instead of participants' words.

In an earlier section of this chapter, I highlighted the importance of the researcher being reflexive and being able to stand back and monitor our actions. Reflexivity also plays a role in managing the distortions caused by the distances between experience and the final recorded narrative. As with Giddens' (1991) explanation of reflexivity, knowledge and awareness of the distance and of the potential for distortion can help the researcher be more cognisant during interviews and ask for clarification and further between interviews, identify things which can be clarified in a later interview. In addition, where "dialogue, collaboration and the development of trusting relationships" (Warrin et al 2006:243) are important features of reflexivity, then the opportunity to build a positive relationship with participants over a number of interviews and to revisit topics from previous interviews serves to mediate against the effect of distance and time between experience and narrative.

4.4.2 Challenges of interviews as a data collection tool

Although it may physically look like a benign conversation, it would be naïve to think of an interview as a neutral event. A number of factors can impact on what a participant might say in an interview, thereby impacting on any data collected.

> The way an interviewer acts, questions, and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the way participants respond and give accounts of their experience.
>
> Clandinin & Connelly 2000:110

Throughout an interview the interviewer, or the interviewee, may control the event by imposing their view of what should be said either consciously or unintentionally. The time of day, the physical space in which the interview takes place and ongoing events for the two participants before the interview takes place may all impact on what is said and therefore what data is collected. It is not possible to divorce the data gathered through interview from the impact of these circumstances. What is possible, and what is completely congruent with a qualitative paradigm, is to acknowledge the context of data collection in the findings and be concerned about validity of data in a way which may better correspond to a qualitative research paradigm as discussed earlier in the section on validity.

A further challenge of the interview, closer to the unstructured end of the continuum, can be found within the linguistic area of genre analysis, which highlights the difficulty of engaging in spoken or written genres whose conventions we are unfamiliar with. Unstructured interviews are likely to be a very unfamiliar genre for most, if not all of the participants. Within the broader spoken genre of *interview,* our schematic knowledge of the features of the genre are likely to be gleaned from its more frequent occurrences: job interviews or TV/radio interviews to name but two. All of these examples are *structured interviews* where the interviewer has a fixed set of questions, though these can sometimes include follow-up questions depending on the context. The stretches of talk that the interviewee engages in are likely to be short and the genre will demand that they provide an answer to the question.

Expecting anyone to engage in a completely unstructured interview forces them to engage in a very unfamiliar spoken genre and this may interfere with the ability of the participants to respond. For this reason, the interviews are undertaken with key themes in mind, but also with the acknowledgement that they may at any stage slide between semi- and unstructured, while always considering the dangers of:

> Fearing that the interview might be on the verge of breaking down, the researcher can feel the need to say something quickly to kick-start the discussion.

> Denscombe 1998:178

Maintaining the balance between anxiety if there is silence in the interview and pushing the interview down the interviewer's pre-determined route is certainly a challenge. The solution seems to lie in continual mindfulness of the dangers and practice to get the interview technique as developed as possible.

The questioning of unstructured interviews as a tool for screening applicants for a job (Dana et al 2013) raises issues about the generation of data. Dana et al have illustrated that our efforts at sensemaking when we are presented with information from unstructured interviews actually means we surmise that all the information is valid, even when, in their study, the information was falsified. The study warns about the power of "sensemaking" (Dana et al 2013:519) for the researcher, who may try to draw out of the data what fits with the research questions rather than what is emerging. This may lead the interviewer to pre-empt interpretations of the data during the interview and there is potential for leading the participant to a narrative they may not have intended to include. Again, the best strategy to combat this is an a priori awareness of this effect during the interviews and in the analysis of the data.

Despite some of these challenges, interviews have been widely used in studies of teacher learning, suggesting that they would be an effective tool in this study. Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) use a similar interview schedule to this study and semi-structured interviews to investigate changes to teachers' pre-existing beliefs during a teacher education programme. In a study on a similar theme, Borg (2011) combines semi-structured interviews with course documentation: reflective diaries, teaching documentation and assignments. Both of these studies drew conclusions

about the learning of participants on the course and the narrative accounts of the individuals' experience were an effective tool in reaching their conclusions.

Abednia's study of teachers' professional identity highlights the importance of viewing teachers not as passive recipients or "empty vessels to be filled with knowledge and skills of teaching" (Abednia 2012:706) but as creators of their own knowledge. The study reinforces the idea that if we view learning as constructed by the individuals who are learning, then interviews are a good way of gaining insight into that construction. Abednia explains how:

> Interview was the main tool for exploring the shifts in the participants' professional identities … since it provides a comprehensive picture of its different dimensions.
>
> Abednia 2012:708

Thus the complexity of changes experienced by the participants is felt to be best captured through the use of interview.

As mentioned above, Borg (2011) combines the use of interview with the scrutiny of course documentation. Borg (2005) looks at the views of teachers on a CELTA course and also engaged in the course and observed planning sessions for teaching practice and the teaching practice and feedback session. I have already mentioned the ethical reasons for not engaging in live observation of the course due to its potential negative impact on participants' performance in lessons. I am basing my findings, therefore, on participants' narrative of their learning through interviews. This, I believe, is congruent with a qualitative paradigm, where I seek to reveal one perspective rather than looking for triangulation from multiple perspectives.

4.4.3 The research diary – the research tool of the researcher as participant.

Within the qualitative research paradigm adopted in this study it is recognised and discussed in sections above that the researcher is also a participant in the research. This participation can take a number of forms. As the researcher uncovers meanings generated by data collection they may develop ideas that form part of the emerging interpretation. This might take the form of *noticing* some emerging findings. The researcher is likely to have, as is the case in this study, some familiarity with the

context of the research and have some pre-existing ideas about the research questions. However, the story of the research is also the story of the *changing ideas* of the researcher and this is worth recording. Finally, as the research progresses, the researcher will be honing and refining the research focus. This process also forms part of the research as any *redirection* of the research is a finding in itself.

It is therefore of value for the researcher to record their thoughts throughout the research process. One of the most common tools to do this is a research diary. The diary exists parallel to any other data source as an acknowledgement that the researcher offers another perspective which provides yet a further layer of data, contributing to a thick description. As a concept the diary is an interpretative tool. It represents a written account of the researcher's thoughts and so is one, or perhaps two steps from those thoughts. The first step could be seen as the inner voice of the researcher putting the thought into language. The second step would be transferring that language into a written text.

I attempted at the outset to keep a diary. I found the entries to be distanced from my original thoughts and when I looked at them at a later date, I did not feel connected to those thoughts. Vygotsky (1962) has recognised the fundamental role that language plays in the creation of thought. In this study the creation of signs through language as a step in learning is one of the themes that emerge from the data. However, the process of writing the diary prompted me to question the extent to which this form of written language was the best way to *represent* my thoughts.

I began to explore the idea of whether language is thought. In other words, whether my utterances and writing are my thinking. There is an assumption outlined by Freeman that "language data, from whatever source represents thought" (Freeman 1996:736). He describes this assumption as being "a foundational assumption" in "wider socio-political and epistemological dimensions" (Freeman 1996:736) when considering teachers' inner worlds. This assumption is evident in the widely used tools for research into teachers' worlds, some of them used in this study: interviews, diaries, field notes on interaction.

Freeman, however, recognises that the linguist brings another perspective. This perspective emphasises that "language data must be studied for what it is –

language – and how it is presenting the world, rather than simply for what it says about that world" (Freeman 1996:744). Drawing on the work of de Saussure, Freeman explores how the individual engages in meaning-making through language and highlights the fact that "language depends on a speech community to create and sustain meanings" (Freeman 1996:745).

In the context of Freeman's analysis it is difficult to see the diary as a genre that is capable of representing the world of my thoughts very well. A diary as a linguistic genre could be said to be an internal monologue, but it is a monologue that is edited for external viewing as I am aware when I am writing that my utterances become public by writing them. It is also edited by time. Even if I were to write the thoughts immediately after thinking them, there is still a lag of time between the thought and the writing. There is also an editing of the complexity. Thought is instantaneous and has huge complexity. It would be difficult to render this complexity into a diary entry. I therefore searched for another tool with which to record the story of the researcher.

An example comes from one key moment in my research journey, which was my realisation that the concept of *reification,* which I wanted to use in my study, was best encapsulated in a scene from a film I was familiar with. I began to write about this in diary form. I soon gave up, realising the scene itself was a better *record* of my thoughts than a diary description of them. The scene was a direct link to the inner voice without interference from a second written interpretation. This direct link allowed the immediate memory to be accessed, an immediacy which overcame the time lag present in the written account. I needed something to store the idea of the scene rather than my account of how the scene developed my thinking. I looked for some kind of repository that could contain, but was not limited to, written form.

4.4.4 The tool of the researcher as bricoleur - a scrapbook

The qualitative researcher is often described by metaphors that belie the use of language at all. The notions of "bricoleur and quilt maker" (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:5) suggest someone working with physical objects to create their piece of work. Such images provided a powerful permission for me to develop my own tool for recording my participation in this research.

141

> The qualitative researcher as bricoleur, or maker of quilts, uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods and empirical materials are at hand … If the researcher needs to invent, or piece together, new tools or techniques, he or she will do so.

> Denzin & Lincoln 2008:5

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have identified a number of alternative tools that can act as a record of narratives. They mention photographs and memory boxes as two possible tools. These collections can then be used to "trigger memories of important times, people, and events" (Clandinin & Connelly 200:114). I was drawn to their idea that these memory boxes would contain a set of *artefacts* and felt that such a concept might be better suited to recording my narrative through the research. They seemed to promise a richness that had eluded me in the writing of a diary.

> It is these artefacts, collected in our lives that provide a rich source of memories. Viewing these documents in the context of a narrative inquiry constitutes something that might be called an archaeology of memory and meaning.

> Clandinin & Connelly 2000:114

I then chose the concept of *scrapbook* rather than a memory box as it was a more familiar concept from my childhood. As I was only going to use the scrapbook for my reflections, I felt it was justified that I would choose something that resonated with me on a personal level. I purchased a scrapbook so that I could match the concept to the physical reality and began to place the items, which I called *artefacts*, within the scrapbook.

I placed in the scrapbook anything that reminds me of a thought related to my research. There is no limit to the type of artefacts. Some are pictures, some are scribbled notes, and some are transcripts of conversations, extracts from film screenplays, quotes from novels. As a practical measure, I tended to place pictures of objects rather than the objects themselves, for example, a picture of a film DVD. There was a general thematic structure, but it is recognised that the order is not important as simply viewing the artefact acts as the trigger for remembering the

142

thought, regardless of when the thought occurred. Some examples from the pages of the scrapbook are in Appendix 2.

In searching for a description of how the scrapbook acts as a memory trigger, I felt that the best reference was the famous literary passage from Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, where he describes the way the vision, taste and smell of a Madeleine cake dipped in tea evokes a memory from his childhood. The passage is given in translation and in the original below but the discussion will focus on the original passage as the key concepts are not particularly well rendered in the translation.

> And once I had recognized the taste of the crumb of Madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime-flowers which my aunt used to give me ... immediately the old grey house upon the street, where her room was, rose up like the scenery of a theatre to attach itself to the little pavilion … taking their proper shapes and growing solid, sprang into being, town and gardens alike, from my cup of tea.
>
> Proust: *Remembrance of Things Past.* P.63

> Et dès que j'eus reconnu le goût du morceau de Madeleine trempé dans le tilleul que me donnait ma tante … aussitôt la vieille maison grise sur la rue, où était sa chambre, vint comme un décor de théâtre … Tout cela qui prend forme et solidité, est sortie, ville et jardins, de ma tasse de thé.
>
> Proust: *A la recherche du temps perdu.* P.31

The first thing to consider relates to the immediacy of the memory recall. *Dès que* and aussitôt suggest that it is an immediate moment. There is no time lag, no interference between the taste of the cake and the memory. The adjacency of the object and the memory was something I sought. When I look at an artefact in the scrapbook I relive, at that moment, the memory and thought that is associated with the object. I found this to be a superior recall to a language description of what I had thought at that moment.

The second point is the complexity of the memory. Proust expresses surprise that *Tout cela qui prend forme et solidité*, all of that takes shape. The memory is limitless. He can picture every detail of the scene. Again, this was something I felt was not contained in a diary, which was reductive of the memory. Instead I now have something that encapsulates a more multi-dimensional memory. I can often recall being in the place where I first had the thought. The different dimensions strengthen the memory and give it a richness which was missing in the diary.

4.5 The procedure for collecting the qualitative data

In the following sections of this chapter I detail the process of collecting and analysing the data for my research. I relate my strategies to some of the concepts and concerns about both the methodology and the tools discussed thus far in the chapter. I also outline some of the steps I have taken to ensure the data and the analysis are as valid as possible in qualitative terms.

The collection of data for this study was done with three different groups of participants. As highlighted in the section earlier in this chapter on my own cognitive preferences, one of the aims of the data collection with the first pilot group was to reassure myself about the generation of data through a qualitative methodology. As part of the data collection with this pilot group I recorded some of the interviews and took notes in others. I found the notes to be less effective in generating data and therefore with the second group of participants all interviews were recorded. The final set of interviews was done after emerging findings had been drawn out. This was to gather data from participants taking a course delivered in a different setting and to see whether similar or contrasting findings emerged.

The first two groups were following a course with the same format: a part-time programme delivered in a university setting over five months with three meetings a week. Course participants attended two days a week for taught input by tutors. This was reduced to one day a week in the latter stages of the course. They also attended on one other evening to do their teaching practice with a group of volunteer learners. For this activity they were in teaching practice groups of three or four trainees. All my interviews took place on the days when participants attended for taught input. This was because these days were less pressurised for participants

and they had more time available to be interviewed. The final group also attended a part-time programme but in a further education setting. The course was over five months and took place one day a week. The interviews were conducted on days when the participants were not engaged in course activity and were done at three points during the course, as with the other groups.

The pilot study and the follow-up study contributed to the iterative nature of the data collection. There was a six-month gap between the pilot study and the next group interviews and this allowed for some preliminary analysis of emerging findings. There was a gap of three years between the main group and the final group, during which time more analysis was done of the data. Such an approach acknowledges the non-linear process of qualitative data collection where there is no one moment where data collection begins and ends, it is a continuous cycle "back and forth between data collection, data analysis and data interpretation depending on the emergent results. (Dörnyei 2007:243).

The pilot study was carried out with four participants from January to May 2011; the main study was with six participants from January to May 2012. The follow-up study was done with two participants from October 2014 to February 2015. The data collection timeline is provided in the tables below. There is also a brief summary of the participants with the participant letter identifier, information on gender and the different prior teaching experience. A more detailed description of the participants' background is provided in Appendix 3.

4.5.1 Data collection timeline

Pilot study (Jan-May 2011)

Trainee	Male / female	Experience
N	M	Completed similar course 20 years previously. No experience in the meantime.
T	M	No previous teaching experience
E	F	4 years training in a public organisation
S	F	5 years working on English language summer schools

Main study (Jan-May 2012)

Trainee	Male / female	Experience
M	F	Facilitates Weight Watchers groups (3 years)
L	F	1 year teaching assistant at a secondary school
H	F	2 years teaching cello one-to-one
J	F	No previous teaching experience
G	F	Some informal English conversation classes during year spent in Italy.
C	F	8 years teaching at a further education college (not English language)

Supplementary interviews (October 2014- February 2015)

Trainee	Male / female	Experience
O	M	Taught snowboarding to children
U	F	Part-time voluntary hours (not English language) in a College over one year.

4.5.2 Interview timeline

The interviews with participants took place on three occasions, which corresponded with three distinct points in the course. The first interview was after the start of the course but before the participants had done any significant teaching themselves. They had watched one or two videos of teachers in their lessons and some had already undertaken some live observations of experienced teachers. I felt it was important to situate the first observation before they had done much teaching. Although many of the participants had undertaken a teaching role in the past, this was their first role in teaching English language to groups. I could therefore ask about their expectations in a context where they had not much concrete experience to draw on.

The second interview was at approximately the mid-point in the course. Participants had taught four or five times, totalling approximately two hours of teaching. Most of them had only taught one level of learners of the two distinct levels they teach over the course. They had also taken part in their first tutorial on the course, where they would have been given feedback on their progress. They would have completed at least two of the four written assignments which form part of the course assessment.

The final interview took place at the end of the course when all participants had completed their teaching practice or, in two cases, had one lesson (1 hour) still to teach. The final interview timing allowed the participants to look back over their learning on the course, but for some it was also an opportunity to look forward as

they already had an idea of future teaching roles they would be or would like to be engaged in.

Interview 1		Interview 2		Interview 3
1/2 weeks of taught input attended. Videos/live observation completed. No or very little teaching practice.	→	At least 2 hours of teaching practice completed with one level of learners.	→	Most/all 6 hours of teaching practice completed.
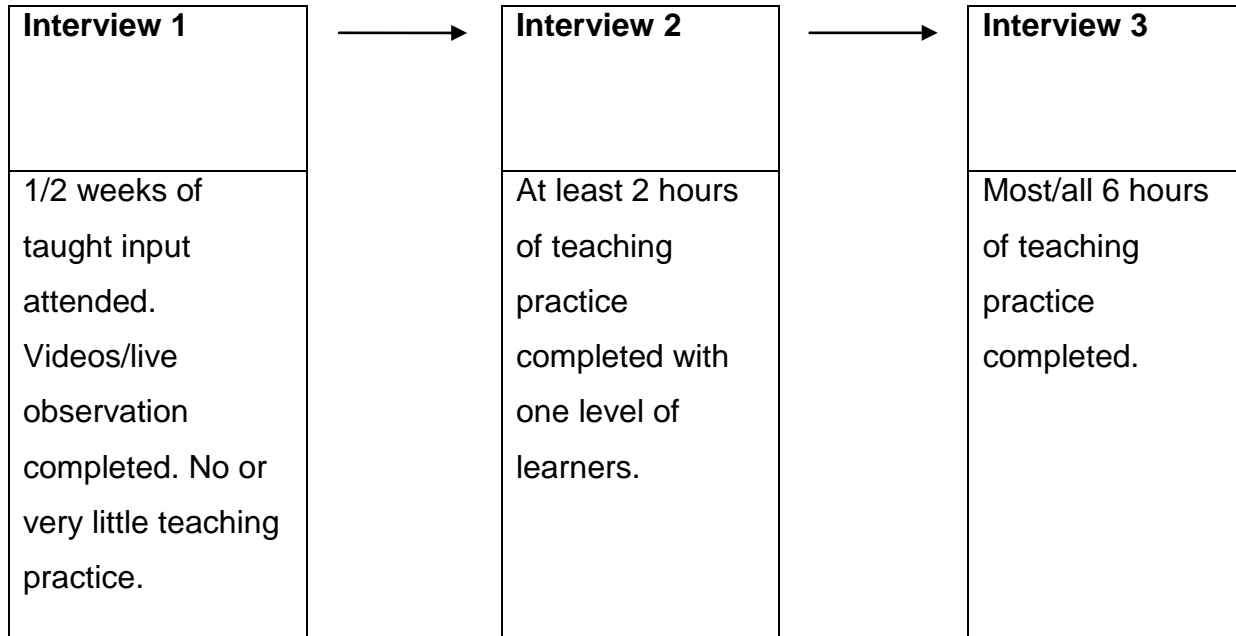
In addition, three participants were interviewed after the course. One was interviewed six months and one year after and had taught part-time during the year. Another was interviewed a year after and had done some one-to-one teaching in the interim. The third had not done any teaching between finishing the course and the interview.

4.5.3 Sampling

The table above outlining the data collection timeline also highlights the gender profile and differing levels of experience of participants. There is no set pattern to the profile and this is due to the fact that the sampling of participants was largely "convenient" (Maxwell 2005:88) as I relied on volunteers to take part in the research. Whoever was willing to be interviewed would be included in the study. It can be argued that convenient sampling is less valid as it does not always capture heterogeneity or represent the entire range of variation (Maxwell 2005). For example, the participants did not represent the gender balance of all CELTA courses. The pilot group was split equally between male and female and so it was

possible to see if any contradictory data was emerging from the male participants in the pilot study. Convenient sampling is often the only way to collect data as we are reliant on individuals to offer their time. This was a factor in my research as all the participants would be engaging in a demanding course of study and the interviews represent an additional time burden. The opportunistic nature of the sampling does not necessarily undermine the validity of the data collection process.

Another consideration that was relevant to the process is that of "purposeful sampling" (Dörnyei 2007:126) to find participants who can provide rich and varied data. It is more likely that those who volunteered for the interviews will have a greater interest in exploring their learning and should be better able to articulate the meanings they attach to their learning process. It could also be argued that those who volunteer are likely to be more confident and therefore more willing to be candid about their experiences as they worry less about any impact of the research on the outcome of the course.

4.5.4 Research relationships

As a researcher I have both a relationship with the research and with the participants and one is intertwined with the other. Liu and Zu point the importance for validity of securing:

> high quality data through building trust and rapport with our participant so that the stories are told with fidelity.

> Liu & Zu 2011:591

Thus my relationship with participants contributes to the quality of the data I collect. An aspect of this relationship is described by Fontana and Frey as "Deciding how to present oneself" (Fontana and Frey 2005:705). This posed an interesting quandary in the study. In order to encourage participants to engage in the study and to win their trust, I let the participants know that the research is about finding aspects of the course that lead to learning. This in turn may have encouraged participants to seek positive aspects and make their narrative biased towards this. Yet not stating a position is likely to keep the participants in a state of not knowing what the

researcher is *getting at* and could result in a break in the trust and confidence that would undermine any emerging narrative.

The participants were fully aware that I also worked on CELTA courses, as this was part of my introduction as to why I was undertaking the research. A key ethical element to the relationship with the participants was the guarantee that I would not be involved in any way in the assessment of their progress on the course. This in turn helped to build a rapport as participants did not feel that anything they said would impact on their progress and, more importantly, the assessment of their progress. I also organised the interviews on the days when they were attending the input sessions rather than the days when they were doing teaching practice. I felt that attendance at taught sessions was a more neutral event in terms of judgments being made about their performance and that they would be more likely to perceive my role as non-judgmental.

I also have a relationship with the research itself as I have what could be described as a vested interest in the outcomes. This means that I am keen to generate data that can yield findings and may be tempted to push participants to express meanings which provide me with richer data. As discussed at a number of points in this chapter, I have experience of the CELTA course and have a positive regard for the course, an inherent bias. My presentation of myself to the participants as described above is one way to ensure that I am aware of how "one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand" (Maykut & Morehouse 1994:123) and that I am open about this with participants. This is part of the reflexivity of the research as at each stage the researcher attempts to aim for *Epoche* or the suspension of judgment when gathering data and seeking to bring out meaning. By openly stating my positive view point or bias I am better able to acknowledge its presence and suspend its impact on the research.

4.5.5 Maintaining validity in the data collection

As noted in the initial sections of this chapter, qualitative researchers seek to maintain validity in research through the collection of different views and perspectives, rather than through a numerical triangulation of results. I have already explored how the recognition of my own bias within the research contributed to

validity as well as how I attempted to establish the best research relationship with my participants. I will now consider some further steps taken during the data collection and relate this to Maxwell's "validity tests" (Maxwell 2005:113)

The first point relates to the simple mechanics of data collection and to Maxwell's notion of "rich data" (Maxwell 2005:114). Rich data is constituted when the most detailed data is collected from any situation, for example, by transcribing interviews rather than making notes on what was said. As outlined earlier, with each of the participants in the pilot studies only two out of the three interviews were recorded. It became apparent that note-taking on the interview was not generating the richest data. For all the other interviews full transcripts were made allowing for the fullest data to be available for analysis.

Maxwell identifies the most important test as that of respondent validation, where the researcher solicits feedback on data. The time lag between interviews allowed me to listen to each interview and, where pertinent, ask the participant to reflect on contributions from previous interviews. In some of the interviews, participants remarked on how some of their views had changed over the course and there was a sense of "that was then, this is now" to some of their comments, which provided an interesting insight into their learning as well as contributing to the validity of the data. This checking process was one of the ways to make the process more iterative (Dörnyei 2007) while contributing to validity. Once the interviews were completed, participants were sent the transcripts and invited to comment. In two cases participants wanted to clarify comments they had made.

The intervention test (Maxwell 2005) acknowledges that the researcher's presence always constitutes an intervention and it is fully recognised here that interviews are not "the neutral tool of data gathering" (Fontana and Frey 2005:698). Any interview is an interaction where two or more people negotiate meanings. Techniques to have some neutrality in the interviews were the use of open questions such as "Tell me about X" or "What about X". Nevertheless, mentioning "X" immediately brings in the researcher's construct as it stakes a claim to "X" having importance and value. This echoes the challenge posed by having a priori research questions. I come to the research with an interest in certain areas. This will facilitate additional questions for clarification when one of these areas is mentioned by participants. During the

interviews I attempted not to lead or redirect the participants, but I asked for clarification on a number of occasions. I felt this was a valid strategy in seeking more narration in relation to a particular point rather than excluding other points that the participant wished to make. As Maxwell concludes:

> It is impossible to remove the "lens" of the researcher. It is not about eliminating researcher bias, but understanding what it brings to the research.

> Maxwell 2005:108

Thus by highlighting my awareness that I am a participant in the interviews and remaining vigilant to the impact of my presence, I have tried to ensure that participants' narratives are as valid an expression of their reality as possible.

4.6 Analysis of data

In order to describe the process of analysis of my data, I will refer to the four different stages outlined by Holliday to describe how we move "from data to writing" (Holliday 2007:90). I have chosen this framework as it fully acknowledges the ebb and flow which occurs between the extrapolation and writing of findings and the analysis itself.

> While it is very important to understand the conceptual differences between data collection and analysis and writing, these two major activities need to happen at the same time and feed off each other.

> Holliday 2007:90

The four stages Holliday proposes are: the corpus of raw data, data analysis, creation of themes and the creation of the text of data discussion. All of these interact with the researcher's agendas, theories, preoccupations and biography.

However, Holliday recognises that these stages are not separate and they will intertwine with each other as the formulation of findings takes place. An illustration of this is the early iterations of findings discussed in the following section. Although these are not the same as the findings discussed in Chapters five and six, they represent the search for the themes and theories that were emerging at the time. Thus writing and data interacted with each other as each formulation of emerging themes allowed for a re-examination of the data with a better-honed lens. A useful

metaphor for the interaction of writing and data would be the focusing of a camera or telescope lens. Each attempt at creating themes and writing about emerging conclusions sharpened the focus of the lens which was then reapplied to the data.

I now consider each of the stages mentioned above and describe the way in which I worked with the data. They are separated for the purpose of providing an appropriate description, but it is fully recognised and acknowledged throughout that each stage interacted with others as I processed the collected data.

(1) Corpus of raw data

The data collected was a series of transcribed interviews with the participants. There were also some emailed reflections by some participants as well as some notes I took from the pilot study interviews where I did not record the interview. As interviews are examples of spoken text, the written form will lose certain features such as intonation and word emphasis, which may impact on meaning. To ensure reference could be made to these features all the recordings were saved so that they could be listened to again during the analysis, if necessary.

Holliday includes in this stage the noticing of what the researcher "finds to be important or significant" (Holliday 2007:90). As part of the interview process outlined above, some of my internal references to participants' previous interviews, those questions which sought to verify meanings articulated, were already part of my identification of important areas. Raising an issue again in a subsequent interview highlighted the fact that I was beginning to see this as a significant point. It also recognises the interference of my theories and pre-occupations as mentioned above.

The examples below of such interaction include questions which ask the participant to reflect on the previous interview, to reflect in a more general way and to comment specifically on a case they raised in the previous interview.

1. You talked the last time about learning, about planning and also speaking less in class. Are they the things you've continued to learn or are there other things? (S3 1:11)

2. Do you think your idea of teaching has changed since the beginning of the course? (T2 5:180)

153

3. You had a very interesting example the last time we spoke about a technique you tried … as you'd seen other people use it you became more confident … has there been any other example? (T3 3:104-106)

The questions indicate that between interviews, some analysis had been done and that themes such as learning of targeted techniques and participants' views of teaching were valuable areas to focus on and were, therefore, raised through a more direct and structured manner in the subsequent interview.

This interaction shows how the raw data can incorporate the researcher's preoccupations, yet the researcher can remain "sincere and truthful" (Holliday 2007:90). A further example illustrates this point. One of the areas of the course I expected (thus evidencing preoccupation, theory and biography) participants to comment on was the joint lesson planning. Initially, I thought they might identify this as a fruitful area of learning. In Chapter three I included a study by Gray and Morton (2010) investigating the success of this aspect of the course as a positive example of social learning. In gathering the data, I asked participants about this part of the course and there was unanimous rejection of it as an important part of their learning. Thus, asking the question and recording the answers allows me to acknowledge both my own theory as well as participants' meaning and the fact that they were not congruent.

Work with the raw data began with an initial listening to each interview before the subsequent interview. This allowed for formulating some themes for the next interview. As highlighted in the specific examples above, in second and third interviews there were a number of questions beginning with such phrasing as: "In the last interview you mentioned that … Do you still feel the same/ think the same?" The references allowed for more validity within the data collection but also allowed for threads to be made once the work began with the whole corpus of data. At the end of the course, with each group of participants, the interviews were then read through as a whole, chronologically for each participant. Some very general notes were taken as to points which seemed to stand out in this first reading. These very initial thematic strands are given below. These strands formed the beginning of the next stage of data analysis.

Initial thematic strands:

- Constructs of knowledge include prior experience of being a learner, but also more general views of what it means to be a teacher.

- Identification of own personality traits by participants were linked to noticing and learning.

- A strong preference for and value placed on procedural knowledge of how to structure a lesson.

- Being "natural" in the classroom emerged as participants progressed in the course. Learners' reactions also became important.

- Observing other teachers was important, but it was not always through observing very effective teachers that learning took place.

- The verity of feedback by participants on their own and others' teaching was questionable.

The time gaps between the different groups of participants posed some challenges but also provided some positive aspects in terms of creating the corpus of data. In between the pilot and the main group, I continued with reading and writing of some emerging findings. This meant that with the group of six participants I had probably better-honed areas for exploration in the interviews. One of the areas that was more fully addressed in the second group was around the question of prior knowledge as I had begun to notice that the pilot group referred to this quite often. However, using semi-structured interviews allows everything to be included and the fact that the interviews had underlying themes does not mean that they excluded additional areas. As a result of the time gap I was unable to return to the pilot group to ask them follow-up questions about some of the emerging points from the second group. Instead, by rereading the first interviews I was able to apply new findings retrospectively on my analysis of their narrative, though not able to ask for clarification. By the time I interviewed the final group of two, I had quite well formed findings which had emerged. The transcripts of interviews in Appendix 1 indicate that

I remained open to new points and did not prescribe the questions to relate to my emerging findings.

(2) data analysis

The first step in data analysis according to Holliday (2007) is considering the "overall character" of the corpus (Holliday 2007:90). As discussed above, this actually formed part of the generation of the corpus since the use of longitudinal interviews over the duration of the participants' course allowed for continual listening to interviews and identification of the overall character.

The next part of the data analysis is the searching for "natural divisions" (Holliday 2007:90). The identification of divisions or categories is often referred to as coding, with the expectation that the researcher will annotate the written data with a code to illustrate which parts of the corpus pertain to which category or division. As such coding is a categorisation strategy (Maxwell 2005), and the setting of the research questions is already an organisational categorisation of "broad areas or issues that you establish prior to your interviews" (Maxwell 2005:97). These categories help in the search for key themes and as such can point the researcher to what they are looking at, but do not necessarily help to make sense of what is found.

The first stage of coding was to consider substantive and theoretical categories, "ones that provide some insight into what's going on" (Maxwell 2005:97). The substantive categories were mainly descriptive and are closer to the data in that they did not yet offer a theoretical perspective on what is being researched. This form of coding can be referred to as "open coding" (Denscombe 1998:271) where the researcher simply notes general themes that seem to be occurring in participants' narratives. Such an approach could be described as more of an "intuitive approach" (Dörnyei 2007:244), where the researcher is simply noting down points that seem to stand out by the number of times participants mention them within an interview or across interviews.

As a practical process I read through the transcripts again and began to extract examples of common themes emerging on separate notes. In many descriptions of coding, researchers mark their corpus with a code to help with finding the example at a later date. I decided that it was important to maintain a *clean* copy of the transcript

without annotation so that every rereading would present the words of the transcript to me afresh. I would not be visually distracted by categorisations I had carried out in previous reading. I was able to locate each point again by the use of a reference number combining the number of the interview (1, 2 or 3), the page in the transcript and the line. So for example, an extract from trainee G's second interview on page 4, line 25 of the transcript would be noted as: G2, 4:25. In Appendix 1 I illustrate the transfer of the quotes from the transcript into a coded sheet which is separate from the original interview. In Appendix 1 I have used the series of three interviews with one participant and included notes relating the three main overarching themes which emerged as detailed in (3) below.

The transcript presents a written copy of what is spoken data. I have already alluded to the importance of listening to the recorded interviews to take note of the way a speaker expressed their meanings. Annotating on the transcript represented to me a distortion that would make my analysis less valid. For practical reasons, I underlined parts of the interview which belonged to a particular category so that I could find it more easily, but by writing out the quote on a separate sheet in a category allowed me to revisit the corpus with a fresher view.

The first coding exercise produced divisions which had a clear relationship to the research questions. This is to be expected since the questions themselves present categories which would impact on the questions asked in the interviews. Within each division, however, there were sub-categories which included many unexpected areas. For example, participants' reference to personality and the notion of being "natural". A table with the first set of categories and sub categories is below:

First coding

Category	Sub Category

What constitutes "teacher knowledge" – (research question 1).	1. The knowledge, beliefs that trainees bring with them to the course. Gained from:
	   a. Their experiences as learners or teachers.
	   b. Other socially constructed beliefs about what a teacher is/does.

	2. The impact of personality – is who we are as a teacher an extension of who we are as a person? a. The issue of being "natural" or "yourself" and whether this is impossible while training and leads to a loss of identity.
	3. The interaction of doing and thinking. The synthesis of classroom skills and knowing why you are doing things.
The impact of the processes of teacher education (research question 2).	4. The importance of signs/reification/proceduralisation of the teaching process. How giving names to concepts impacts on learning.
	5. Noticing, copying, imitation and the impact of having to do what you are told.
	6. The different steps in learning, exploring why different trainees might go through different processes.
The relationships in the training process (research question 3).	7. Views of expertness and superior knowledge of the tutor and how this impacts on learning.
	8. The group relationship and the limitation on critical feedback from peers.
	9. The challenges of co-created knowledge when there is an imbalance of power between tutor and trainee through the assessment process.

(3) Creation of themes

As discussed above, the identification of the first categories was followed by interim writing up of preliminary findings which further honed the lens of inquiry as I returned to the data, reread it and found headings within these categories. Thus the interaction with the data became more focused as I began to formulate initial ideas of what was actually emerging from it. I found that some findings had to be rejected as

further scrutiny of the data presented conflicting evidence or narratives that were inconsistent and difficult to draw conclusions from.

An example of this is subtheme three: *The interaction of doing and thinking. The synthesis of classroom skills and knowing why you are doing things*. In earlier coding it seemed that participants were identifying separate forms of knowledge, knowledge of how to do and knowledge of why. As the data analysis progressed and I re-read each interview, it emerged that rather than co-existing knowledges, the *knowing why* seemed to be generated by the *knowing how* as well as by other aspects of their experience, such as learner reactions. Likewise with subtheme nine: *The challenges of co-created knowledge when there is an imbalance of power between tutor and trainee through the assessment process*. This seemed to be a major area to consider on the first categorisation and, on reflection, may have been partly due to my own surprise at the level of deliberate fabrication which participants said they engaged in during feedback. With the awareness of my surprise and incorporating a more reflexive reading, I was able to be clearer on the fact that the fabrication for participants was not necessarily a barrier to learning. They expected not to hear the truth, but were able to gain from what they heard, not least because I began to see how they relied on tutor feedback as the main source of their learning.

I then began the final organisation of themes which would provide the main structure of my findings chapters. To do this I returned to the three overarching themes given in the table presented above. The two main themes were related to teacher knowledge and teacher learning. A difficulty was posed by the fact that as participants described aspects of teacher knowledge, they were equally describing how they acquired that knowledge: their learning. The third theme of *relationships* on the course, as the analysis progressed, seemed to fit more under the theme of teacher learning. In addition, the subtheme of prior learning was generating a lot of and more complex data than I had initially envisaged. I therefore set about a re-categorisation which addressed these emerging issues.

My first category was *What I want to learn*, which covered views of prior knowledge but also initial views of teacher knowledge prior to much experience of the course. The second category was *What I am learning*, which revisited constructs of teacher knowledge but allowed for changes and modification of those constructs and

therefore incorporated some aspects of learning. The final category was *What processes helped (or did not help) me learn*, which had a much stronger emphasis on learning and included those comments on relationships within the course.

I re-assigned extracts from the transcriptions to these categories. As I did so, invariably there were some that fitted into more than one category. In such cases I recorded them twice. I then annotated these extracts with notes identifying more specific features which were emerging as I was in the process of writing up findings. A photograph of one of the notes pages is below and Appendix 1 provides an example of one participant's interviews and the notes pages relating to the three categories.

The extract below is dealing with processes of learning. The extracts from the transcriptions are on the left with the numbers referring to the interview. This is to allow for revising the original interview to verify exact working if the extract is to be used in the findings. In pink along the right hand side are the notes identifying, for example, "observation" or "feedback" as the specific area commented on. Towards the end of the page the note "WoD" can be found. This is the concept of "Way of Doing" which I explore in Chapter five. This example serves to illustrate the continuous iteration of the analysis as the first time I categorised the data I had not yet formulated this concept. Thus analysis and writing of findings interact to "feed off each other" (Holliday 2007:90).
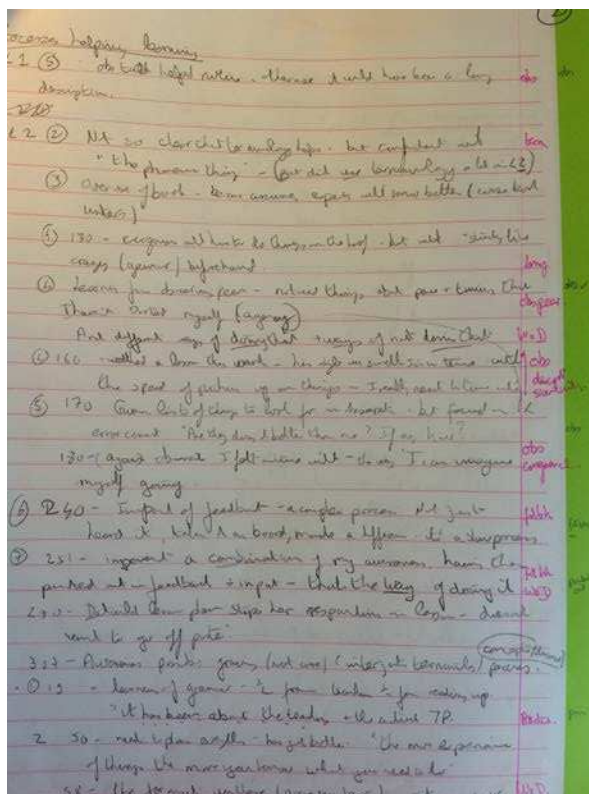
The data categorisation therefore suggested that I should have two chapters in the thesis, one on teacher knowledge and one on teacher learning. Within each of these chapters three themes (some with subthemes) became evident. There continued to be a question about the possibility of overlap. With the area of "prior knowledge" this was more readily resolved by focusing in the first chapter on the origins and nature of prior knowledge and in the second focusing on how that prior knowledge was integrated with new learning.

With the question of practical, procedural knowledge, the separation was less clear-cut. Participants' narrative of what constituted knowledge inevitably included their changing and modified views as they progressed through the course. My solution was twofold. Firstly, I have tried a much as possible in Chapter five to focus on the nature of the procedural knowledge and the factors which impacted on its creation, whereas Chapter six is more concerned with the process of that impact. Secondly, both here and in the findings chapters, I acknowledge the inevitability of some overlap and that any organisation is in itself an attempt to structure what is fluid and emerging and unlikely to be fully successful.

Below is a table summarising the themes to be discussed in the following two chapters.

Themes in chapter on teacher knowledge (Chapter five)	Themes in chapter on teacher learning (Chapter six)
Existing paradigms of teacher knowledge o Origins of these paradigms	The integration of prior knowledge and new learning

A Way of Doing as the articulation of teacher knowledge.
    o Establishing the Way of Doing
    o Evolution of a way of doing
 	
The role of subject knowledge
	The role of practice
	    o Observation and noticing
	    o Scripts and their evolution
	
	The impact of the community of practice
	    o Relationships in the group
	    o Reflective practice

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the research paradigm that I have applied to my study and provided justification for its choice. I have explored some of the reasons for undertaking my research as a qualitative study and the use of narrative to collect representations of truth. I also considered some of the challenges in this approach and how I have tried to mitigate against these challenges, while recognising that they can never be fully resolved.

There is a discussion of the research tools I have used and some of the issues of using interviews to collect my data and I have then provided an outline of the practical process of data collection and analysis. The discussion of the process of coding and the emergence of themes sets the scene for my findings, which I will explore in the following two chapters.

Chapter 5: Findings on Teacher Knowledge

5.0 Introduction

In Chapters two and three I provided a discussion of views of knowledge and learning both in a general sense and specifically related to teachers. Chapter four provided an overview of my methodological choices for this study and a description of the processes I undertook to gather and analyse data. In this chapter and the next, I present the findings I have extrapolated from my analysis of the data. As outlined at the end of the last chapter, this first chapter of findings relates to teacher knowledge. The findings seek to discover participants' meanings and the conclusions will be based on the multifaceted views presented in the participants' narratives.

The findings expressed in both this chapter and the next take into account both similarities and differences in participants' expressions. Overarching themes are based on views articulated more frequently and therefore made more salient across the range of interviews. Within each point, participants may be describing different perspectives, but the extracts chosen to illustrate are, by their nature, one participant's viewpoint. However, I also consider what can be described as "outliers", or views which are significantly different from the general finding. This is to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of the data and to contribute to the validity of the findings.

I already stated on a number of occasions in this thesis that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between views of knowledge and learning both in the literature and in the thematic categorisation which formed part of my analysis. Therefore, although the focus of this chapter is teacher knowledge, some of the findings are closely linked to the findings in the next chapter on teacher learning. I have tried throughout to acknowledge where there is a potential overlap and maintained the focus on knowledge.

5.1 Structure of the chapter

This chapter begins with the participants' expression of their knowledge of teaching prior to starting the course and prior to engaging in much of the formal teaching

practice. For this reason, much of the data for this section comes from the first interview with each participant, though not exclusively so. Consideration is given to both the nature and origin of this prior knowledge and considers what kind of knowledge was generated by participants' experience as learners as well as other experiences which may have helped form their views prior to starting a course.

Attention then turns to the teacher knowledge which participants wished to gain from the course. Much of the discussion focuses on participants' articulation of what practical knowledge consisted of and why they felt it was an important part of teacher knowledge. In this part of the chapter there is a stronger focus on English language teaching as opposed to teaching in general, as participants began to be concerned with the subject *English* as well as knowledge for teaching. I consider how participants begin to construct a kind of practical theory based on a number of sources of evidence. I also explore why they value practical knowledge and how it contributes to their learning more broadly.

5.2 What I know before: prior knowledge of teaching

As discussed in the literature chapter, it is well recognised that the many years spent as a learner provides us with some knowledge about what a teacher does. Lortie's (2002) concept of the Apprenticeship of Observation encapsulates the idea that we spend so many years *watching* teaching and through this we learn *about* teaching. The nature of this knowledge, as discussed in Chapter three, is often considered to be incomplete as it originates from a spectator's view rather than from an understanding of why a teacher had done something in a lesson. A contrast is made in the literature between a front of stage view, purely based on what we notice, without understanding and a back stage view, the view complete with understanding of the decisions a teacher may have made. The front of stage view is seen as a knowledge deficient in understanding, though nonetheless capable of exerting a powerful influence on potential learning when new ideas are introduced on a teacher education course.

In this section I will discuss findings related to the origins of this prior knowledge and explore whether this knowledge is as deficient in understanding as might have been thought. I consider participants' ability to articulate reasons and a rationale behind

the teacher behaviours they were aware of. In Chapter four, in detailing the background of my participants, I noted that some had teaching experience and one had a substantial amount. This may provide additional insights which would extend participants' understanding of the rationale. The fact that all participants had the interest in joining a teacher education course may also suggest that they had a more heightened awareness or were thinking about teaching in a more abstract way and this allowed them to look back on their experiences as learners with a stronger reflective stance.

5.2.1 Experience as a learner

Given the long exposure that the majority of us have to classroom practice as a learner, it is perhaps unsurprising that participants drew extensively on this experience as the basis of their judgments about what teaching involves. It also formed a kind of roughly constructed model of what they expected to be asked to do in the teaching practice element of the course.

Participants who drew on their experience as a learner explored this experience from the learner's point of view; they talked about what they did or felt as a learner. They certainly included points that could be described as a *front of stage* view of teaching, where we consider the performance of teaching, make judgments as to what is good or not so good without knowing the *back stage* intricacies of planning and design and teacher decisions taken during the lesson. However, many of the points made reflected some understanding of why the teacher acted the way they did. Participants clearly identified ways of practical doing that they feel are good teacher behaviours and which they would like to employ themselves.

J is enthusiastic about a Geography teacher from her secondary school and aims to take a similar approach in her own teaching. As well as appreciating the teacher behaviours which had a positive impact on her, she also understands that the teacher made a decision to take on a facilitative role and that there was an alternative approach available:

> *She used to be one of those teachers that would give you a task and then walk around the room and you'd be doing all the learning yourself really, and*

she'd oversee it rather than standing up and lecturing, and I think that made a
lot of difference and that's what I aim to do, I think. (J1, 1:21-24)

In this example, J shows an understanding of two different ways of structuring a lesson and that she has a preferred approach based on her response to the favoured teacher.

H's example comes from a negative experience with a secondary school French teacher. In the extract it seems that her understanding of the *back of stage* elements has come in retrospect, but is nevertheless present. She is now able to identify that the teacher made a decision to focus on one area of language to the detriment of another:

It was very focused on the grammar and learning vocabulary. So the speaking
of it wasn't paramount, which I feel now is really important, so getting students
to speak as quickly as possible, and even if it's just a few words. (H1, 2:32-35)

She also has more ideas of what she should do based on her general experience of learning a language rather than from one particular teacher. She has some insights into activities which are beneficial to learning, in particular the number of vocabulary items to introduce, and not simply teacher behaviours she wishes to imitate.

Obviously without verbs and vocabulary and grammar to an extent you can't
really say a lot, but it – I think it's just building it up from even one or two
words up. So perhaps showing them that we will be learning those things and
vocabulary, and we will do it with perhaps memorising things and games or
something. (H1, 3:70-72)

H also describes the belief that speaking is important as her "gut feeling" (H1, 2:65), something that she has concluded from her experience and which will inform what she does in the classroom. This suggests that she has taken examples of behaviours to construct a rationale but without any formal theoretical framework, i.e. students speaking a lot is good; I must do this in my teaching. The understanding has been constructed from her prior experience, but includes an element of cognition which extends her insights from a simple *front of stage* view on how teachers behave.

Reflecting on his school experience some time ago, N also articulates his views of what teachers should do from a negative example. His experience of learning Latin provides a stark contrast to what he now sees as the way to teach a language. He is adamant that in language teaching "what we produce has got to be of use" (N2, 1:35), illustrating a retrospective realisation of the importance of building in communication activities into his teaching.

When participants described what they had gained from their experience as a learner, they also had views on more general teacher behaviours, in particular the interaction between the teacher and student. When highlighting these behaviours, participants were aware of the specific action of the teacher but also the reasons for that action.

H explores a more positive experience with a teacher where the teacher made a conscious decision in relation to the way he chose individuals to respond to questions:

> *he didn't pick on anybody in a horrible way to sort of speak … he did it in a more encouraging, supportive way, rather than just like: 'you', so you feel awkward or I'm going to make a mistake.* (H1, 4:118-120)

In drawing on her experiences as a learner, G uses a very recent experience, as she was taking an Italian course parallel to completing her CELTA. She focuses on the interactions between teacher and learner as one of the key things taken from her experience and again identifies the teacher behaviour but also the reasons why such behaviour is good to emulate.

> *Listening to everyone in the class, trying to be – trying to be equal in my attentions I suppose, and trying to be quite kind of empathetic.* (G1, 1:31-33)

In all of the participants' descriptions thus far, there is certainly an awareness of the choices and decisions made by teachers whose actions have impacted on their views of teaching. It is acknowledged that this awareness is retrospective as they are speaking after the experience, in some cases quite a few years afterwards. This does not, however, detract from the fact that participants' knowledge is more than a set of behaviours they liked or disliked. Rather it comprises some understanding of

167

the decision making process of the teachers they remember. With this understanding comes the desire to replicate or not replicate these behaviours which is more than simple imitation. Participants already have an emerging understanding of the impact of teacher actions and the reasoning behind them. Thus they are beginning to create an emerging rationale for what teachers should do.

The knowledge gained from the apprenticeship of observation as discussed in Chapter three can be summarised by Lortie's conclusion that:

> What students learn about teaching, then, is intuitive and imitative rather than explicit and analytical; it is based on individual personalities rather than pedagogic principles.

> Lortie 2002:62

From the discussion above it would seem that participants have already deduced some pedagogic principles about teaching and about language teaching. They have some understanding about the impact of choosing certain activities and of how the teacher interacts with the learners. Their understanding goes beyond the "imitative" and is moving toward a rationale. It may not be articulated as a fully formed declarative theory, but there is a sense of knowing *why* as well as knowing *how*.

5.2.2 Experience as a teacher

Some of the participants had prior experience of teaching themselves. Although none of the experiences were the same as the group classroom-based language teaching they would be expected to do on the course, their experience also proved to be a source of their beliefs about teaching.

L had some experience of a secondary school through her work as a teaching assistant. She worked to support the teachers in the school and acknowledged that there had been examples of poor behaviour in the lessons she took part in. When asked what skills she would see as being important in teaching she commented:

> *The classroom management skills come high up. Come high up on that list, in some cases tends to be the highest. If you can manage the classroom that's all – you know all that's expected of you.* (L1, 1:24-25)

168

She is able to identify other skills, mainly around structure and planning which she feels are important, but the one which is most important to the success of teaching is the management of behaviour.

> *Having that kind of authority is terribly important. And if they haven't got that then it doesn't really matter - because I do know some teachers who are very – you know, have the commitment and the enthusiasm and are terribly creative and quite brilliant with their lesson plans and everything, but they don't have the authority, and frankly they really struggle to deliver.* (L1, 2:44-48)

Although focused strongly on the authority and control of the teacher, L is also concerned with ensuring that activities in the classroom are fun. When asked what kind of things she would do in the classroom if she had the choice, she replies:

> *I do like to have fun … I don't like things to get particularly heavy.* (L1, 7:227-231)

This seems to represent a different focus from her previous teaching experience, where authority is such a key aspect. She acknowledges that the teaching she will be doing is in a very different context, where she will be teaching specially arranged English language classes with volunteer students and this seems to counterbalance the aspects she has identified as being important in her prior experience of teaching. Again, this evidences some understanding that her current experience may be context bound and she is able to temper a current concern with a more general overarching belief. She may see discipline as a high priority in her current context, but a different priority, that lessons are fun, dilutes this view.

The experience of teaching music one-to-one has given H ideas of what teaching involves, but she does not see the direct applicability to the teaching she will do as an English language teacher on the course because of the new context of having to teach groups.

> *I always have a plan and a kind of goal for each student, but I appreciate now it has to be a bit flexible, because it depends completely on their individual personalities. Which is easier as a one-to-one. That is going to be a challenge*

169

> *within the group … I think that would be important to do that, but within the overriding, I suppose, needs of the group. Because you can't just focus on one person, can you?* (H1, 3:90-96)

In this case, it seems again that the new context identified by H (group teaching) makes her think that the skills she has developed in her prior teaching is not directly relevant to the new context. This is further evidence of some *back of stage* thinking about teaching, where the participant is beginning to form a rationale of what is appropriate and what may have to be sacrificed.

C had the most number of years of experience as a teacher. She had worked extensively in the UK Further Education sector. C often referred to changes implemented in her own teaching throughout her career because she was forced to by external requirements. She described how the system of observation at the college where she worked had moved her from teaching in a lecture style to using more group tasks with students. Her explanation was that students today expect this and that it was what was needed to get a good grade in an observation by the college management and by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) inspectors, who regularly carry out inspections of the Further Education sector.

Throughout the interviews, C remained in favour of lecturing as her preferred way of teaching, but recognised that this was not appropriate in most contexts nowadays. When describing a tutor from another course whose lessons she really enjoyed, she explains her preference would be to be like him:

> *He's lecturing without you knowing it and as I say that's the kind of style I'd love to have, but we're not allowed to do it really, you know, anymore.* (C1, 6:209-210)

She seemed to have a belief in a certain way of teaching that she continued to hold on to, but was able to put in place observable classroom behaviours which would satisfy the demands of external observers and evaluators. This is in contrast to the other participants who were hoping to put in place the behaviours they approved of from their own experience as learners.

In addition, C held other beliefs about teaching which emphasised the communication and the sense that teaching was an activity where teachers were there to serve the needs of their students. She was the only participant to use the word "vocation" in relation to teaching.

> *I think what makes a good teacher is that it's almost like a vocation, you've got to really want to teach. I think you've got to want to help other people.* (C1, 1:18-20)

It seems that what she had gained from her prior experience as a teacher was a recognition that you had to be open to change and that this change must be in tune with what she perceived the students needed at a given time. The issue of having to respond to external demands was one she seemed to accept with relative ease, but she raised in the initial interview that there was a potential impact on her as a person.

> *You have to be able to adapt very easily and without it affecting you as a person, and I think you always have to think of the needs of the students.* (C1, 1:21-22)

Ironically, as the course progressed, C experienced continued difficulty with implementing changes that were suggested to her by her tutors on the course. Although she expressed her willingness to adapt to external views, she struggled with this on the CELTA course.

In this section I have considered descriptions of the nature of prior learning about teaching which participants brought with them on to the course. The findings suggest that participants were able to draw on their experience as learners, and some of them on their limited experience of teaching, to explain teacher behaviours which they felt were good or not so good things to do in the classroom. Their descriptions also contained some understanding of why such behaviours were beneficial to learning. As such there was evidence of some pedagogic understanding in the sense that there was a partial understanding of why a teacher would act in a certain way and how this might impact on the learner. Participants aimed to replicate such behaviours because they had an understanding of their benefits, not simply because they liked them or the teacher who exemplified them. This all suggests they had an

emerging and partly formed pedagogic rationale beyond the simple intuitive understanding suggested by the literature.

5.3 What I want to learn: perceptions of teacher knowledge

In the literature chapters I identified different iterations of the notion of practical knowledge, its definitions and the reservations about its applicability to the implementation of teacher education. The underlying difficulty is highlighted by Fenstermacher:

> … whether there are adequate conceptions of science that permit the production of practical knowledge in a way similar to our current understanding of how conventional science gives rise to formal knowledge.

> Fenstermacher 1994:37

In this section I argue that my findings suggest participants want to learn something I call a procedural knowledge about how to structure activities and lessons. They believe that this is an important aspect of teacher knowledge for a number of reasons. Firstly, they come to the CELTA course expecting to learn *how to* do things in the classroom and their willingness to engage in and pay for the course is a result of that expectation. Secondly, the materials they use for teaching and the guidance they receive from tutors in their input sessions and feedback reinforces the idea that knowing the moves of teaching is a key aspect of teacher knowledge. In addition, their tutors model such procedures during the input sessions which the participants attend. Thus participants have a desire to obtain what they feel is a fully- justified knowledge and that knowledge is largely procedural; it is the knowledge of the steps, actions or moves they should take in the classroom.

Although critical of the validity of practical knowledge Eraut (1994) suggests a way of viewing practical knowledge which chimes with the findings of this section. He questions whether:

> An amorphous collection of practical principles [can] be said to constitute a grounded theory of practice.

> Eraut 1994:65

The term "grounded theory" is most often found as a methodological approach to research, where it allows for theoretical perspectives to emerge from data rather than starting research with an orientating conceptual framework. There is "simultaneous data collection and analysis" (Holstein & Gubrium 2008:676). This study does not use grounded theory as its methodological model. However, the principles of this research approach seemed to be echoed in the way participants constructed their knowledge of teaching. Eraut's question suggests the possibility that practical actions generate simultaneously a theory of teaching. I illustrate this possibility in the findings here.

As a point in the data collection, it is worth noting that in the initial interviews with participants, I posed the question about *what* they wanted to learn on the course. Linguistically, the word "what" suggests *thingness* or an object of some kind. I did not choose the question in a deliberate manner and did not consciously reject questions such as: "What do you want to learn to do?" The question used offered the participants an option of focusing on aspects which could be described as more theoretical or more practical, or a mixture of both. With all participants there was an overwhelming lack of hesitancy in giving their answers. It was clear that they had definite and well-articulated ideas what constituted the teacher knowledge they hoped to gain on the course.

5.3.1 Way of Doing as a possible "grounded theory"

The most well-defined and repeated aspect of teacher knowledge highlighted by the participants concerned something which I have termed here a *Way of Doing*, (WoD). This Way of Doing was described by participants as an existing and structured way to teach which they hoped to learn. The word *structure* was a frequently-used term in participants' responses as were terms such as *how to*, *technique*, *way, process* or *template.*

It is suggested here, therefore, that the ways of acting in the classroom constituted for the participants the *what* of teacher knowledge. In contrast to views of teacher education which see a dichotomy between theory and practice and seek to unite them, participants were expressing the view that practical behaviours actually

constituted the knowledge of teaching or at least provided a framework on which they built new learning about teaching.

In the following sections the Way of Doing is considered to explore its genesis for participants and the manner in which it evolved over the course. This evolution is revisited in the next chapter as a description of participants' learning. In this chapter the main focus is on the nature of the Way of Doing as teacher knowledge.

For participants, the WoD provided a linear direction. The WoD would enable the teacher to know where to begin and how to proceed through a lesson. J explains how she would like to have a step-by-step structure.

> *At the moment I wouldn't even know where to begin standing up in front of a class of foreign students, I wouldn't know where to begin. So I'm hoping it's just going to hone me into the right direction really and give me some grounding on what to do when faced with a class of people who don't speak English.* (J1, 2:49-52)

A similar sense of wanting to know where to start and how to progress is expressed by H, who wants to learn

> *where to start and what level to start at really. And what's the most important thing to teach first … and then sort of how you build it up.* (H1, 4:137-138)

She links this knowledge to learning how to plan: *how to structure my lessons, the lesson plans* (H1, 5:170), as does L: *It's about the planning … how you structure things.* (L1, 3:78-82)

U also highlights the importance of learning a WoD as a sequence of activities and uses the expression "formulaic" a number of times. She sees the understanding of teaching as an understanding of what should happen in a logical progression through a lesson.

> *… a lot of what I've learned in particular has been a set process. So understanding that you start with this and then you continue with that and it's all [pause] it's quite a sort of linear approach but it's always building on, on the*

knowledge that they have. So I almost see it as a lot more formulaic than any other teaching practices I've done ... (U1, 231-34)

The focus on planning and structure is also evident in the multiple uses of expressions such as *what to do/how to* by participants when discussing what they hoped to learn. Particularly at the beginning of the course, they were mainly concerned with learning a step-by-step process which would inform them how to go through each lesson of their teaching practice.

In participants' narratives it was clear that they had a pre-existing expectation that teacher knowledge consisted of largely procedural knowledge, that is how to structure and sequence classroom activities. The term Way of Doing, which I have used in this section and will continue to use in this chapter, highlights participants' desire to learn the steps or routines of a lesson. Thus an early understanding for them was that teacher knowledge was a series of structured events in the classroom which were predetermined and would be imparted to them on the course.

On applying for and being interviewed for the CELTA course, all trainees will receive some information about the course. Participants had already experienced some taught sessions before I met them. It could therefore be argued that their limited experience of the course led them to believe that teacher knowledge was procedural knowledge, as this could have been suggested by the nature of the course itself and their experience from input sessions. However, the similarity in the narratives, regardless of whether participants had prior experience of teaching, suggests a common view of the primacy of procedural knowledge. They were also able to provide some justification or rationale for why such knowledge was important, which I now explore.

5.3.2 The Way of Doing as a rule-bound activity

At the start of the course participants did not express the idea that the WoD might be a set of choices that they would select from. Instead they seemed to view the WoD as a set of given rules or moves that they would learn and adhere to. There was little sense of co-created knowledge, but rather the idea that rules, external to participants, existed for English language teachers and informed how they would

teach their lessons. There was an assumed validity because of the assumption that such a set of rules existed.

J recognised that the necessity to follow a given procedure would be stricter as a new teacher. Commenting on a lesson she observed, she noticed that the (experienced) teacher seemed very relaxed but that:

> *I don't expect to be like that at all to start with, because you have to do everything by the book as well.* (J1, 4:141)

She confirmed that the way she would learn on the course was by following this given structure as directed.

> *At the moment I want to do everything by the book* (J1, 7:235)

> *I'll probably just sort of follow what I'm told to do at the moment* (J1, 7:245)

For some, the rules existed in the form of individual techniques that would help them do specific classroom activities. L is keen to find out the kind of questions which should be asked to check learners' understanding and in her reflection comes to the conclusion that although asking questions should be a common sense activity, there must be a specific procedure that exists which she needs to learn. She looks forward to having directed input on this technique (in the afternoon session after the interview) as she identifies this taught input as the source of her knowledge about how to tackle questions.

> *I really don't know how to do this and it's about asking questions, it's about the questions that you ask to actually, you know, make sure that they've understood. And that's something that seems – should – when I first – when I first came across that I was sort of thinking, "Oh that's easy, that's obvious," then I'm actually thinking, "Actually it really isn't". And so I'm really – I know we're doing - we're starting with that this afternoon and I'm really looking forward to it.* (L1, 3:91-96)

Her enthusiasm about learning the way she should ask such questions indicates a real belief in the existence of a given technique that an individual could not work out for themselves without being provided with it. This is despite the fact that the aspect

of teaching she has chosen (asking questions) would seem a relatively straightforward activity. She also talks about how her reaction to some of the input sessions is the thought: "Ah okay that's the way of doing it" (L2, 7:259), highlighting the fact that what she gains from these sessions is a correct way of teaching, a given template, which she receives in the input sessions.

J also expresses this idea that there may be a common sense way of approaching a lesson, but that some kind of existing and validated strategy is better. When looking at planning a reading or listening lesson, she comments on the use of a procedure given to her on the CELTA course:

> *I mean you can go in with common sense and have a stab at it, but it's nice to have it laid out the correct way to do it.* (J2, 3: 89-90)

For both L and J having a given WoD is an important part of their learning. They see the WoD they will gain through the course as valid and correct. They view the teacher knowledge they will acquire as being made up of sets of Ways of Doing certain teaching moves and lessons.

The comments from J and L above indicate that they are receiving instruction on lesson procedures in their input sessions. This would correlate with the overarching CELTA syllabus and its focus on teaching strategies. It could therefore be argued that the provision of procedural knowledge by the course impacts on participants' views that teacher knowledge is largely procedural. However, the consistency in their focus on this kind of knowledge in their views of teaching, observing other teachers and in the advice they received from their tutors on their teaching, suggests that there is an existing predisposition to regard this type of knowledge as the main constituent of teacher knowledge. The predisposition seems to be reinforced rather than generated by the content and focus of the course.

One of the participants expressed his frustration at not being able to follow the WoD because of his perceived inability to relax. He felt that he had learned a lot of effective techniques but was unable to use them because he still had to "lighten up a bit" (N3, 1:33). In wanting to implement the WoD he felt was valid, he encountered difficulty in his personal manner.

I've got to find different ways of doing it and I've got to be more demonstrative. You know, I've got to ham it up a bit. (N3, 140)

There was no sense of questioning that the existing set of rules or the expected classroom behaviours were to be adjusted. Instead he felt the real challenge lay in changing his own manner.

The belief that a template for teaching existed permeates through each of the participants' narratives. Moreover, they perceive the template as an already existing teaching formula which they believe is right and justified. They trusted that there is an underpinning rationale dictating the "correct" way of behaving in activities and lessons. The notion that there is *a way* comes through most strongly in the examples above where participants realise that they are re-learning an everyday activity: asking questions, reading. Teacher knowledge includes a way of doing these things that is special to English language teachers. Their emerging and developing theory of teaching is that teaching embodies a series of structured, practical moves which can be learned.

5.3.3 The Way of Doing embodied in books

Although J's comment above about doing things *by the book* is used metaphorically, the view was expressed that the WoD and rules of how to teach English were embodied in the course books used by the participants to teach their students. The presence of the WoD in books provided further justification to the notion that teacher knowledge consisted of a series of sequenced moves. The books referred to were published textbooks for the international English language teaching market and each teaching practice group used them as the basis for their lessons, particularly at the start of the course.

A typical coursebook would be divided into units organised around topics and areas of language. It would then provide a series of activities related to the topic and language area that teachers would use to structure their lesson. Teachers could choose to follow the coursebook quite closely, in which case lessons would move from one exercise to the next. Some teachers might choose to vary the order of the activities or supplement the coursebook with activities of their own. The course book would not normally include a discussion or consideration of *why* activities were being

proposed, although some consideration of this might be in an accompanying teacher's book. The coursebook usually contains, therefore, a purely practical blueprint for structuring a lesson or series of lessons.

J mentioned the coursebook in her first interview in her discussion about wanting to do what she was told.

> *To be honest probably at the moment I'll follow the book* (J1, 7:239)

One of the ways that participants' views of knowledge developed over the course was that they began to see the course book as a sometimes flawed source of knowledge and J comments that after the first few weeks

> *I've definitely strayed from the coursebook that we were given quite a lot.* (J2, 3:111)

Her comment reflects a growing awareness that the course book does not fully embody a WoD that she can use without question. Possibly the clearest view of this change is expressed by M in her final interview. She reflects on how at the beginning of the course everyone followed the coursebook without question, but this changed.

> *I mean we were actually really quite green, and we hadn't had a lot of input at that time so it's basically you've got the student book and you're using that a lot right, or more or less totally.* (M3, 6:176-178). *At first you think the course book is gospel, and then you realise they're rubbish in parts.* (M3, 6:183)

Disillusionment with the coursebook does not, however, lead to a view that a WoD is not an important part of the knowledge M gained on the course. Although she may question the WoD in the coursebook, she continues to see a given structure as a key element in assuring the quality of her teaching in the future. For her final lesson she wants to make sure that: "I got all my steps" (M3, 10:320) and when asked about how she would work in a future teaching position after the course, she confirms:

> *I hope it's not, you know, following the book too closely, I wouldn't like to be too regimented. I like to have a bit of freedom to add other things. But I think it is good to have a structure.* (M3, 7:216-218)

The link between the WoD and coursebooks provides a further illustration of how participants' trust in the practical template nature of the WoD was reinforced externally. It could be said that coursebooks provided a further reason or rationale for the acceptance of the WoD which they sought to gain from the course. Interestingly, participants did not refer at any stage to books they would use to access theoretical content on language pedagogy which might be used to compete their four written assignments. Only the coursebook, which does not provide theoretical content on language pedagogy, is mentioned by participants as an important source of knowledge. This indicates that the course book occupied a quasi-theoretical template because it embodied the knowledge they sought: procedural knowledge.

5.3.4 The Way of Doing modelled

Apart from some questioning the validity of the coursebooks as outlined above, participants did not substantially question the origins of the WoD which they wished to learn and were offered on the course. They received a further validation of a way or procedure for teaching by their appreciation of how the tutors on the course taught their input sessions in the same way as the WoD they were learning.

G liked the fact that the tutors followed the same procedure for teaching because this confirmed the way she should approach her lessons.

> *And so it's quite interesting to see how the teachers who teach us are putting that into practice themselves.* (G1, 3:104)

> *They practise what they preached. So they did the sort of things to us that we should do to our students.* (G3, 2:49)

J identifies specific strategies that she has seen tutors use in the input sessions and has incorporated into her own teaching.

> *When he [the tutor] introduces a new vocabulary word, the way he lays it out on the board … I've found myself doing that automatically.* (J2, 289)

The impact of the experience of input sessions as a validation of the WoD was also highlighted by U. She explains that the tutors on the course would often role play a

particular strategy that they expected trainees to use. Seeing it demonstrated by tutors engendered a trust and belief in the demonstrated techniques.

> *Often they'll kind of role play and they'll show what a good example is or a bad example so you can see it in action and I think you trust in that method quite a bit.* (U1, 6:176-177)

Not all the participants felt that the modelling of strategies by tutors was a positive reinforcement of what should be done in the classroom. Throughout the CELTA course as she engages in more and more teaching activities, C identified struggles she had with the concept of getting students engaged in classroom activities rather than adopting a more lecture style. She was unhappy with the fact that as a trainee in the input session, she was being asked to engage in activities in a way that mirrored the approach she should be taking. In contrast to the participants above, she did not agree that the tutors should use similar strategies to those she would use in her lessons. However, she still acknowledged the fact that tutors were modelling a correct way of teaching for her students. When evaluating a more student-centred approach, she commented:

> *I wouldn't agree with it as a teacher training a teacher, but I do agree with it as a teacher training a student.* (C2, 2:57)

She indicates that the tutors in the input sessions have modelled a valid way of teaching, in spite of the fact that this is not a way she feels is valid for the teaching of participants on the input sessions of a CELTA course.

A further consideration of the validity of the given WoD was the regard for the awarding body which validates the course. G explains that investing your money in the course shows a level of investment in the given way of teaching.

> *You're showing some faith in the fact that – that the body of people who accredit the course and so forth are – are a worthy body. So you know, why did I pay the £[fee] if I wasn't going to, you know, try and believe what they said?* (M2, 3:118-120)

The comments made about investing in the awarding body are a further illustration that the validated WoD is something that you would *believe* in. M sees the WoD as

something that is right or correct because the awarding body and the tutors model and affirm it. Such affirmation provides a justification for their belief in teacher knowledge as a set of procedures which are predetermined and which work in the classroom. The WoD is accepted at face value and participants seem uninterested in being given a further rationale which underpins it. Their rationale is that it exists and that is a main constituent of teacher knowledge.

5.3.5 Purpose of the Way of Doing

It is possible to view the participants' desire to learn a structure or a way of doing things as simply a response to a worry about standing up in front of a group of learners and not knowing what to do. It seems a natural reaction in a new situation to want a step-by-step guide, rather than simply "having a go" and using a more common sense approach.

The role of a WoD as simply a safety net to avoid embarrassment is discussed below in the section looking at the link between the WoD and confidence. However, it is important to highlight that participants identified, from the early stages of the course, that the WoD was there to benefit their students and their students' learning. They viewed procedural knowledge as that which enhanced the learning experience.

Such acknowledgement on the part of the participants reinforces the argument in this study that the practical WoD had a justification, though not necessarily through knowledge of pedagogic principles. Participants sought to seek verification of a classroom action through a positive response from their learners. Through this they received further validation for their chosen WoD. The validation came from further practical actions: the reaction of learners.

If we consider the emergence of a WoD as a chronological process, the participants were told about a WoD in their input or in planning, they noticed that other experienced teachers used this and that there were further WoD in their course book. They then tested out the validity of their WoD by considering the reaction of their learners. The process relates well to Eraut's (1994) notion of a grounded theory of practice mentioned earlier. Participants simultaneously acted according to the procedural guidance they believed existed and took data from their tutors' modelling as well as what they noticed from learner reaction.

The chronological emergence could be represented diagrammatically in this way:

Initial/pre-course desire to have knowledge of the moves or procedures of teaching.		CELTA input sessions provide instruction on different procedures and moves of teaching.	Feedback on teaching provides additional input on procedure and moves of teaching.
Participants use procedures in their lessons and notice what learners like and benefit from.			
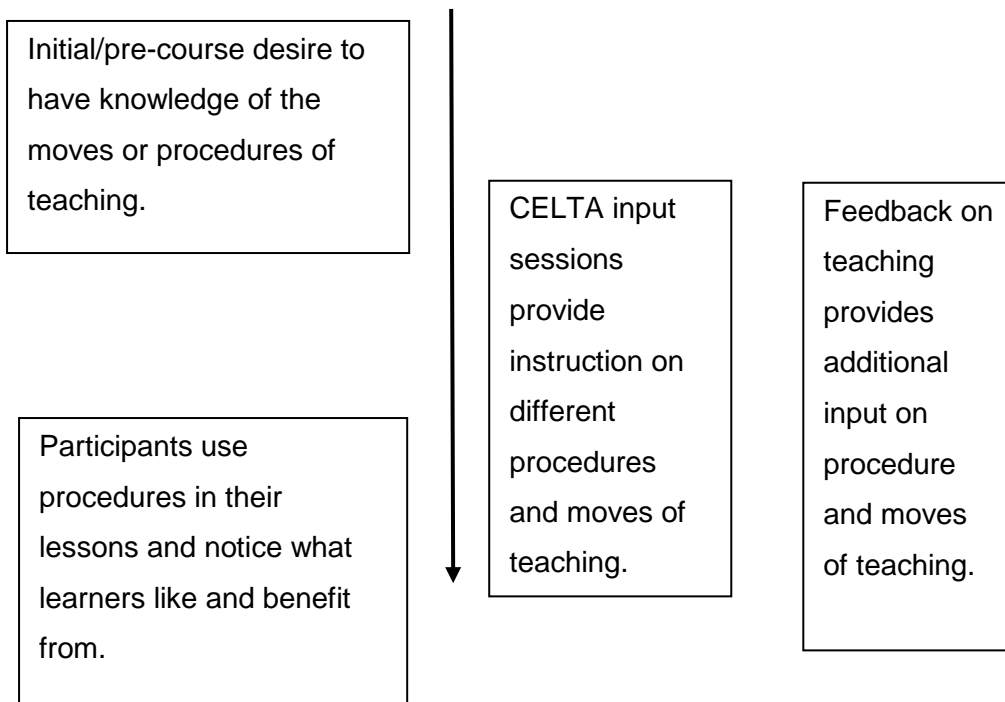
H identifies a range of teaching strategies she would like to learn before she starts the teaching practice on the course. They are all procedural and focus on the step-by-step approach to building up a lesson that has a focus on grammar. However, there is a strong emphasis on the impact of each step on the student and their learning.

> *Perhaps sometimes there is a need to learn a list of things or how a sentence is constructed, constructed using a particular verb or something, and then try and talk through examples of that. So I think it's – it would be important to write an example on the board or list of perhaps how a verb is conjugated, or – and then use – then encourage them to speak, just learn simple sentences.* (H1, 3:72-76)

In her outline of the various techniques she might learn to use, H is fully aware of the wider impact of each step in the lesson on her students and how they might need to learn a particular structure and use it in speaking.

The reaction of learners is one of the ways S judges that something she has done is actually valid. She speaks of seeing "when the light goes on" (S3, 1:36) in learners and the teacher can judge that they have understood. This is the justification for having applied a particular strategy in the lesson. O describes a negative reaction which confirms for him that a strategy he has adopted is worthwhile or not. He describes the reaction of the learners: "you can see their shoulders kind of drop and they just don't, you know ... they're not interested in it at all". (O1, 7:211)

The need for teacher knowledge that sets the procedural aspect within a wider framework is highlighted by G in terms of understanding the reason for adopting specific strategies. She identifies what she wants to learn as:

> *To learn how to do it … organise some sort of structure and to know exactly what the purpose of it is.* (G1, 3:75-79)

She is keen to have an understanding of why she is carrying out the steps in teaching and not simply knowledge of the steps themselves. Like the other participants, she does not see a WoD as simply a recipe for survival in the classroom, but recognises that any WoD needs to have some kind of justification. The justification is partly found through a perception and understanding of the reaction of the learner to the strategy used. Thus learner reaction provides a kind of proof for the correctness of a particular procedure, a piece of data in the formation of what I have termed a "grounded theory" of teaching.

5.3.6 Confidence and a Way of Doing

In one interview J explained that she had gained some insight into what might constitute teacher knowledge through a discussion with a student. The student was convinced that:

> *As long as you are confident, even if you don't feel it. Come across as confident and they'll all listen to you.* (J1, 4:135-136)

It is difficult to reconcile *confidence*, which is an emotional response, with the notion of teacher knowledge. It is not specifically a skill or ability, although the student's words above suggest that it is possible to consider a teacher's ability to *appear* confident even if they are not.

What emerges from participants' stories is that a kind of *acquired confidence* would be created through the mastery of the given WoD. This confidence would, in turn, allow the teacher to carry out the different teaching steps more effectively and, as highlighted in the next section, move away from the strict adherence to the given structure to a more adapted and individual way of teaching. In this way, confidence can be seen as a facilitative aspect of teacher knowledge; it allows the teacher to implement strategies better. When I asked J what she wanted to have learned by the end of the course, her response illustrates her hierarchy of priorities.

> *A lot more confidence I think. Just about doing the whole practical side. And a lot more knowledge, I think. Just grammatical knowledge and the theory.* (J1, 7:58)

At the end of the course L highlighted similar priorities in identifying what she felt she had learned.

> *I think I'm probably more confident and more assertive, and I think that comes from feeling more confident about what I'm doing, feeling more knowledgeable.* (L3, 10:354-355)

The interplay between structure and confidence is evidenced in the account of one of the participants who was quite downhearted in the second interview as she had received a "fail" grade for one of her lessons. She felt that she might consider giving up the course at this stage. By the third interview she was significantly more optimistic. I asked her about how she felt she had improved in her teaching since the last interview. Her reply highlighted the importance of confidence

> *I suspect it was where I – kind of how – how to become more confident.* (G3, 1:15)

She then identified how focusing on individual strategies or moves had helped her to gain that confidence.

I have shifted – I think what I've done is I've focused on very specific things to improve on and I think that's made me able to improve overall just by – instead of thinking, "Oh I'm not that confident," or, "I shouldn't be so worried," or kind of big general things like that, actually to try and focus on specific areas and improve on those. (G3, 1:19-22)

In her reflection on her increased confidence, she felt that changing tutor to one who gave very specific feedback about individual strategies had helped in bringing about this change. Her experience highlights the interplay between a WoD and confidence. By having a clearer WoD, confidence is gained and by gaining more confidence, the participant becomes more effective in their WoD.

5.3.7 Context/level specific and an adapted WoD

Through the second and third interviews with participants a recurring theme was the challenge they perceived when changing levels of student group. On the CELTA course it is a requirement that all trainees teach learners at two different levels of English language expertise. Normally, one group would be at quite a beginner level and the other group more advanced. Participants often expressed opinions as to whether they felt it was easier to start with the lower level and move up to a higher level or to do the reverse. Underpinning these discussions was the belief that the strategies and techniques for each level would be somehow so different that they could not be applied across the level. The WoD seemed initially limited situationally to the language level of the learners. T summarises the challenges in anticipation of the move:

It's going to be difficult to apply those same sort of things which I picked up with the elementary group to the higher group because whereas with the elementary group you can sort of get a good energy going and people are happy just to say one word well, you know when you've got these more advanced students who are really going to be trying to be refining their language I guess, it's going to be different, you know different techniques. (T2, 5:192-197)

H also notices through an observation that the different levels will pose different challenges.

I observed an elementary lesson last week, or on Monday, and I realised that you have – although maybe what you teach is easier, it's how you teach it and checking that they understand is much more difficult. (H2, 3:78-79)

However, once the level change had occurred, participants' concern was not that they had to use different techniques, but rather the challenge of the adaptive expertise they had to bring to doing this. N explains some of the issues:

The other three are pretty much of the view that it would have been better for us to have the lower level first and then the higher level. I don't know really. ..if we'd done the lower level students first we'd have had to adapt it to the higher level by actually using different language with the higher level students … As it's turned out we've had to really slow things down. (N3, 6:240-245)

The context specific nature of the WoD in relation to levels was a concern for participants before they engaged with the second level. Once they began teaching at this new level their focus was on the difficulty of the adaptation rather than any idea that adaptation might not be possible. It seemed that having the procedural techniques facilitated the ability to adapt. The importance of adaptation as a feature of teacher knowledge and the way adaptation occurred with the participants in this study are now considered.

5.4 Challenge to the Way of Doing

As the course progressed, participants' acceptance of a singular, given and correct WoD evolved and they began to question the WoD as static teacher knowledge. The questioning was mainly generated through the identification of the WoD as something *unnatural*. Participants felt that acting in a particular way was artificial. Some related this to the idea that they felt they were putting on an act, that they were being asked to behave in the classroom in a manner not congruent with their own personality.

In addition, there was a growing sense that the WoD was closely linked to the assessment on the course. The participants began to feel they needed to follow the WoD in order to satisfy the course requirements, but they were cognisant of the fact

that this was possibly a temporary situation that would end with the end of the course.

From the beginning of the course H identified herself as a keen planner and wanted to have everything thoroughly planned in terms of the step-by-step approach to the lesson. She then begins to identify a tension between the security of planning and being natural.

> *It was just to feel secure I think, because at that stage when you're learning I just can't be that natural about it I think partly because it's new, and partly because I want to get it right.* (H2, 4:130-132)

Looking to the future when she becomes more experienced at teaching J identifies this as the time when she will be more natural, like the experienced tutors she observed.

> *So it'd be nice to eventually be like that. And then yeah, you can just completely be yourself and relax and not have to act.* (J3, 9:321-322)

A retrospective view is also given by G who calls the adherence to structure as "jumping though hoops" *(*G3, 2:66) and feels that in her future teaching after the course there will be less of this.

In learning the technique of asking (concept) checking questions, H identifies a number of stages from writing them down to using them in a lesson, but concludes that her ability to use them is "just not quite natural yet" (H2, 8:306). She later confirms that following a strict plan undermines her ability to be natural and this in turn impacts on her learners' contributions.

> *Some of that is because – like not totally myself – is because I'm trying to do everything to the book in a way … So it's all that type of thing which when it comes more naturally sort of I can just think of a concept question and – so I think it's coming away from following a plan too much, which will be good.* (H3, 3:108-115)

The more extreme description of the challenge of following a specific way of teaching and being natural was expressed by C. She felt that following a structured way of teaching impacted on her personality.

> *I sort of dropped all my bad habits and good – whatever – and just did what I was told. And now I'm doing what I was told to do. I hope my personality comes back though.* (C3, 4:113-114)

In a similar manner N struggled with implementing the WoD because he felt that his natural preference for being less demonstrative prevented him from acting naturally in the classroom.

> *It's difficult to be something that you're not. To put on an act if you like. It's safer ground to be yourself.* (N2, 3:71)

He highlights the dilemma, also faced by C, where the WoD seems so incongruent with more natural behaviours that it becomes impossible to implement. If we consider the WoD as participants' emerging theory of teaching, then over the duration of the course, a tension began to emerge between an this theory and something that was perceived as more natural, less artificial. For some participants it was simply the feeling that they were putting on an act, not being true to their own personality. This feeling presented new data for participants to include within the development of, as I have termed it before, a grounded theory of practice. Their own reaction caused a questioning of the WoD. They therefore began to evolve or adapt the WoD.

5.4.1 The evolution of a more natural Way of Doing

In this section I will consider how participants reacted to the feeling of unnaturalness by adapting the given and validated WoD. I am conscious that this move is a constituent of their learning process and therefore also belongs in the discussion of teacher learning, which forms the main focus of the next chapter. I am including it here as it seems more coherently positioned as a corollary to the discussion of the nature of the WoD. I will therefore explore the findings below, but will revisit the emerging conclusions in the following chapter.

An analogy to encapsulate the evolution experienced by participants might be that of an improvised script. Actors are given a written script, but in some contexts they are allowed to improvise or use lines that come out of the moment as they experience it. This move to improvisation and back again to the script is highlighted well by H in a commentary on her first lessons.

> *So in the first two there were moments when I was spontaneous, which – and those are the moments I really loved. It was like I reacted to someone who asked a question or something and I wrote something on the board and it wasn't in my plan because my plan was very precise and everything. I think it's like something to hold onto … I didn't look too much at a script or anything, I just had to have it in my head, and I felt that I had to follow it so I didn't fall off, if you know what I mean.* (H2, 2:40-48)

At this stage H is moving very much between a given WoD and her own individual WoD which is a response to the context and moment of the lesson. We can see a kind of switching between these two even in the small timeframe of the lesson.

The next step for participants was not to abandon a WoD, but to give it more of a background role, a reminder and guidance. M highlights this for her last lesson where the plan became a document that would be a memory aid.

> *I wanted to make sure I got all my steps, and I'd keep going over it, you know, so I'd know what I was going to deliver and how.* (M3, 10:320-321)

As she moves into her own job, she will keep some of the script and improvise more.

> *I was planning it minute by minute. I'm not going to do that, obviously. I don't have to do all of those steps, I just have to have, you know, the procedures that I want to – to cover.* (M3, 10343-345)

J also sees the value of the script-like nature of a written plan but that she is able to internalise this to be a reminder that she has covered everything, while allowing herself to respond to the context of the lesson.

> *I do it in sort of three ten-minute slots in my head and then just getting it down on paper, it's like a - yeah, like a script almost. Just following it and getting it in*

the right order and make sure you haven't missed anything. I think that helps, writing it down. You realise if you've missed something. (J2, 3:104-106)

For the future J hopes once she has finished the course that the WoD will have a more background, yet nonetheless, important role. She summarises her increased ability to improvise towards the end of the course, while at the same time relying on a WoD for guidance.

I found myself often when I'm teaching a reading lesson or a listening lesson going back to my notes and just looking at how it's done, and I'll probably keep having to do that for the next couple of years really, because it's not going to just come back to you straight away … obviously when you teach a bit more you might cut corners in some places or add your own approach to things, but I think the basis of what they've given us has been brilliant. (J3, 11:404-410)

Even at this stage, J still has taken the WoD as a kind of justified theory of "how it's done" and this is something she has gained from the practical, step-by-step approach given to her on the course. In looking to the future, she sees the role of a given WoD as central to her knowledge as a teacher, but recognises that she will develop the ability to modify this and perhaps not follow exactly the WoD she has been given.

The course book as a WoD and how participants began to move away from the coursebook was considered in 5.3.3. U gives an example of how moving away from the course book constituted her evolving WoD. Her description is related to decisions she took in relation to what to include or omit in a lesson. Following the coursebook would mean doing everything the book prescribed. However, she begins to reject this and makes choices during the lesson as to what she wishes to omit.

But I think I've got a bit … kind of a better idea of what you can, what you can cut and what you can sort of add and what's useful. And I had in my teaching practice, in my last teaching practice it was… I ended up running on quite a lot with some of my activities but they … the kind of … the students were kind of getting really good speaking practice out of it. (U3, 4:148-151)

191

The evolution has come through recognition that the learners will benefit more from the change. U has used the evidence from the learners to formulate an adapted WoD which is different to the prescription of the book. Such a series of steps seems to indicate an evidence gathering process which would also fit with the notion I have explored of participants building a grounded theory of teaching.

5.4.2 After the course: an evolving theory or Way of Doing

Participants interviewed after the end of the course continued to express the idea of the evolution of a WoD. H was clear that when teaching in a language school the teaching "feels more real" (H P1, 2:41). She enthuses about the first lesson she did on her own with no other tutor in the room as it allows her to adopt something that is more natural.

> *The first lesson I did on my own it was frightening in a way but it was actually great because I felt I could just be me and do my own thing … I was going to teach more naturally.* (H P1, 5:182-185)

A year after the course and with more experience, H is continuing the process of evolving her own WoD.

> *I've just become much more confident, much more developed and much more spontaneous … at first and everything has to be in your head kind of thinking … But now I don't find I'm thinking so much. It's coming much more naturally so things don't throw me so much so I'm able to adapt.* (H P2, 1:10-16)

Her acknowledgement that she is not doing so much thinking reflects a move away from a given and deliberate set of teaching moves to an ability to respond to the "here and now" of the classroom.

G was teaching one-to-one a year after the course. She also confirmed that her WoD had evolved, particularly as she was responding to one individual student. She acknowledged though, that the WoD she had learned on the course provided a backdrop of skills which she accessed and evolved *from*. Her description suggests a kind of procedural blueprint that is in her head which she now adapts to the specific context of the student she is working with.

> *I've got the skills numbered in my head … those things are there but the general kind of plan, I would say, is a more – it's able to evolve more.* (G P1, 3:86-87)

This continued reliance on a WoD as a basis for teaching is also confirmed by J. Although she has not done any teaching, she confirms that what has remained with her and what she hopes she will use when she does get a teaching job is: "a lesson agenda … the way to keep the lesson rolling and planning lessons" (J P1, 3:97-100).

The continued importance of a WoD as part of teacher knowledge is highlighted by H in her exploration of a situation in her new teaching job. As part of her teaching responsibilities she was given a group of students whose level of English was very low. She had no experience of teaching a group with such a low level of English and sought to gain additional knowledge in order to equip her for this new challenge. The first step was her realisation that:

> *there must be a better way, or different ways to teach levels … a lower level* (H P2, 7:240).

She refers back to knowledge as being a way of doing, a procedure or formula. Her strategy for dealing with this was not to access a resource based on pedagogic theory. Instead, the solution came in the form of personal advice from the school's director who gave her:

> *a sheet of ideas … information on how to teach the lower levels.* (H P2, 7:250-252)

She thus values a solution which emphasises strategies or moves of teaching; another WoD specific to a group of learners with a low level of English language skills. Her appreciation of this helps illustrates that a WoD continues to form an important part of teacher knowledge.

5.5 Terminology/naming as part of teacher knowledge

A noticeable change in participants' discourse occurred between the first and second interviews. By the second interview, participants had begun to use terms for aspects of teaching which belong very much to the nomenclature of English language

teaching. Examples of such terms used by participants included: *marker sentences, error correction, concept questions, echoing, teacher talk, grammar clarification, peer correction, systems, skills, activating schemata.* The participants identified these terms as something they were learning and called it collectively *terminology* or *jargon*.

Participants generally felt that learning this terminology was an important part of making the course content clearer to them. There were different views of how it was valuable. When asked whether these terms helped make concepts clearer, M replied:

> *I think so, yeah. Some of it's silly, like "activating schemata". I mean we don't need to put labels like that on things really. You know, you're just confusing the issue I think.* (M2, 1:26-27)

U called the terms "buzz words" and considered their use an integral element of being a part of the course. In a sense the terminology makes her feel part of the community of practice of CELTA.

> *It's been useful in terms of having almost buzz words so you're suddenly … we're kind of talking in a CELTA way now.* (U1, 5:162)

This is further extended by O, who notices that having a common terminology allows all the course members to engage in discussion of teaching using a common discourse:

> *One thing that's good about the terminology and the … the sticking to a format is that at the end of the session with the feedback, it gives everyone the opportunity to talk on the same terms.* (O2, 4:121-123)

J is positive about the use of terminology, although she acknowledges the potential for confusion.

> *Well first of all, yeah, all the jargon was really, really confusing, because I'd never heard of a concept question and things like that, and – but yeah, because it goes very well with the lessons that we've been having during the week. (J2, 2:42-74)*

An example from J's use of the terminology illustrates the way this discourse had become integral to participants' expressions by the second interview. It also provides an indication as to how the use of terms helped consolidate learning, which is discussed further in the next chapter. On observing a lesson given by an experienced teacher with another trainee, she comments:

> *There was lots of things she was doing and we – me and H were both like, "Oh we've learnt that, oh we've learnt that, that's a concept question, that's a marker sentence," and things like that, and she would – yeah, real CELTA style. (J2, 7:271-273)*

In this example J identifies the things she notices in the lesson by specific discourse terms and communicates with her fellow trainee on their learning using these terms. The concept of what they are seeing and learning is encapsulated in very specific discourse related to the learning field of English language teaching. The way the terminology is used echoes Vygotsky's definition of a "tool" as a learning device where it is used to identify and thus remember or incorporate a particular practice:

> The tool's function is to serve as the conductor of human influence on the object of activity
>
> Vygotsky 1978:55

The use of the discourse of English language teaching also suggests the way reification occurs according to Wenger's definition:

> producing object that congeal… experience into 'thingness'
>
> Wenger 1998:58

Participants are naming features of practical teaching and, through this, making these features part of their learning. The nomenclature acted as a way of reifying the key concepts they encounter and making them part of their knowledge base.

5.6 Subject knowledge as teacher knowledge

Like many other English language teacher education programmes, the syllabus for the CELTA course contains not only the pedagogy of how to teach English language

but also the subject *English language*. This is in contrast to many other teacher education courses, where participants come on the course with a prior qualification in their subject. For example, a trainee teacher may have a degree in history, modern languages, mathematics or a qualification in a more vocationally oriented subject such as business or horticulture. They would then learn about aspects of pedagogy which they would apply to their subject. They would not study knowledge *of* their subject on their teacher education course.

Participants who complete an English language teacher education course are less likely to have a subject qualification prior to starting the course. They may have studied related subjects, such as a modern language. Some participants may have done a qualification in English and if this had a large language element, which it often has if studied in a non-English speaking country, they will have learned some subject knowledge before embarking on the CELTA.

The participants in this study are all native speakers of English and it was no surprise that, initially, they felt that subject knowledge was an important part of the teacher knowledge they expected and wanted to learn on the course. In particular, they highlighted the need to have more explicit knowledge of the structure of English, of which they had an implicit understanding as native speakers.

L comments that she wants to learn about

> *the grammar side … I want to feel more solid about what I'm teaching, because at the moment I'm - and the whole - it's obviously a completely different subject and one that I'm quite-you know, I do feel like I'm not particularly solid on.* (L1, 2:67-69)

H also includes subject knowledge as part of her anticipated learning on the course.

But obviously I need to go - which is obviously part of the learning - back to the grammar; the structure, the forms. (H1, 4:140-141)

J highlights the fact that she wants to learn the explicit theory of language that underpins her own native usage.

You just know what sounds right or wrong. I don't know the theory behind it so well, and I suppose I'm afraid of teaching it wrong just from not knowing it well enough myself. But then I guess I'll learn it as the course goes on. (J1, 3:76-78)

This is echoed by E, who acknowledges that she has an "intuitive knowledge" (E1, 2:42) of language but needs to have instruction on language in order to teach it. This is a point also raised by G. By the end of the course she would like to "have much better knowledge of the structure of my own language, which I have never really paid a great – great attention to*". (G1, 3:78-80)

C also comments about wanting to have a theoretical understanding of language and not just rely on her own usage.

I also expect that I will learn how to teach English, the language itself. That I will learn - that I will understand and appreciate English better and know more about the language so that I can teach it without my own bias". (C1, 2:63-65)

M had undertaken a short language awareness course before the CELTA. However, she also felt that knowledge about language was something she would get from the course.

I'm just becoming more aware of things. And especially, you know, around language. Just you know, the things that we become really - that we just take for granted. (M1, 1:29-30)

What is then noticeable is that in the second and third interviews, once teaching practice had begun, the issue of subject knowledge was not very evident in participant narratives. When asked about their learning, no participant commented specifically on having learned an aspect of language although the course input had specific sessions on areas of language. There were cases where subject knowledge played a role in the participant experience. For example, in one of J's lessons, where she described herself as going into panic mode, this was due to her worry about teaching grammar. L commented that she "had turned out to be quite good at … the phonemic thing ". (L2, 2:80) However, each question I asked participants about their learning in the second and third interviews generally had an answer related to

197

teaching activities or communication with learners, with subject knowledge somehow an integral but less prominent part. J's description of a successful lesson illustrates this point.

> *… we were doing - oh what were we doing? Modal verbs. And they just - they were just really responding, and they were really getting it, and it was just really nice. (J3, 6:304-306)*

In a similar way, O was very concerned in his first interview about knowledge of language and how "it's been quite challenging getting my head around the grammar". (O1, 3:73) However, even by the second interview, he has changed to the view that knowledge of language in isolation is not the key to teacher knowledge.

> *I think I do feel a bit differently. I think you deal with it as and when it comes up and I think that's actually the best way to do it as well. (O2, 2:33-34)*

It seemed that subject knowledge, though perceived initially as an important part of teacher knowledge, either lost prominence in the participants' minds or became such an intrinsic part of subject pedagogy that they did not feel it was worth commenting on in detail as a key feature of the knowledge they had gained.

5.6.1 An instrumental case study in the changing views of subject knowledge

A heightened example of the development of participants' perceptions around subject knowledge can be found in the changing views expressed by L. At the beginning of the course, L raised the issue that she would find it difficult to teach something that she did not fully understand. She was reluctant to engage in any kind of trial and error approach. Her aspirations were to have acquired all the necessary knowledge about language before teaching it.

> *I want to feel more solid about what I'm teaching, because at the moment, I'm – and the whole – it's obviously a completely different subject and one that I'm quite – you know, I do feel like I'm not particularly solid on. And there are some things I just go, "I haven't got a clue. Haven't got a clue how to approach this. Not a clue". So I'm hoping to cover all of that. (L1, 2:68-71)*

Her focus in this initial interview is very much on the *subject*. This correlates well with her concerns regarding the need to know everything about English before she taught it.

As she progressed through the course L became less focused on the subject knowledge. Although she admits that: "I still feel insecure on quite a lot of elements of grammar" (L2, 4:130), an experience of teaching a lesson on conditional structures where she had to do a bit of "learning on the hoof" (L2, 4:127) during the lesson allows her to express the realisation that this might be the way she will continue to operate as a teacher.

In looking back at what she has learned on the course in her final interview, she confirms that she has "learnt a lot about the actual content that I'm teaching." (L3, 1:14) However, she is also very clear that her learning of the content has come about through reading but, more importantly, the teaching practice.

> *I'd say half of that's come from the teaching and half of it's come from kind of like the, "Oh god, I'd better read up about this." So – but actually, it has been about the teaching and the actual teaching practice and the feedback from that.* (L3, 1:17-19)

Her final summary of the main area of teacher knowledge that she had acquired over the course places the WoD at the centre. This is all the more noticeable given her ongoing concern during the course for knowledge about language as a central part of teacher knowledge.

> *I think the thing I'm most aware of really kind of understanding in a way that I perhaps didn't before was the whole thing about staging a lesson, and you know, the actual – the actual way people learn and the types of activities that you give them in – in what kind of order and all that sort of thing.* (L3, 1:23-26)

L's final focus on WoD as teacher knowledge exemplifies the decreasing concern over the course with subject knowledge and an increasing regard for subject pedagogy in the form of a knowledge of procedures or moves of teaching.

5.7 An overview of insights into teacher knowledge presented in this chapter

This research explores the participants' articulation of teacher knowledge both prior to joining a teacher training course and during their experience of the course. In relation to prior knowledge, insights from my study indicate that participants' experience of teaching and teachers as enshrined in the concept of the Apprenticeship of Observation is not simply an accumulation of uncritical observations. Participants also had insight into the thinking behind teachers' decisions and are able to apply this to their emerging experience of being a teacher. Their views on teaching are not confined to the *front of stage* view, nor are they devoid of an understanding of why teachers act the way they do. The impact of this knowledge and understanding on new learning is the focus of the next chapter.

I have illustrated throughout this chapter that participants view teacher knowledge as procedural knowledge: knowledge of the procedures or moves or strategies of teaching. They identify this as what they want to learn on the course and they find justification for this view of knowledge in the coursebooks they are using as well as the way their own tutors teach them. They do not question the existence of a correct "Way of Doing" the activity of teaching. One of the key positive outcomes of this procedural knowledge is that it gives them an acquired confidence, which they value and which in turn, they feel, allows them to implement the procedures more effectively.

However, although the existence of a way of doing is not questioned, it is open to adaptation. Adaptation is a result of participants gathering data from a number of sources. They begin to recognise that some of the ways they are asked to act in the classroom are incongruent with their own personalities. They also gather data from the reaction of their learners as to what seems to work. As a result of this data they modify the procedures. By the end of the course they are beginning to move away from what they were given as a Way of Doing, but not abandoning it. They have learned to adapt or developed a kind of adaptive expertise.

I argue therefore that the procedural knowledge which participants want and value becomes a kind of grounded theory of teaching. They validate what they are learning through a belief in the course, their tutors and the printed coursebooks. They collect

data which allows them to make justified decisions about modifying their way of doing until it is congruent with their own personality and their learners' positive responses.

5.8 Conclusion: towards a "grounded practice theory"

In this chapter I have considered participants' narratives about the *what* of learning; their perceptions of teacher knowledge. It is clear that they begin their course with firm ideas of what constitutes teacher knowledge gleaned from their experience as learners and, for some, their experience as teachers. They have paradigms of teaching that mostly focus on the *doing*, the *moves* of teaching, but also include the relationships and communication between teacher and student. These paradigms are not, however, a passive accumulation of observed features of teaching. Instead, the participants have an understanding of some of the teacher decisions. They approach the course with some established ideas of both what teachers do, but also why they do it.

Once on the course, their concept of teacher knowledge consists mainly of a procedural approach to teaching, they want a script for *doing*. They also believe that such a script exists and is valid. The script is embodied in the teaching books they use, the teaching strategies adopted by their own tutors and is further validated by the awarding body which regulates the course. Thus they begin to build a "practice theory"; a paradigm for teaching which is built on practice, but becomes the framework for their thinking about teaching. The new discourse related to these procedural aspects, the nomenclature of English language teaching, serves as a naming device that accentuates the theoretical nature of their knowledge of procedures by reifying practices. Although they continue to value the procedural knowledge, as they become more confident, they recognise that any *given* script has an unnatural quality and they begin to improvise with the script. The ability to improvise is in itself generated by the confidence which, in turn, has been generated by having a script to follow.

In the first chapter of this thesis I recounted anecdotally a view held by a number of people that they had "learned more" on their CELTA course than on a longer teacher education programme. This study does not present any findings of comparison.

However, it may be pertinent to suggest that individuals perceive that they learn more because what they learn is actually congruent with what they believe teacher knowledge should consist of. The CELTA course may provide the kind of practitioner knowledge (Saugstad 2005) which is more valued and is therefore felt to be *more*.

Chapter 6: Findings related to teacher learning

6.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter I considered findings from my research in relation to participants' perceptions of teacher knowledge. I now turn to findings related to participants' views of their learning on the CELTA course and thus more generally to findings in relation to teacher learning. It is fully acknowledged that learning is not separate from knowledge and the intertwining of the two was recognised in a number of sections in the previous chapter. It is therefore the case that some of the themes from the previous chapter re-emerge, but are refocused to maintain a more consistent lens on learning. Each participant in the research has an individualised experience on their CELTA course and the findings presented in this chapter show examples of participants experiencing the same course event differently. Through the different perspectives, however, there are many commonalities which form the basis of the conclusions drawn here.

Another commonality highlighted in Chapter one was the relative homogeneity of the CELTA course in comparison to other teacher education courses in terms of its structure and content, regardless of where it is experienced. In total, the twelve participants in this study speak about three different courses as the three groups of participants attended different courses. The chapter considers some of the common elements of the course and participants' reaction to them as there is an intrinsic consistency in the content and structure of the course, though not necessarily in participants' perception of their experience.

In this chapter I make use of two *instrumental case studies*. As described in Chapter four, these are heightened examples of a more general finding which offer a heightened description of that finding. One of the instrumental case studies is of a course event and the other of an individual participant experience. Throughout this chapter I refer to the *participants* when I am looking at contributions or findings related to those who contributed to my research data. If the comments relate more widely to all those undertaking the course, I refer to this group more generally as the *trainees*.

6.1 Structure of the chapter

The starting point of this chapter is to explore the way the prior knowledge which participants bring to the course interacts with their new learning. This is done through taking one specific area of the course to exemplify key points and then looking more broadly at how participants weave together old and new learning.

The chapter then looks at important learning events identified by participants to explore the underlying process they went through to gain new knowledge. This section concentrates on three main aspects of the course which were predominant in participants' narratives: the actual practice of teaching, the observation of other teachers and receiving feedback. Each element is taken separately with consideration given to how participants identified their process of learning through these events.

The final section of the chapter considers the impact of the relationships between participants and between participants and their tutors on participants' learning. This section also explores the use of reflective practice and highlights participants' perceptions of the different modes of reflective practice as well as the tension between that which is effective for learning and that which is useful for assessment.

6.2 Impact of prior knowledge on learning

In the previous chapter it was demonstrated that participants came to the course with pre-existing knowledge about teaching. The origins of this knowledge were considered and it was shown that this knowledge was mainly gleaned from participants' experience as a learner. It was postulated that the knowledge included some understanding of the rationale behind teacher actions and teacher decisions and thus was more than just a superficial awareness of teacher behaviours. The potential for this prior knowledge to impact on participants' learning on the course was acknowledged and it is here in this chapter that I consider the exact nature of this impact.

In Chapter three I noted that a thread in many studies looking at the impact of prior knowledge is to take a "before and after" picture to see whether trainees have adjusted their views. This is to evaluate the resistance of trainees to new learning

presented on a programme and presupposes a desire for a change in beliefs as a result of trainees undertaking a teacher education programme. Rather than replicate the large number of studies focusing on *whether* change happens, in my research I have tried to uncover *how* this change happens. In the next section I first discuss an instrumental case study which shows the ebb and flow between prior and new learning and serves to highlight some of the ways in which prior knowledge remains immutable as well as how it can be changed.

6.2.1 An instrumental case study – observation of experienced teachers

The first step in my examination of the impact of prior knowledge on learning is to take one example and consider the process which is exemplified through this example. I then explore other outcomes from the data more generally which supplement this illustrative example.

The area considered in this instrumental case study is the reaction of participants to the observation of experienced teachers. On the CELTA, as on many teacher education courses, trainees are presented with models of (usually good) teaching and are encouraged to notice the features of effective teaching. This exposure to good teaching may be implemented through the trainers modelling what they believe is good practice during the taught input sessions as well as the use of observations of more experienced teachers teaching English language in real classroom situations. On the CELTA course there is a requirement that all trainees observe a number of hours of English language teaching by experienced practitioners; some of this may be completed by watching videos of lessons.

To help trainees notice features of the lessons they observe, trainers often provide observation tasks. The underlying assumption is that trainees need to be guided to notice the pedagogy in the lesson. Otherwise these observations would simply be an extension of what trainees have done in other settings where they have been a learner, the *front of stage* view explored in the previous chapter. The observation tasks are an attempt to get the trainee to speculate and work out the *back stage* decisions taken by the teacher. On their courses, participants undertook observations of teachers on video and also live observations of teachers by sitting in on real lessons. The videos were used more in the first weeks of the course; the live

observations were throughout the course. In the interviews participants were asked to describe what they had learned from these experiences. In many cases, what was *noticed* was closely linked to their views about teaching that they held prior to the course.

In Chapter five I illustrated that L had identified two areas she felt would be important to learn to be a teacher. One was related to planning and structure, the more formal organisational aspects of the lesson and the other was "fun". When asked to identify what she noticed about a live observation, she mentions these two aspects as things that stood out for her.

> *The way that I – it was quite – it was good fun, it was a really nice personal style … It was the speed and the way it was very well-integrated and - and incredibly useful obviously.* (L2, 4:159-169)

She further commented that this was a teacher she felt "in tune with" (L2, 4:157) and as a result seemed to notice the features of the lesson which corresponded to what she believed were important parts of teaching. However, she did notice other things including error correction, something she had decided beforehand to watch out for.

> *In terms of his error correction, I really, - I was - I was kind of looking out for it anyhow, but I was - how quick and specific he was on things. …It's actually being really, really quick on the - and picking up - especially at that level.* (L2, 4:160-165)

C, whose priority was expressed as meeting "the needs of the students" (C1, 1:22), watched a video of a teacher doing a vocabulary focused lesson with all the group of trainees on the course. She indicated that the trainee group had been encouraged by the course tutors to notice specific skills around how to teach new vocabulary. When asked what skills or techniques she had noticed, she replied:

> *What I noticed was he had a great empathy with the students … So he empathised with anyone who might be shy or afraid to show their feelings."* (C1, 2:41-45)

When pressed to try to identify some of the skills around teaching vocabulary she described what the students had learned: "a very, very competent range of skills to

206

describe their feelings and emotions". (C1, 2:57-58) When asked what learning she could take into her own teaching she returned again to the needs of the students:

What new things is maybe a better understanding of individuals who are wishing to learn and in terms of their age and background. (C1, 2:61-62)

For both L and C, their dominant paradigm of teaching or their view of what teacher knowledge they wished to gain served as almost a limiting factor in what they noticed in the observation of others teaching. C, in particular, seemed to be unable to notice anything beyond this, although I rephrased questions three times to try to get her to articulate the classroom activities or techniques she had noticed as she had been encouraged to do by her tutors. She was unable in the interview to identify any specific techniques used by the teacher.

The use of observations as a learning tool is an important part of teacher education programmes. It is assumed that in order for any learning to take place, the trainees must be able to notice what is going on in the lesson. The two examples above illustrate the way prior beliefs about teaching may actually precondition the participants to notice, and therefore to not notice, features of the lesson. In a sense, the participants have their own observation tasks generated from their views of teaching.

Two possible perspectives on the impact of prior learning emerge in these examples, or perhaps, more accurately, two ends of a continuum. The two metaphors which I feel illustrate these two ends are that of flavour and filter. If prior learning adds a flavour, then it is an additional taste to other tastes. Something that takes up space certainly, but something that allows other tastes to co-exist with it. In the example above, L noticed aspects of the lesson that corresponded to some of her views on teaching from her prior experience. However, this did not prevent her from noticing other elements, though they may have had a less strong taste. She is able to gain some "useful" techniques from the observation albeit with a strong focus on the fun element of the lesson.

A filter, on the other hand, is something that prevents certain things getting though. In C's example above, her overwhelming view that teaching was primarily to do with understanding the students and their needs seemed to almost completely block her

ability to notice anything else. The way prior learning affects the participants may also be influenced by the strength of the prior experience, perhaps by length or impact. If the prior knowledge has a strong "taste" then this might override the "taste" of the new learning, much like adding a strong spice to a dish. If it is less strong, perhaps because the knowledge schema is weak, or the participant's commitment to the taste is weak, then the prior knowledge simply adds a hint of a taste, or a "note" in a scent.

The instrumental case study of what can happen during the observations of experienced teachers provides a metaphorical paradigm with which to consider how prior beliefs about teaching impact on learning during the course. I now turn to some other examples of this interaction to draw further conclusions as to the nature of the process.

6.2.2 Further examples of the flavour and filter

As they explored their learning on the course in the second and third interviews, participants provided further insights into the interaction between their prior knowledge and learning on the course. In some instances, the interaction was a matter of incorporating some new learning within the participants' existing schema as to what was important for teaching. In others, new learning was simply rejected because it did not match their prior views of what constituted appropriate teacher behaviours.

As already mentioned, L highlighted how important "fun" was for her in a lesson. She raised this point in the first interview and, as discussed above, noticed it in her observations. In the final interview, when asked if there were aspects of teaching she learned on the course that she would reject and not incorporate into her teaching she explained:

> I suppose because of my background, basically if the lesson isn't entertaining then you lose the students like that. So there were a couple of things that I – you know, it was more things that – it was kind of restricted practice things that always seemed to be very dry and – well not always, but a lot of the time seemed to be very dry and I wanted to make them more kind of exciting, and

then kind of lost perhaps some of the restrictive nature of it … I do have this
kind of drive to make everything as fun as possible. (L3, 3:89-104)

It seems that when faced with directions from her tutors to use classroom activities where there were fewer opportunities for students to speak more freely and naturally such as restricted practice exercises, her own view that teaching should be fun demanded that she would adjust them. This meant that in some cases the original purpose of the exercise, to practise language in a very controlled way, was lost. This suggests the application of a filter, as she did the activities, but adjusted them in a way which slightly distorted their purpose.

G mentions the importance of "variety" in her first interview. She explains that this means having different activities in a lesson, but also giving attention to all the students in her class. The notion of "variation" is mentioned a few times by her in interviews. G undertook an Italian course parallel to her CELTA and she notes that recently her Italian teacher has changed the way she teaches so that "she's stuck to the textbook". (G1, 7:244) G views this as a negative change. She also sees the use of different media as important to implement variety. When asked to comment about her feelings coming up to her first lesson, she focuses on the use of the tape recorder and the fact that she will have to use technology.

When G goes to observe teachers from another group she notices mainly the way they use the interactive whiteboard as a strategy for introducing variety. Again this highlights how the focus of observations becomes the issue the teacher is preoccupied with. In her second interview G had just taught a lesson that had not gone well and to which the tutor had awarded a "fail". When discussing the lesson she acknowledges that the main reason the lesson was not successful was due to her efforts to "invent a game" (G2, 3:91) to introduce variety. She wanted to introduce a real example to the lesson of a criminal, which was linked to the theme of the lesson.

> *I thought that that would be quite an exciting thing to know that there was a*
> *man in Kent who's so bad, and that might interest them. But then you can get*
> *carried away with the story and forget about the fact that these people are*
> *meant to be learning something. And then also because I don't want to be - I*

don't want it all to be about me dictating things to them, so it's sort of just
trying to get the balance really. (G2, 3:103-108)

In this example G felt that she could not proceed with a possible safer option of using the coursebook or set materials but had to introduce more variety. In her evaluation she seems to acknowledge that this attempt has actually distracted her from what her students were actually meant to be learning. In her preoccupation with variety, she rejects aspects which would contribute more to student learning and the lesson is judged to be unsuccessful by her tutor and by her.

In the interviews with all the participants, I asked a direct question about whether they disagreed with anything they were asked to do in their teaching practice. This was to try to crystallise potential conflict between their prior beliefs and the new learning on the course. In all but two cases, participants said that there was nothing they rejected outright. The case of C was discussed in the previous chapter in relation to her identified ability to change her teaching to a way she did not believe in to acquiesce to demands from external bodies: her College and the inspection regime. This would be a behavioural change without a corresponding change to her underpinning paradigm of teaching. Two other cases illustrate how prior beliefs can present a strong filtering out of new knowledge presented on the course.

One of the strategies S was exposed to on the course and asked to use in her teaching was the use of concept checking questions (CCQs). These are questions framed to check students' understanding of language concepts or meaning. S was given feedback that she needed to work on these in her teaching and by the end of the course had done so to the satisfaction of the tutors observing her. In the final interview she identified CCQs as a "bone of contention". (S3, 3:91) In explaining her difficulty she drew on prior knowledge gained from her experience as a learner.

That's only my view, but I think it's probably because I don't feel comfortable
using them. Having learned languages, I mean I'm only familiar with French
and German, but I managed to hold a conversation in both languages and get
by without ever coming across concept questions. (S3, 3:93-95)

Her argument is based on knowledge gleaned from her apprenticeship of observation and has remained fixed in spite of any contrary expectation of the

course. She has succeeded in making a temporary change to her behaviour to comply with the requirements of the course, but is clear that this change will not last and that neither her teacher behaviour nor beliefs about teaching will include the use of concept checking questions.

The teaching strategy identified by E is the use of a *gist task*, or task that focuses on the general understanding of a text when teaching a lesson focused on developing listening or reading skills. This type of task would be expected to be used at the start of the activity to allow students to gain an overview of the text content. E comments that she doesn't believe in the use of such tasks "in her heart" (E3, 4:154) and will therefore not implement them in her teaching after the course.

Prior beliefs about teaching gained through time spent as a learner or teacher before the course clearly had an impact on participants' learning on their CELTA course. In this section I have drawn some conclusions as to the nature of this impact. I have not focused on conclusions as to whether it is immutable or not, as this is the subject of many other studies. Instead I have illustrated *how* the interaction takes place. I have shed light on how the "constant traffic" (Cabaroglu and Roberts 2000:288) between prior knowledge and new knowledge takes place. I have shown that prior beliefs can determine what a trainee actually notices in activities designed to focus them on strategies in observed lessons. I have also shown that it can lead participants to persevere with a teaching strategy which they realise does not lead to the desired learning outcomes for students, but satisfies their own preoccupations. In these cases the prior knowledge could be seen to act as a filter, blocking out new insights from the course as participants simply acted according to what they felt were appropriate teaching behaviours.

In other cases, however, the participants strove to reach some sort of balance where their teaching would be modified by prior beliefs but they were still able to incorporate new learning. In these examples, participants adapted what they were asked to do by the course tutors to incorporate their existing beliefs about teaching. This quasi-hybrid approach I have talked about in terms of flavour, where the prior knowledge calls for an adaptation rather than a rejection. This reflects the notion that participants have sought to find "plausible solutions" (Tillema 1998:223) which reconcile their prior knowledge with the knowledge they encounter on the course.

The complexity of the effect of prior learning suggests that a more multifaceted approach needs to be taken to addressing prior knowledge on courses such as CELTA. In the case of S discussed above, it might be that some exploration with tutors of whether she might indeed have experienced CCQs in her own language learning, but was unaware or even why she might not have, could have served to recalibrate S's views on this topic allowing her to be more open to the new learning.

When exploring their prior knowledge, as detailed in Chapter five, participants were able to give considerable detail about their experience as a learner and the beliefs about teaching they had acquired from this experience. Their views were quite explicit and therefore relatively easy to examine. An additional layer of complexity comes into play when dealing with some aspects of that prior knowledge which remain tacit and unexplored by the participant. Where beliefs about teaching are unidentified, then it is even more of a challenge to address them explicitly on the course. I now consider some examples of the impact of more tacit knowledge.

6.2.3 Tacit constituents of prior knowledge and their potential impact

In this section I address one specific area where a belief about teaching expressed in an explicit manner by participants was contradicted by other, more tacit views. This is the belief that it is important to adopt a more facilitative teaching approach, where students would be more active, a view expressed by participants J and H and discussed in Chapter five. It is this one specific aspect of teaching; facilitation rather than teacher led approaches, where participants' expressed beliefs were contradicted by another belief which did not seem to originate from any experience of being a learner or a teacher themselves.

Both participants J and H, identified the importance of getting students to speak and were convinced that the teacher's role was to engage students in activities and tasks. They articulated a preference for a more inductive or student-centred way of teaching. Such an approach would chime with the way CELTA courses would encourage trainees to teach. They were both adamant in the first interview that this would be the way they aspired to teach. H was especially convinced, since the examples she drew on, as discussed in Chapter five, came from her experience of

language lessons and she believed that when teaching English it would be important that the students in the class did most of the talking.

A hint of a different paradigm of teaching came in J's first interview. Although very strongly advocating the fact that she wanted to imitate a teacher who did a lot of tasks and got the students to direct their learning, she gave a slightly different picture of what a teacher does when describing her mother, also a teacher.

> *I think she's very good at noticing when someone's losing interest in something and I hope that I'll gain that from her. And you know when you've been standing up and explaining something to someone for a long time and you can just probably see them go blank after a while ...* (J1, 9:301-303)

In this more personal example the teacher is seen as taking on the role of standing at the front of the class explaining rather than setting up tasks where the students direct their own learning. This is perhaps an alternative, tacit view that J holds, but does not articulate when asked to put forward her positive ideal based on her experience as a learner. As discussed in Chapter five, she was quite adamant that her desire was to be facilitative and set up tasks for learners to do rather than stand at the front of the classroom.

In her second interview J looked back on the lessons she had taught and outlined where she had been less successful in her teaching than she expected, based on her own reflections and the feedback from her tutors. Surprisingly, the area she had struggled with was where "I ended up standing at the front and talking a lot". (J2, 1:33) When questioned as to why this might be the case, she attributed it to going into panic mode because she was teaching grammar and found this difficult. Her response to the panic was to do exactly what she had articulated as not good teaching when describing her examples of teachers from her past.

> *But when you're up there you don't think quick enough I think. You go into panic mode a bit.* (J2, 1:48)

It seems that when faced with a challenging situation, her response was to draw on the idea of teaching that gave her the most control. This was the version of the teacher role highlighted in her description of her mother's teaching. She did not draw

on any prior belief gleaned from her experience as a learner, but on another belief about what to do when "up there" in the role of the teacher. The teacher behaviour of explaining to the learners rather than being facilitative was a kind of default behaviour reverted to in a time of crisis.

H explains how she reverted to a different way of teaching than the one expressed as her ideal. She was also given feedback by tutors that she should try to talk less in lessons. This was despite her aspiration before she started teaching that the students should speak more, as highlighted in Chapter five. When asked what had caused her to take on a more didactic role, in direct opposition to what she aspired to do, she explained:

> *I think it's because I – I thought that if – that if I gave them too much to do - or because I'm a teacher I should be talking the most. (H2, 3:89-90)*

She goes on to describe how she also finds the silences difficult and this suggests that she may be experiencing a natural communication response. If nothing is being said, someone fills the awkward silence. It is interesting, however, that she articulates her response to the situation (talking the most) as a "teacher" response, something that is contrary to her declared belief of how a teacher should behave as outlined when describing her ideal language teacher.

I have also recorded in my scrapbook further examples of the impact of a more generic world view of how a teacher acts. I note an example of how online picture searches generate mostly images of the teacher instructing at the front of the class, I have recorded two cases of other teachers I spoke to concurrent with this research. One came to a teacher education programme with a background in therapy and expressed an overwhelming commitment to the notion of facilitation and not taking up the role of knower at the front of the class. In his first lesson he proceeded to write notes on the board and deliver a mini lecture on a feature of language. When asked why, he explained that as soon as he took the board pen in his hand he felt somehow obliged to start talking and explaining. It was as if having a pen in his hand put him in a role where he felt he had to lead, explain and direct. The second teacher, who taught music, wrote a pre-observation reflection piece in which he expressed his determination to do more facilitation and less teacher instruction. In

the lesson he was unable to sustain any learner-led work and became more didactic as the lesson progressed. He explained afterwards that once he stood up he felt such a need to perform that he was unable to let learners do more.

What emerges from the examples above is that alongside a more considered response, where participants deliberately evaluate what they are being taught against their prior beliefs, there exists a more tacit, almost visceral response which draws on a paradigm of the teacher as a knower, who imparts knowledge. The view may emerge from what Johnson terms "the sum of the individual's prior experiences" (Johnson 1009:9). Thus notions of teaching extraneous to the apprenticeship of observation come into play. These notions have an impact on participants' ability to implement less didactic approaches, but seem to emerge when the participant is under some pressure. It suggests some kind of default teacher behaviour which is under-recognised in participants' narratives of their prior knowledge and also, potentially, under-recognised in activities on teacher education programmes which attempt to uncover and explore trainees' prior beliefs.

6.2.4 Can personality impact as a constituent of prior learning?

As part of my role as a CELTA assessor, I engaged in a conversation with a group of trainees who expressed the view what one did as a teacher was simply an extension of one's personality (scrapbook). This premise that an individual has inbuilt personal characteristics that will make them a good teacher without, or even in spite of, any training they receive was introduced at the very start of this thesis as the question of whether teachers are "born or made".

A possible link between personal characteristics and one's characteristics as a teacher form part of my disquiet with the concept of teacher identity which I have discussed at length in Chapters two and three. Therefore, in this section, rather than signal the impact of personality as a feature of identity, I discuss findings on how the participants' personality traits, as identified by them, seemed to exert an influence on their learning on the course. I would not presume on the basis of three interviews to draw conclusions about the personality of the participants in this study. My findings in this section are therefore reserved for points that have been explicitly raised by participants themselves in interviews.

The emergence of personality as a theme in the research came about through the recurrence of certain words and topics in a number of the participants' interviews which were related to personality traits. The recurrence was evident throughout the three interviews and it emerged that the identified personality trait was linked to their learning on the course.

M considered her daughter's judgement of her personality, one which she hoped she would not show to her students.

> *My daughter tells me I'm bossy, I hope they don't see me as bossy really. I don't see myself that way but maybe it's a different thing with a child. Not that she's a child.* (M1, 5:171-172)

M had some previous teaching experience and when asked what she wanted to learn on the course, mentioned an area she felt she needed to improve on which has a link to the trait of controlling without seeming to be bossy.

> *One of the things that I do find difficult is when there's all these little side conversations and I don't want to be rude and say "shut up and listen". I'm not quite sure how to deal with that. So I'm hoping I'll get some sort of techniques to help me deal with that more subtly.* (M1, 2:45-48)

When asked what she noticed in the video observations of teachers that she had watched, the bossy theme was evident in what was recalled.

> *In terms of – oh how she reprimanded somebody – maybe not reprimanded. How she dealt with somebody who was late, and speaking in another language.* (M1, 2:64-65)

Once M started to teach she found that an area she needed to work on was "giving instructions". (M2, 1:62) A speculative conclusion would be that either her personality trait made her give instructions that were unclear because she expected to be obeyed, or her desire to avoid this personality trait resulted in vagueness and lack of clarity.

G had some very striking descriptions of the possible impact of personality, no more so than in the question in the first interview.

Question: *What kind of teacher do you aspire to be?*

G: *Do you mean like what sort of person have I got in mind?* (G1, 7:262-263)

G explained that she was "quite anxious" (G1, 3:107) about starting the course and in the first interview focused a lot on things she was worried and not worried about. The word "worried" occurred on five different occasions in the transcript of the first interview, referring to different aspects of the course. She was concerned that the course could be "traumatic" (G1, 3:106) and wondered how the trainers could advocate trainees encouraging their students while at the same time "traumatising" (G1, 3:114) the trainees themselves through the feedback. The overall impression given in the first interview was of someone who was fearful about the course.

Her fearfulness impacted on her learning when watching experienced teachers. She found the videos unrealistic because one teacher was "immensely charismatic" (G1, 5:185) and the other "seemed to be very experienced and confident and – so I couldn't really identify with those people very much." (G1, 5:188-189) It meant that she couldn't "really remember specifically" (G1, 2:198) what she had seen in the video apart from the fact that the teacher was "amusing and commanding". (G1, 2:198) In contrast, J, whom I would describe as confident, though this is not a judgement she expressed about herself, watched the same video and had this comment to make:

> *The teacher was really charismatic and enthusiastic and I remember thinking "I want to be that sort of teacher and do that".* (J1, 4:130)

The two contrasting views indicate that for G, a personality trait was filtering out the techniques that she was supposed to be observing because she was filtering out the teachers whose personality she could not identify with. Her inability to see herself as confident meant that she could not use the experience of watching a confident teacher to gain insights into strategies she might use in her teaching.

In the second interview Trainee G seemed quite demoralised from the outset and it emerged during the interview that she had received a "fail" grade for one of her lessons. The teaching seemed "overwhelming, nerve-wracking". (G2, 1:7) She spoke of her fear of:

drying up, being left with a sea of blank faces … I suppose it's – I didn't expect it to be anything else because of the person I am. (G2, 1:7-9)

She was convinced that fear was part of what was preventing progress on the course.

I don't feel I've done – made a massive lot of progress in three lessons. I don't think – I don't think it's surprising. I mean you know, it might be a bit disappointing, but – but I think for people who don't have to pay any attention to the fear side of things then everything they do they can – they can focus. (G2, 8:295-297)

By the third interview, she was much more positive. This was a result of focusing on more specific things related to classroom techniques "instead of thinking, 'Oh I'm not very confident' or 'I shouldn't be so worried'". (G3, 1:18-20) She acknowledged her "fear of failure" (G3, 5:146) and how failing a lesson had "wiped out most of the creativity" (G3, 5:173) in her teaching. The trait of being anxious and fearful had clearly left a strong imprint on her learning.

There were two areas of her personality identified by H in the first interview. The first was that she was not "extremely extrovert" (H1, 4:120) and the second was that she was "quite a perfectionist". (H1, 6:194) Both of these traits flavoured her view of what she wanted to learn to be a teacher. Her aim was to be encouraging to those who were not very extrovert and to prepare very thoroughly so that she can become more relaxed because things were going well. She felt that the important knowledge to be gained on the course was

… also to make – so that I'm very approachable and open... and making sure all the students felt they were included. (H1, 5:170-175)

Once teaching started the perfectionist trait seemed to dominate. She found it difficult to let go of control and allow the students to undertake the task. She was "almost afraid of that spontaneity, because it might – I might lose control of where I am". (H2, 3:96) The need for structure and perfection was inhibiting her ability to try out more student led activities.

218

I acknowledge that it is difficult to draw conclusions about whether an individual personality trait was responsible for some of the aspects with which M struggled in the example above. However, in the case of G and H, it seems that there is an impact on what they notice and their aspirations for the way they want to teach which are closely related to a feature of their personality they highlight.

Each teacher, just like each human being, has a number of individual characteristics which make up what can be called a "personality". I do not contend here that an audit of personality traits is a valuable addition to a teacher education programme. However, there may certainly be some value in considering the experienced teachers used for the observation element of such programmes. The examples here suggest that confidence might be a fruitful area to explore. The natural tendency is to show trainees experienced, and therefore normally confident, teachers. There might be a value in ensuring that less overly confident teachers are also available for trainees to watch as part of their learning process.

6.3 When learning happened

Having explored the different ways in which the participants' prior learning, beliefs and dispositions impacted on learning, I will now focus on participants' articulation of when and how learning took place during the course. As discussed in Chapter one, the CELTA course has a similar structure wherever it is taught. Therefore, there are similar opportunities for learning across the different courses participants were engaged in. In this section I therefore refer to the events on the course. However, I also refer to events in the sense of moments participants identified as helping them to learn.

To summarise the course learning events, the main elements of the course addressed by participants and outlined in Chapter one are:

Input sessions – whole group lessons where trainers provide instruction on English language and English language pedagogy.

Teaching Practice (TP) – English lessons with groups of volunteer students where participants practised their teaching skills. Participants taught in a sub-group (TP group) and shared the teaching time between them.

Feedback – a group feedback session led by the tutor where participants were expected to comment on their own lesson and the lessons of other trainees. In some of the interviews, participants refer to "teaching practice" to include feedback because feedback normally happened directly after TP.

Planning – a group planning activity where trainees in one TP group planned the upcoming lesson together.

Observation – opportunities to observe experienced English language teachers either live in a lesson or on video. Some participants refer to the observation of their tutors in input sessions as observation, although they were in the role of learners in that context.

Alongside these defined events, participants described key moments unique to them when they felt they had learned something. I have tried to link both individual and course learning events wherever possible to illustrate findings from a course perspective as well as from the individual narrative.

6.3.1 Practice

In the previous chapter, one of the key findings about teacher knowledge was that participants identified practical knowledge of how to structure and use a series of teaching strategies as the key knowledge they hoped to gain and actually learned on the course. I called this a Way of Doing (WoD) to emphasise the practical and procedural nature of such knowledge.

It is not surprising then that participants were adamant that the key learning event for them on the course and the time and place when they learned most was during the hours of teaching practice, when they were actually in a classroom engaged in the act of teaching. A selection of comments from participants indicates the primary importance of practice:

> *Actually it's been about the teaching and the actual teaching practice and the feedback from that.* (L3, 117-18)

> *I learned a lot from standing up and teaching. I think probably the most.* (H3, 2:51)

I think probably the teaching practice sessions have been the most valuable (O3, 1:8)

So we've got lectures, teaching practice – well I think whatever you do, if you're able to put it into practice, if you're able to do something, you know, rather than read it or whatever, I think that that's the most valuable. (M1, 3:75-76)

It is clear from the extracts above that participants valued the opportunity to implement teaching strategies and it was through the actual implementation that learning occurred. It seems somewhat tautologous to say that participants identify *learning to do* as a key constituent of teacher knowledge and they learn this best by actually *doing* it. However, closer consideration of their articulation of the role of practice leads to more complex findings on how exactly the practice element of the course contributed to their learning. In the next sections of this chapter I consider findings in relation to the different features of practice which played a role in learning.

6.3.2 Practice and discord with the script

In the previous chapter I described the evolution of a WoD from a fixed script to a more improvised script. In that description I highlighted the fact that participants became uncomfortable with the unnatural quality of the given WoD. They did not feel they were acting like themselves and therefore began to make modifications. The realisation that the given procedure was unnatural, the desire to change and the changes made could be described as a feature of learning. Thus learning occurred because of a discord between the natural behaviours of the teacher and what they were being asked to do.

As the course progressed learning occurred through the participants' noticing of the reaction of their students. As they began to notice these reactions their ability to judge the success or lack of success of a teaching approach grew and allowed them to move from the lesson or activity template they had been given. J describes her growing realisation of the impact of students' level of English and the group dynamic. Talking about an activity recommended by the coursebook, she concludes:

In some instances it's not appropriate for this particular group, like drilling and things like that with them. (J2, 4:114)

While in a more general sense, she also begins to identify lesson activities which might not work because of the dynamic in her group.

> *Like a role play exercise or something like that where one person has to stand up and do something, I think they'd just get giggly and they wouldn't want to do it. Whereas if they're working in pairs or groups they seem to work much better.* (J2, 4:131-135)

This growing realisation that the recommended activities may not be suitable for a particular group of learners allowed the participants to move from a given script and start to adapt it to be a more appropriate Way of Doing for their group.

H describes how noticing the reaction of learners with one of the other teachers in her group helps her take on the specific strategy of asking students to come to the board.

> *Another thing I saw one of them [peer teacher] do was get students come up and write things on the board and that – I did that yesterday actually, and that works really well … the students seemed really pleased to be – they felt they were taking part in the lesson, really actively taking part.* (H3, 7:236-241)

Making a judgment as to the success of this activity encourages her to do this herself and she implements it immediately in her own teaching, reassured by the reaction of the students in the class.

U recognises that being able to notice whether something is going well or not takes time to develop and it is developed through practice.

> *I suppose that takes weeks of doing teacher practising to get to grips with the idea that you can be a bit spontaneous or kind of recognise if something's not working so you have to readjust something slightly.* (U3, 4:139-140)

The development of the ability to notice the reaction of students in a lesson and making a judgment as to the success of an activity plays a key role for participants in helping them decide when to move away from and adapt their script. It is of note that feedback from students does not feature formally in the course structure of the programmes experienced by the participants. In my experience of CELTA and other

teacher education programmes, it is not usual to see formal feedback from learners used as a source of learning for trainees.

6.3.3 Noticing the practice of others.

A feature of participants' narratives of their learning was the important role played by their observations of other teachers. They also learned from watching their peers in TP groups teach and for some, observing their tutors during input sessions led to learning. An interesting feature of this observation is that seeing an activity or lesson that was unsuccessful could generate learning. By seeing how not to do something, participants gained more insights into their own practice.

The learning process described by participants is in two distinct parts. The first is noticing the strategies used and the second is deliberately incorporating them into their teaching. Some of the participants were able to do the former but struggled to do the latter consistently.

An example of how skills of noticing were developed is described by M. At first she feels she is not able to identify things in an observation, but became better at this. She then starts to identify the next stage as putting these into practice.

> *The first one [observation] like I was just green, so I'm sure I missed a lot. The second one, you know, I was scribbling a lot of notes and I was putting down not just what happened but my impressions as well.* (M2, 4:110-111)

And on a later observation:

> *I thought that was a great technique. Things like that I'd like to put into practice.* (M3, 9:292)

L describes the process of turning an observed technique into something she incorporates into her own teaching. In this description she identifies observation as the means by which she increases her awareness of an area she needed to improve on in her own teaching (error correction). She then uses the strategies from the observation as a kind of marker, not something to imitate or copy into her own lesson, but something that pushes her to make changes in what she is doing.

223

I was always very aware of observing – whenever I've observed … I sort of think, "I need to do something about the error correction," so I'd be very focused on how other people did it and then just try to introduce it. (L3, 6:151-155)

I'd find it very difficult to just copy somebody in that sense. It's just something that I – you know, I was just aware of it and just thought, "Right now do it, do it, do it. Like now, do it". (L3, 6:110-112)

G also identified observing teachers as a great learning opportunity. Like L, she sees the learning from observation as the opportunity to reinforce her awareness of things that she needs to do, but unlike L, struggles to implement the ideas she sees in other lessons into her own teaching. She confirms that she has "watched a lot of people and I think that's hugely useful". (M2, 2:59) In response to the question about what she had learned from these observations:

I think sort of dynamism, in other words, you know, the changing of tasks and so forth ... and very clear organisation.. I suppose, as far as it affects me, that I know already that those are the things that I should work on, and that are what's required, but it's just so much easier said than done. (M2, 2:61-68)

The value of observations is recognised by U, but she also acknowledges that it is not simply a question of implementing exactly what you see in a lesson. Her explanation highlights the importance of seeing in practice what has been dealt with during input sessions and considers observation as reinforcement of learning rather than something to imitate directly.

And I think there is the kind of danger when you're observing someone that you do, you kind of pick up on all the stages and you think, "well you could have done that and you could have done that." And when you do actually teach you know that you can't think of all those extra things that you could have done but it kind of reinforced all the things in our input sessions and helps us identify that. So yeah, I think it's completely integral to the whole experience really. (U3, 6:216-220)

In the examples above, learning from observations takes the form of noticing certain techniques. These are often areas that the trainee has already identified as important because they feel they are something to improve. For some, noticing how others engage in an aspect of practice can be deliberately incorporated into their own teaching by consciously changing something in the lessons: for others, the incorporating is more of a challenge. Nevertheless, there is recognition that the activity of observation contributes positively to learning. O confirms its importance by comparing it to input sessions in relation to learning about classroom management.

> *… just kind of little techniques for classroom management, they're quite useful and you can't really pick them up any other way. You can't teach them. … So I think there's definitely stuff that you pick up from observing that you can't in any other way.* (O1, 9:299-304)

A further insight into learning through observing was the fact that it was not necessary for the observed lesson to be successful. T and O in particular were very clear that watching something that went badly was a key learning experience. They highlighted this in relation to watching their peers teach, rather than experienced tutors.

In the final interview O comments that in many ways, he was able to learn more from watching peers than experienced teachers because:

> *But the observations are … were really useful, yeah. More just in terms of sort of noticing where things have gone wrong and why they've gone wrong. So like we were saying when you watch experienced teachers, you don't really, it's quite hard to say, "oh that's why that happened," because they're so, they're so experienced at doing it they're kind of one step ahead. Whereas with inexperienced teachers I think it's much more, it's much more obvious when something goes wrong, why.* (O3: 6:204-210)

In his reflection he identifies the advantage of observing less experienced tutors as the opportunity to notice the perceived errors which they make. The obviousness of something going wrong makes it easier to notice. As with the growing awareness in their own lessons of which activities are successful learning experiences for their

learners, participants are also aware of the unsuccessful and for this participant, the failure of a peer became a key learning event.

Another example of a learning opportunity which arises from watching a peer's lack of success is described by T. He identifies one technique; using your fingers to identify language which needs to be corrected, and describes how watching a peer do it badly gave him the confidence to try it out. In this way the negative observation leads to the *acquired confidence* discussed in Chapter five.

> *One teacher did try and implement it in the next lesson and just crashed and burned miserably but then all of us did start doing it and it certainly felt like it worked really well in this lesson … it was just like a lot of these things on the course, which someone says oh do this and you think that's ridiculous and when you're in the process of doing it in the back of your mind you just don't have the confidence that it's going to go well and so it takes more than one attempt really.* (T1: 6:240-255)

For T the learning from observing something go wrong was a realisation that it could and most likely would go wrong and that this was an acceptable part of the practical element of the course. Through this experience he was able to gain confidence about putting other techniques into practice with the knowledge that he did not need to be successful the first time he tried it.

In Chapter three I discussed the concepts proposed by Vygotsky (1978) of mediated learning and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The learning described by participants in relation to observations touches on both concepts. The way participants use observation to notice how the "knowledgeable other", or experienced teacher does things and then try to implement the strategy mirrors the process of mediated learning. In such learning, what is observed is transferred to other situations and therefore has a "transcendent character, having significance beyond a here and now situation" (Kozulin 2003:22). Vygotsky identifies mediated learning when "The formation of the concept is followed by its transfer to other objects" (Vygotsky 1962:56) and the attempts described by trainees to transfer the observed classroom actions seems to echo this paradigm.

The concept of ZPD suggests that learning involves travelling from what a learner is capable of to something beyond their current capability with the guidance of another. The examples in this section indicate that observing peers may offer a richer potential for that movement, possibly because they are closer in the zone to where the individual currently is. In addition, watching a "failed" example seems to offer better guidance beyond current ability, whereas watching expert teachers is less beneficial, possibly because it represents something so far beyond current expertise that it becomes unreachable. It is too far outside the zone.

6.3.4 Learning from instruction

Some parts of the CELTA course provide direct instruction, that is to say, there were opportunities for their tutors or peers to give participants guidance and advice on what they should do in their teaching practice.

The input sessions are the part of the course where most of the overarching pedagogical theory and practice are presented to trainees and where there is information presented in relation to language. As discussed in the previous chapter, one aspect of learning from the input sessions was where participants saw their tutors implementing the WoD in their session as this provided validation and proof that the WoD worked. Although the participants acknowledged that the input sessions were generally useful, there was little articulation of whether or how encountering knowledge *about* teaching impacted on their learning. Instead participants saw input sessions as reinforcing learning or almost as part of an aggregation of learning which came together over time. M looks back on this process in her final interview.

> *Things started to make more sense, because like for the first two or three weeks it was all sort of fragmented and then all of a sudden things started to link together.* (M3, 6:197-198)

H describes a similar concept where she felt "completely saturated with information" (H3, 1:7) in the first few weeks of the course. However, by the end she was able to see the links between different aspects. From participants' description of knowledge in Chapter five, it would therefore seem that the instruction on the actual moves or

procedures of teaching constituted the more important aspect of learning from the input sessions.

Another area of instruction is the joint planning sessions where trainees work in TP groups to plan their lessons together. At the outset of the research I anticipated that this would be an area where many participants felt they had gained useful knowledge through discussion with peers as to how they might plan their lessons. I asked frequent questions about the role of the planning sessions due to my own belief that it must help with learning. In all cases, participants' view was that the group planning sessions were primarily the source of the content of the lesson, what a trainee was expected to cover in their lesson in order for it to dovetail with the next trainee's lesson. Participants revealed that they then planned on their own and while doing so drew on the other elements of the course: observation and feedback, to be mindful of which strategies to use. The event of the joint planning was not, however, identified as a significant contributor to their learning.

6.3.5 Feedback as instruction

Much of the instruction on the CELTA course comes through the sessions of directed feedback which normally take place after the teaching practice. In the final part of this chapter I will deal more extensively with the way in which feedback was perceived and the impact of the group interaction expected in those feedback sessions. Here I explore how participants felt feedback contributed to their learning.

Participants valued instruction about what to do and examples of specific strategies with which to implement this. L highlights the interaction of instruction from feedback and the input sessions. She explains that feedback supports her own awareness and she is able to extract specific ways of working on points from the instruction gained from input sessions. As discussed in the previous section, the instruction of input sessions plays a complementary role.

> *It's a combination of my own awareness of things and having that reinforced by the feedback, and also – yes, I think with the input sessions as well, just thinking, "Ah okay that's the way of doing it".* (L2, 7:255-259)

For G, the second interview was at a low point in the course as she had recently failed one of her teaching practice lessons. Her more confident stance in the third interview was put down to being given very specific things to improve on by her tutor. She also commented that the change in tutor to one who tended to give very specific advice on adopting certain techniques contributed significantly to her learning.

H describes how she deliberately worked on areas that were pointed out to her in feedback by both tutors and peers. It is actually a little frustrating for her because by deliberately putting things in place to help with one aspect of her teaching, other aspects suffer.

> *It's been really, really useful having the feedback from the tutor, but also the feedback from the two other people in my group … then I could try putting into practice those – the bits that they – the tutor points out … The only problem is that you kind of – you start focusing on that and the other bit goes.* (H3, 2:39-47)

The points that are given by the tutor are incorporated into M's teaching by "actively working" on them. (M2, 2:58). She does this by drawing on ideas from the input sessions to respond to feedback as part of her learning process.

A very interesting feature of how participants learned to respond to tutor feedback is the way in which they described the immediacy of learning mid-lesson. Although there were ample opportunities to reflect on their teaching after the lesson and between teaching practice sessions, they identified some learning opportunities as occurring in the middle of teaching. For this, the participants often referred to *a voice in their head*, which was normally the tutor's voice reminding them that they should be engaging in a specific activity or implementing a strategy in a different way. The voice generally resulted in them making a change in the lesson, which in turn facilitated their learning of a new way of tackling a particular aspect of teaching.

M had been asked to work on talking too much in the lesson. She describes how she improved by noticing herself doing this mid-lesson. "I had to catch myself and you know, a couple of like - second, third, fourth one, I caught myself doing it". (M3, 1:30-31) L talks about having an internal voice that tells her to do something different

when she becomes aware in the middle of a lesson. These voices continue to let her know what she has to do in terms of areas identified for improvement:

> *I've always got little voices, there's voices there all the time. And if it's not, it's just thinking, "Okay, you need to pick the pace up a bit now," or "You need to sort of - "do yes, there's always a little voice there".* (L3, 6:214-215)

For H, after the course and having had additional teaching experience, these voices were still present. She described how in the middle of a lesson she could still visualise her tutors saying something about her teaching. At a distance from the course the tutor instruction remains live and real.

> *Yes, sometimes I see maybe [tutor's name} or [tutor's name] telling* (HP1, 12:259)

Participants' descriptions of how they benefit from the instruction received through feedback focuses on the giving of advice on specific teaching strategies and ways of acting in the classroom. The advice is used to attempt changes in practice, though participants admit this is not always easy to do or always achieved. I now provide one further example of how feedback works as instruction in an instrumental case study.

6.3.6 An instrumental case study of learning through feedback

One of the areas which O struggled with in his teaching was being able to adapt or *grade* his classroom language and giving clear instructions so that he could be understood by learners whose level of understanding of English was quite low. This was an area he admitted he "struggled with for the last four weeks". (O1, 5:134) He found that on the course input there had been "a lot of like conceptual ideas". (O1, 5:138) A tutor had given him some advice on this specific area and O described this as "really sort of useful practical advice on how to implement these things". (O1, 5:136) He explains the nature of the feedback which he felt had contributed most to his learning:

> *He gave us some … he just gave us some practical examples of, you know, "this is something that you do. What you could do instead is this". "This is some … a way you present this material, but what you could do instead is*

this." So that, it was really sort of specific to me and what I'd done in the past and what ways that I kind of … tendencies that I had towards certain, you know, methods in the classroom. So that was really useful. (O1, 5:142-146)

When asked whether this feedback had helped in his teaching, he replied "Yeah massively." (O1, 5:148)

The example of O's reaction to feedback highlights the features of learning described throughout this section. Participants respond most effectively when they are offered opportunities to learn strategies and techniques. They noticed such strategies when observing others and responded best to feedback where they were given advice and instruction on which practical strategies to implement in their teaching rather than conceptual ideas about those strategies. I argued in Chapter five that procedural knowledge was an important and valued element of teacher knowledge. The examples in this section also illustrate that instructing participants with procedures may be a more effective learning tool than instructing them with the pedagogical concepts on which they are based. In a sense, this may reflect Bourdieu's (1977) notion of *learned ignorance*, where the tutor gives the trainee the moves of teaching without reference to the principles which underpin those moves. The evidence in this study suggests that perhaps it is this learned ignorance which contributes significantly to learning.

6.4 The impact of relationships on learning

On a CELTA course each trainee works within a course group, which could be described as a community of practice. The other members of that community are their peer trainees, their tutors, other experienced teachers whom trainees observe and, as has been noted in this study, the volunteer learners whom trainees teach. In previous sections of this chapter I have discussed how participants' views of the experience, competence and confidence of experienced teachers impacted on their ability to learn from observations. I have also detailed participants' growing ability to use the reaction of learners to modify lesson routines they were using. It could be said, however, that trainees' relationships with experienced teachers and learners is not a formal collaborative learning relationship. They encounter each other as part of the course structure. It would therefore be more difficult to draw any further

conclusions as to how the relationship between trainees, their volunteer learners and the experienced tutors they observed impacted on learning.

The relationship between trainees and their tutors is more formalised within the structure of the course and more continuous over the duration of the course. The tutor is the person who advises and also assesses the trainee in their teaching practice; that part of the course participants in this study identified as being key to their learning. It is therefore of interest to consider the nature and impact of this relationship.

I explore the relationship in general terms first, evaluating the way in which participants view their tutors and how this impacts on their working together on the course. I then focus specifically on a very important part of the course where relationships play a significant role: the post-lesson feedback where trainees are expected to reflect and comment on their own and others' teaching. There are two assessment criteria on the course related to this activity: one is on trainees' ability to evaluate their own teaching and the other is their ability to evaluate the teaching of other trainees. There is, therefore, an importance attached to the post-lesson discussion by the course structure and syllabus in terms of assessing the trainees and in the way it may support the development of their teaching skills.

6.4.1 Relationships: distance and closeness

The first view that dominated participants' accounts was the identification of the distance between themselves and the tutors because of the tutors' experience and expertise. Participants were overwhelmingly complimentary about their tutors and their skills both as teachers and tutors. However, this respect was accompanied by a recognition of their role as assessors as well as the inequality of power in the relationship. Tutors had the power to make decisions about participants' success on the course. In contrast to the emphasis of the difference between them and the tutors, participants described the closeness of the relationship with each other and the importance of maintaining that bond was evident throughout the narratives.

6.4.2 The distance of experience: Trainees and tutors

Participants were unanimous in identifying a distance between themselves and the tutors in terms of experience and expertise. This distance had an impact on the way they related to feedback from the tutor as opposed to feedback from other trainees. It also, for some participants, made them less likely to question a tutor's view on their teaching.

The expertise of tutors was highlighted throughout the interviews. M would listen to the tutor because "the tutor's got the experience" (M1, 4:122), "she's the expert". (M2, 5:142) M also commented on the fact that the tutor was knowledgeable and was also in a power position in the relationship.

> *The experienced person is the one who is assessing you, so he or she knows their stuff.* (M3, 4:713-714)

L also felt that the tutor's expertise was "that kind of experience that I kind of look to actually". (L3, 8:184) G confirmed that "the tutors are certainly more experienced, so I think I'd probably respect what they had to say" (G1, 5:157) and that "each person needed to have their **proper** (my emphasis) feedback from the tutor" (G3, 7:224) as opposed to trainee feedback.

The distance was reinforced by participants' identification of themselves as non-experts without the experience needed to give views on others' teaching. L felt that opinions from other trainees would be less valued because she would think "You don't really know." (L2, 6:230) J felt that as a group "none of us know what we're doing" and that it would only be once she had more teaching experience that she would be able to make independent decisions about teaching in contrast to "at the moment I'll follow the book and do what they tell me to do". (J1, 7:239)

From the extracts above it is clear that participants positioned themselves at a distance from their tutors in terms of expertise. The relationship between them was therefore not one of equals and this was acknowledged by participants as an expected relationship given the tutors' years of experience.

6.4.3 The closeness of a shared purpose: trainee and other trainees

Juxtaposed against the feeling of distance between trainee and tutor is the close and cohesive relationship described between the trainee and other trainees. The relationship between trainees in their TP group was consistently described by participants as positive.

One of the reasons for the positive relationship was often simply the fact that the participants perceived other trainees as people with positive behaviour characteristics. "It's kind of like a group within the big group really", (J2, 4:144-145) "everyone's very friendly and relaxed", (J1, 6:198) "they've given me the impression of being very - you know, really nice, empathetic, people", (G1, 4:133) and by the end of the course "we were all quite close really". (J3, 3:70)

The creation of the relationship of closeness was also attributed to the common purpose of all the trainees to be successful on the course. The language used suggested that the experience of the course was a difficult trial and therefore those enduring the trial together would need to support each other. M commented that it was "such a nerve-wracking experience and we all know what we're going through". (M1, 4:130) Similarly L confirmed that she would be reluctant to comment on others' lessons because "we're all under a lot of pressure and I don't think these people actually need me to chip in with anything else". (L3, 9:203) Two participants used the disaster scenario rescue image: "we're all in the same boat", (H1, 6:216) "we were all in it together kind of thing … We were all in the same boat". (J3, 2:47-50) T described the other trainees as "compatriots in the struggle". (T2, 3:115)

The group cohesion created by the fact that trainees seemed to get on well and, possibly more importantly, that they felt they were unified by a purpose also represents a distance from the tutors. If the tutors are assessors or judges and the trainees were struggling together, then it could be expected that there would be a difficulty in creating a community relationship in the post-lesson feedback. This is highlighted quite emotively by G, who explains why she was reluctant to give any negative feedback:

> *In the process I felt like a bit of a - you know, a **betrayer** of the - because we have a - we have a bond between us (G2, 4:143) (my emphasis)*

A more detailed consideration of how this relationship and inequality of power exerted an influence on the feedback activity is now given to illustrate how the potential for learning in this component of the course might be limited by the distance between the two groups within the community of practice.

6.5 The impact of relationships on the practice of feedback

Initially, the belief that working together as a group in teaching practice and giving each other feedback would be beneficial to learning was one shared by all participants at the start of the course. The sources of this positive view were linked strongly to the relationships described above. Participants felt they would learn from each other because of their perceived equality in inexperience. As they were bonded by a lack of thorough knowledge they would be able to notice different features of lessons and feedback in a way that would be helpful to learning. M thinks giving feedback to others will be "good because we're all learning and we've all got our strengths and weaknesses". (M1, 3:102) L is very positive about her willingness to comment on others' lessons and the benefit of this for her learning on the course.

> *I'm absolutely fine with it. I think it's a good idea really, you know everybody has a different angle on things, everybody sees things slightly differently … I look forward to it because I think it's probably the best way to learn actually.* (L1, 4:143-146)

The other aspect of the group relationship that helped trainees anticipate group feedback as something positive was the belief, or sometimes hope, that everyone would be supportive of each other. L's positive expression above was tempered by the proviso as long as "nobody's being malicious about it". (L1, 4:145) J was also concerned that giving feedback to others would be good "as long as you're tactful". (J1, 4:119) A concern for maintaining the relationship of the group was expressed in C's enthusiasm for giving feedback but under the condition that she "wouldn't be offering too much" (C1, 7:241) because she "wouldn't like to be one of these dominant, know-it-all people". (C1, 7:245-246) O feels that he will be able to give feedback and others in the TP group will respond accordingly.

> *I feel quite comfortable personally … But I think people are pretty honest and pretty open about it, aren't they, generally.* (O1, 7:226-227)

The examples above indicate that participants approached the idea of giving feedback to each other very positively. They were confident that they could learn from this and they were aware of ways of acting in the group that would maintain the group cohesion. However, they had some awareness, even initially, that this focus on being supportive to each other could act as a block to trainees contributing to feedback fully. This was noted by H:

> *I think that's a really good idea because we're all in the same boat, but I think - I wonder if people will try to be nice.* (H1, 6:215-216)

> *If people - they may not be quite as honest as they might as time goes on.* (H1, 7:226-227)

H is suggesting that the learning opportunity offered by the group feedback session could actually be negated by the desire to create and maintain a positive and supportive group atmosphere. This and other issues for group feedback are considered now.

6.5.1 Maintaining the group morale

Once the participants had experienced the group feedback sessions on a number of occasions their views changed, some more than others. The most significant change reported by most participants was that their comments on others' teaching were being constantly modified by the desire to not disturb the group's supportive nature.

By the second interview M was describing how

> *we try - rather bolster each other up than give - you know, because even if you try to give constructive criticism it can come across as negative.* (M2, 4:137-138)

She was also able to give an account of the progressive change in how she behaved in feedback. From the beginning she was able to notice things that had not gone so well in other people's teaching, however she "learned not to say those, just the positive things". (M3, 3:78) Her explanation for how she had learned this relates back to the themes of inexperience and of group cohesion:

236

I think that was sort of what was implicit, I think it's very difficult as a novice maybe to give constructive criticism, and it might have come across not constructive or something. So you know, and my way, the way that I think I might have done it, is not necessarily the way that [tutor name] might have done it. (M3, 3:80-83)

Here M has confirmed that her lack of experience prevents her from commenting on the less successful elements of other trainees' lesson as she is worried that she might be saying something different to the experienced tutor's views. She is also concerned that the feedback would be perceived as not constructive or critical and therefore not conducive to the supportive environment of the group.

The impact of feeling inexperienced on participants' behaviour in the feedback is also noted by G. She emphasised that although she would not give false feedback in the sense of saying something had gone well if she felt it had not, she "wouldn't say, 'oh by the way I thought you really could have done such' - you know that would have been very arrogant". (G3, 7:240-241) She even described as a "burden" (G3, 7:258) having to ask one of her fellow trainees to try to finish their lesson on time as the trainee was constantly overrunning and using up the teaching time of the others in the group. Given her reluctance to comment on a relatively small and quite objective issue of sticking to time, it is to be expected that an evaluative comment on the quality of trainees' teaching would be even more of a challenge.

Participants were aware that what they are receiving from their peers was slightly distorted feedback with an emphasis on the positive. L notices "to be honest most of the peer feedback I've had has been - has been really sweet and positive and kind" (L2, 6:223-224). J feels that everyone is being open but still monitoring what they are saying so as not to offend.

Obviously you've got to be quite tactful I think, if there some things - but I think everyone - yeah, everyone in our group was quite open to hearing from each of us. (J2, 5:153-154)

There was no criticism levied by participants on other trainees for acting in this manner. It seemed accepted that in order to maintain the support for each other and

in recognition of the relative inexperience of trainees, not saying what they really thought in feedback was a good thing.

The dilemma of whether to give feedback on a lesson that has not gone well is highlighted by contributions from U and O. When another trainee has not had a good lesson, U maintains that you have to have "a degree of sensitivity" (U3, 8:263) in providing feedback and not going through every point in the lesson. However, O considers the fact that highlighting each point can be useful in helping a teacher see why the lesson has "gone wrong"; it can help with identifying those individual strategies which have been noted as key to learning. He maintains that even after a bad lesson:

> *I think you do still have to give them some ... because you know, I've had these experiences when you've given a bad lesson and you walk away and think "that was terrible" but you can't really necessarily pinpoint exactly why.* (O3, 8:264-267)

A further consideration for some participants was the additional imbalance in the trainee/tutor relationship engendered by the assessment role played by tutors. G feels a general difficulty in saying something critical when everyone is trying to be supportive, but there is the additional factor of being critical in the tutor's presence.

> *So being asked to criticise them when generally speaking we're all saying to each other, 'No you're doing really well, you're doing really well,' and then lo and behold in front of the teacher we go, 'Oh you could have done that' and it sort of feels wrong somehow. I don't feel comfortable with that.* (G2, 4:148)

This idea of "not in front of the teacher" is echoed in C's final interview when she spoke about giving more honest feedback to the others in her group informally, outside the course feedback session. When asked whether she would give others suggestions for improving their lessons she commented that "I would. But not in front of the observer. We'd talk outside of class". (C3, 8:281)

The TP group feedback is identified in the course syllabus as an important part of the course content. According to the syllabus, trainees should learn to evaluate their own and others' teaching through their engagement with this group process. It is evident

from the above that there are a number of limitations to the impact of the process. The distance in experience and expertise between the tutors and the trainees, as perceived by the participants, undermines the value they assign to the feedback they get from their peers. Brookfield's (2012) notion of "Impostorship" discussed in Chapter three suggests that the tutor in the role of expert cannot expect the less expert student to critically evaluate without causing them considerable stress and anxiety and suggests that it is in fact the tutor with expertise who should take responsibility for this criticality. Evidence from participants suggests that they address the difficulty by simply not saying what they really think, thereby maintaining the more comfortable and supportive group environment. A further limiting factor to the working of the group feedback is the power balance between tutor and trainee, with the tutor holding the important assessment role. The result is that participants are worried about betraying the group in some way and this further limits the contributions they are making.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have highlighted the findings from participants' accounts of their learning on the CELTA course. I have firstly considered the impact of the prior knowledge they bring with them to the course and have explored how this prior knowledge both flavours and filters new knowledge they encounter leading to a kind of hybrid knowledge. It is also suggested that sometimes prior knowledge leads participants to reject new learning because it is not congruent with their existing paradigms of what a teacher should do. Another emerging finding was that participants may hold a view or belief about the proper role of a teacher as the knower and though this remains tacit, it impacts on teacher behaviours. The area of personality was considered in relation to learning and some tentative conclusions are drawn as to the extent of the link between the teacher as a person and the teacher as teacher.

As the CELTA course offers a prescribed range of learning events to all course trainees, I have considered how participants described their learning in relation to these events. I have shown how participants value the observation of teachers, but that they identify seeing teachers nearer to their own level of expertise as a greater source of learning. In addition, they are able to learn a lot from watching examples of

teaching which are less successful. This suggests that their development is fostered through access to examples closer to their own level of expertise.

Instruction, in the form of taught input and direct feedback, is also an impactful event for participants, especially if it is focused on the strategies, moves and procedures which they highlighted as an important part of teacher knowledge. This reinforces the value of the Way of Doing as described in Chapter five.

Finally, I have considered the relationship between trainees and tutors on a CELTA course and participants' perception of how the feedback on teaching, an important element of most teacher education courses, is limited by the way the tutors and trainees function as a group or community of practice. I have therefore questioned the impact of this overt and public form of reflection as part of teacher education.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.0 Introduction

We think that it might be best to build you, our rebel leader, from the outside … in that is to say, let's find the most stunning Mockingjay look possible, and then work your personality up to deserving it!

Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay*   p51

I began this thesis by introducing the much-discussed question of whether it is possible to *make* a teacher or whether there are inherent individual qualities which determine whether someone will be able to teach. Although this thesis did not set out to resolve any nature versus nurture debate in relation to teaching, the findings discussed in Chapters five and six illustrate the interaction between the individual participants in this study and their experience of the CELTA course, which was the context of the study.

In this concluding chapter I present a summary of the findings and relate them to the concepts presented in the literature as discussed in Chapters two and three. I draw out implications for teacher educators based on my findings and suggest how the outcomes of my study might find application in the practice of teacher education. The context of this study was a language teacher education programme and therefore many of my suggested applications relate to this field. However, there are some findings which could relate to features of other teacher education programmes and, where appropriate, I suggest a more general application. I acknowledge here and in the section on key findings below that this study was limited to twelve participants on a specific course and any findings and applications are bound by the recognised limitations of the study.

Throughout this thesis I have used the term "participants" to refer to those individuals who took part in the study and "trainees" as a more general term for the wider group of individuals who took part in the CELTA courses. In this chapter, any content which relates to the findings of this study, will necessarily refer to "participants", as the findings have been generated by their stories. Where I introduce potential

applications of the findings then I am referring to the wider group of "trainees" who may attend future CELTA courses or other teacher education courses.

7.1 General findings in relation to the research questions and themes in the literature

In Chapters two and three I highlighted key overarching themes in the literature in relation to both teacher knowledge and teacher learning. A main strand in discussions about teacher knowledge is the duality of knowledge: theoretical and practical. (Darling Hammond & Bransford 2005, Eraut 1994, Korthagen 2010). This duality is often presented as a competing dichotomy where theoretical knowledge is objective and identifiable whereas practical knowledge is less certain and harder to quantify and therefore operationalise in a teacher education programme. (Cole and Knowles 2000, Bronkhorst et al 2001, Eraut 1994, Golombek 2009, Saugstad 2002). The theme of theory and practice echoes the Aristotelian paradigm of Epistēmē and Technē or theoretical and craft knowledge.

In discussions of teacher learning, the prior experience of being a learner and its impact are well-documented in the literature (Borg 2004, Eraut 1994, Johnson 2009, Lortie 2002). The relative immutability of this prior knowledge when faced with new knowledge on a teacher education programme is also well-recognised (Breen et al 2001, Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005, Tillema 1998). Much of the immutability is assigned to the fact that this prior knowledge is devoid of any understanding of the underlying principles and based mainly on teacher behaviours which were liked or disliked.

A social learning model in its various iterations suggests that teachers learn through participation with knowledgeable others. Participation is viewed in the literature as key to the learning process, though the adequacy of participation is also questioned (Bourdieu 1997, Lave and Wenger 1991, Fuller 2007, Wenger 1998). Learning is said to be achieved through learners' participation in a community of practice where they observe and gradually assimilate the practices which are carried out by others in the group. The role of the knowledgeable other is in mediating the learning (Kozulin 2003, Vygotsky 1962, Wertsch 1985) and leading the learner through the

Zone of Proximal Development, a concept which acknowledges potential for what an individual could possibly do with the help of others.

This thesis presents views which corroborate, question and extend the concepts found in the literature. I have provided the views of participants attending a specific teacher education course and these views represent a perspective I believe extends previous work on the constituents of teacher knowledge and the processes through which teachers learn. By following the participants through their learning experience I have captured their ideas of what they would like to learn, what they have learned and how they have learned it. Their narratives present a picture unfettered by a high value placed on Epistēmē or theoretical knowledge which may be present in those designing and delivering teacher education programmes (Saugstad 2002). My thesis has represented the voices of those in situ as learning teachers and thus has provided a better understanding of their learning. It can therefore suggest implementations for teacher education programmes such as the one participants experienced, but possibly also more widely for other teacher education provision.

My first research question, as outlined in Chapter one, was to find out what participants identified as constituting teacher knowledge. I contend that the chief constituent of teacher knowledge which participants identified at the outset of their training was practical knowledge. This practical knowledge is a knowledge of the procedures, moves and routines of teaching, a kind of blueprint for action. During and after the course, they continued to consistently identify this procedural knowledge as their chief constituent of teacher knowledge. The tenets of this knowledge remained relatively unquestioned by participants and their view of its importance was reinforced by the way they were taught on the course. They saw procedures modelled by tutors and evident in the teaching materials used. For participants, this knowledge was not seen as deficient, rather it provided the foundations on which they built their understanding of teaching and the role of the teachers. However, it was not static, and participants began to realise that a given procedure was not always appropriate to their own personality in the classroom or to the groups they were teaching. They therefore began to modify the procedures that they used. I identified teacher learning, in part, as that growing ability to adapt a known procedure.

Thus, I believe my findings illustrate that participation in practice allowed my participants to develop what I have termed a *grounded theory* of practice. This theory was formed through starting with a given procedure and using evidence from the classroom as well as personal insights to modify and develop it in a principled manner. I question the notion that providing teachers with scripts, moves and procedures for teaching is necessarily limited or deficient. My thesis, therefore, places Technē or craft knowledge at the heart of teacher development. I contend that providing participants with procedures helped them develop an adaptive expertise where they made use of Phronēsis, or their ability to see what is appropriate to different contexts, to adapt the routines they have acquired. Through this they acquired an ever-evolving theory of practice which, though informed by pedagogic theory they were exposed to in their input sessions, was largely generated by their participation in practice. I argue that this is akin to a theory or Epistēmē created through practice or Technē. It is not written down or formalised, but is nevertheless an evolving teacher knowledge specific to each participant.

My second research question sought to identify the key processes which caused or enhanced the learning of my participants on the CELTA course. My thesis sheds some new light onto the experiences through which participants learn on a structured programme of teacher education. As part of my findings on learning, I have demonstrated that the prior learning which they bring onto the programme is complex and often has tacit elements. More importantly I contend that it is not devoid of understanding; it is not simply a series of actions to imitate. I have shown that the way this prior knowledge interacts with new knowledge is individual and does not simply act as a block to learning.

I have thus illustrated how the interaction of prior and new knowledge is one element of participants' learning. In addition, I have focused on the process of learning and the events on the CELTA course which promoted learning. I provided a more intricate and close lens view of what happens during these experiences. Instruction, in the form of input sessions and feedback on teaching, was most effective if it paid attention to procedural aspects of teaching. Observations of peers and of experienced teachers also contributed to learning. However, during observations, participants chose what to notice and regard without much reference to any

prescribed task set by tutors. The personality of the teacher they observed had a significant impact on whether they were able to implement what they saw in their own teaching. In many cases learning was increased by seeing a failed model where the teacher "got it wrong". This raises many questions in relation to the accepted practice of using expert and often confident teachers as models for trainee teachers to observe. Such teachers were so far beyond the edge of participants' zone of proximal development that when participants observed they encountered difficulties making the journey to the edge of the zone.

My final research question related to the relationships on a CELTA course and how these impact on the participants. The relationships between the tutors and trainees were shown to be far more complex and potentially less benign than is often assumed. Although all participants in the community of practice that is the course group were engaged in the purpose of improving trainees' teaching skills, the perceptions of distance between the tutors and trainees and the bond which unifies trainees in their struggle to complete the course meant that the potentially valuable activity of self-evaluation and the evaluation of others was intrinsically flawed. This is linked to the subject reflective practice (Schön 1992, Tomlinson 1999, Brookfield 2012). Often considered a powerful element in uniting the theory and practice elements of teacher education, reflective practice is a highly valued and important element of most teacher education courses, including CELTA. In this thesis I have called into question the central role it plays by contending that some reflective practice consists of untruths told by participants to maintain the relationships in the group they are working with and to be assessed more positively by their tutors.

7.1.1 Specific findings from this study

I now provide a summary of the specific findings from the study in relation to teacher knowledge and learning. I indicate in brackets the relevant section or sections where each finding can be located in Chapters five and six. These findings are based on the narratives of my participants and therefore represent findings based on a small sample. Any conclusions must therefore be considered as indicators of suggested outcomes rather than definitive statements.

1) (5.2) Participants came to the course with a range of beliefs about the teacher role and teacher behaviours gained from their experience as learners. These beliefs did not seem, however, devoid of an understanding of the rationale for teacher actions.

2) (6.2.3) Some of these beliefs appeared to be more tacit. In particular, the belief that the teacher is the "knower" and must impart knowledge to learners was not readily expressed but tended to come into play when participants felt under pressure.

3) (5.3) In embarking on a course, participants were able to articulate what constitutes teacher knowledge and the most significant aspect as described by participants was a procedural knowledge of teacher moves and actions.

4) (5.3) Once they were on the CELTA course, participants seemed to learn and continue to value procedural knowledge or script-like knowledge of how to structure activities and lessons.

5) (5.4.2) Participants' desire for such scripts continued during and after the course when faced with a new teaching situation. They seemed to consistently view procedural knowledge as the first step in learning in a teaching situation.

6) (5.3.6) A suggested function of procedural knowledge is that it gave the participants confidence. There was evidence that this acquired confidence was viewed as an inherent part of what participants learned on the course.

7) (5.4.1/6.3.2) Participants gradually learned to adapt their learned script. There was evidence that their adaptive ability was based on their personal reaction to the script as something "unnatural" and their appreciation of learner reaction to a lesson.

8) (6.3.2) Thus, learners seemed to play a role within the community of practice and in participant learning, although the course structure does not include a formal role for them.

9) (6.3.3) Participants learned from observing other teachers and this knowledge also appeared to be procedural knowledge. They used specific discourse and the nomenclature of language teaching pedagogy and evidence suggests they used this to identify and reify practices.

10) (6.2.1) What participants learned from observations seemed to be influenced by the prior knowledge they bring to the course and their perceived areas of weakness as teachers. These two factors could determine what participants noticed.

11) (6.2.4) The study suggests that the personality of the observed teacher could prevent participants from both noticing and implementing observed practice. The participant may have difficulty seeing themselves using a strategy if they cannot see themselves behaving like the teacher.

12) (6.3.4) Instruction, through input sessions and feedback, appeared to have a more significant impact on learning if it took the form of procedural instructions or telling the participant which strategy to implement.

13) (6.3.3) Participants sometimes appeared to learn more from watching a negative example and considering why something "went wrong". The evidence suggests that watching very proficient teachers could present an example beyond their zone of proximal development and this experience was less likely to lead to learning.

14) (6.4.3) Participants said there a strong relationship with their peers based on their perception of being in a struggle (the course) together. The result is this relationship on these CELTA courses was that participants appeared not to express their real views of a peer's teaching in feedback due to the risk of upsetting the group dynamic.

15) (6.4.2) These participants expressed a distance between themselves and their tutors in the community of practice. They seemed to value the feedback from their tutors more and seemed to see it as the only genuine evaluation of their lesson. The assessment role of the tutor tended to further inhibit participants

from speaking honestly about their own and their peers' teaching in evaluative feedback.

7.2 Discussion of the findings and proposal of possible applications for teacher education.

In this part of the chapter I provide an in-depth discussion of my findings and suggest how my findings might be operationalised or implemented in teacher education programmes. For each area I relate the findings of my thesis to the concepts found in the literature before proposing some practical strategies which seek to put the findings into practice.

From the outset of this study I acknowledged the context-bound nature of the investigation and the fact that my participants were in a singular learning event: the CELTA course. Thus some of the implications will refer directly to the structure and workings of that course. However, there are clearly implications in the findings above which could call into question more general practices in teacher education and so I also suggest wider applications of those findings. I draw conclusions mainly for teacher education programmes in the state sector in the UK with which I am most familiar. I believe that programmes in other countries will have similar models and that therefore the implications may have a further reach.

7.3 Changing views of practical knowledge

The first area I consider is the insights this study has provided into the nature of practical knowledge as viewed by participants. I look at how my study has contributed to providing a more explicit description of practical knowledge, something Eraut (1994) stated was a potential difficulty in its implementation. I illustrate that the creation of a theory of teaching is partly the result of participants' engagement with practical strategies and practical evidence. In this way, participants are engaging in the creation of what I have previously referred to as a grounded theory of practice.

The participant narratives explored in Chapter four highlight that their definition of teacher knowledge was very much focused on the moves of teaching or practical strategies and techniques which go to make up teacher behaviours in a lesson. This is the knowledge participants explicitly state they wish to gain on joining the course and it is what they feel they have learned on the course. I called this knowledge a

Way of Doing because its constituents were teacher behaviours or moves in the classroom. Even when the course has finished, participants look back at the procedures and structures they learned to support further development and identify the giving of ideas and techniques as the source of future learning. They also value instruction which is based on telling them about classroom activities and strategies rather than the concepts behind these activities. Feedback on their teaching seemed to result in more learning if it includes an explanation of what the participant should do or change about what they currently do.

The literature tends to highlight the limited nature of learning scripts or routines for classroom practice (Darling-Hammond & Bransford 2005, Tomlinson 1999). This limitation was related to the concern that scripts were simply an aggregation of events to replicate and thus unable to be adapted or reapplied to a new situation. This concern echoes the questioning of the adequacy of participation as a learning activity (Fuller 2007) because it may result in simply acquiring a series of moves and does not actually result in knowledge which is transferable. The knowledge becomes so context bound that it is inaccessible in other situations and is therefore less valid knowledge.

In this thesis I have questioned the limited nature of such scripts or routines. Participants value scripts as a reassurance that they will not be left stranded in a lesson and the evidence suggests scripts bolster confidence, which participants view as an important aspect of teacher knowledge. However, there seems to be more to scripts than simply a crutch on which to hang their confidence. The metaphorical nature of the concept "script" is illustrative here. A prescribed script in a play may be followed, but there is room for accentuation, adaptation and improvisation. Likewise, participants develop the ability to adapt their scripts through a number of factors. Firstly, they begin to recognise that the script is unnatural in the sense that they are acting in a way that does not correlate with their own natural way of behaving. They begin to adapt in order to act as they would in a natural setting. Secondly, they notice the positive or negative reaction of their learners and question their given script and make corresponding changes in order to make their lessons more successful for learners. Finally, they question aspects of the script which are in conflict with the views of teaching which they bring with them to the course. It is, however, the

existence of the script which allows the participants to bring to bear the skill of adaptation or adaptive expertise.

If we consider the view expressed in the quote in Chapter three:

> Routines can be helpful as they free up teachers, but offering only routines doesn't give teachers the diagnostic skill to analyse situations and adopt different strategies.
>
> Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005: 360

This study suggests that it is through offering participants those very routines which gives them the skill to analyse situations and adopt different moves or strategies in teaching. It is only when they are in possession of a procedure or given structure that they are in a position to see whether it works or not and make changes to the structure to correspond with the demands of different situations. Thus scripts and routines are the hook on which adaptive expertise hangs rather than its alternative. The evidence suggests that we need to "offer" the scripts to engender the ability to adapt rather than trying to "offer" the analytical skills.

In Chapter two I proposed the Aristotelian overarching paradigms of Epistēmē Technē and Phronēsis as important to understanding views of knowledge. In the conclusions drawn above it would seem that by giving participants knowledge which would correspond to the area of Technē or craft knowledge, they develop Phronēsis or ability to make judgements about the appropriate knowledge for each situation. This allows them to have the kind of adaptive expertise which releases the script-like knowledge into something generative, producing new moves or rather adapted moves according to the situation. Such understanding could be termed Epistēmē as it suggests the development of a personal theory of teaching for each participant. It may not be recorded as declarative knowledge in a textbook. Nonetheless, it is the emerging knowledge participants say they are acquiring.

Bourdieu further highlighted a concern about knowledge which is separated from theoretical understanding by using the term "learned ignorance" to describe the type of knowledge passed on by an expert who tries to explain their practice through the description of "artificially isolated elements of behaviour" (Bourdieu 1997:19). This

concept would suggest that when tutors provide strategies for trainees in a manner which focusses on the specific moves rather than trying to explore an understanding rationale, they are providing something which is less than whole and which is not capable of generating new practice. However, this study indicates that such a separation by the tutor may not result in practice devoid of understanding. Instead the recipient, the trainee in this case, goes on to build new understanding. The use of scripts could therefore be seen not as a learned ignorance, but an ignorance which generates learning.

A parallel learning scenario could be seen with the learning of other academic subjects and not just the learning of teachers. A recent commentary in *The Guardian* newspaper considered a successful maths teaching methodology used in Shanghai and proposed for the UK which aimed to embed deep knowledge and understanding of underlying concepts. The success of the approach is described thus

> There's a lot of chanting and recitation, which to our English ears seems a bit formulaic … but it's a way of embedding that understanding.

> The Guardian 14.3.15

The pedagogy described acknowledges the need to learn mathematical routines which in turn engender understanding. In this example, as with the procedural knowledge participants gained on the CELTA, mastery of the formulas and the formulaic is the precursor to understanding, not a corollary of it.

There is one other feature of practical knowledge identified by participants which is difficult to relate to concepts of knowledge espoused in the literature and in teacher education programmes. Participants spoke about the impact of gaining confidence as an important part of their learning. I have already mentioned my intention to consider the ways in which my findings might be operationalised in teacher education programmes and this does not seem to be one which is easy to implement or even draw conclusions about. Perhaps it is enough to signal that confidence plays a role in teacher knowledge and that teacher educators should be aware of events and activities which would bolster or diminish a trainee's confidence.

7.3.1 Practical knowledge, naming and language

Vygotsky's identification of tools and signs as key to learning recognised the need for naming things externally to us (tool) and converting this to internal storage and memory of the sign (Vygotsky 1979). He recognised the key role played by language in the development of young children. This study has illustrated the importance of context specific language as part of the knowledge of teachers. Participants began to use what they called "terminology" or "jargon", which was part of the nomenclature of English language teaching, early on in their course. They used this language to name teaching strategies which they observed in the classroom and in the feedback on their own and their peers' teaching.

As such, the language used can be seen to act as a tool of reification. It is used to turn an event or strategy into an object which can be discussed and evaluated. In line with Wenger's definition of the concept as making the abstract concrete or turning "experience into 'thingness'" (Wenger 1998:58), participants created an object of the teaching strategy. They were therefore able to move it from one practice event (the observation) into another (their lesson). The label given to the event (concept checking, gist task etc.) replaced the need to describe the event. Thus in feedback, all participants, trainees and tutors were able to evaluate lessons using a shared discourse and they suggested that this was of value. Another way to view some of the nomenclature of English language teaching might be to think of things like a "gist task" or "concept checking questions" as *teaching memes* with the capacity to transfer knowledge from one situation to another.

A further feature of naming was that at the start of the course participants were very concerned with the intricacies of English language, particularly grammar and named features of language (tenses, adjectives etc.) as part of the knowledge they wished to acquire. As the course progressed, their named features of knowledge were the teaching of these elements of language. This suggests that as trainees have more practice with teaching, their concern for subject knowledge seems to transform into a concern for pedagogic knowledge.

7.3.2 Implementation of insights about the nature of practical knowledge

I now turn to suggestions as to how the insights described into the nature of practical knowledge for participants in this study might be implemented in teacher education programmes, particularly the CELTA course. In this section I refer to "trainees" as all of those current and future participants in teacher education programmes for whom this implementation might be beneficial.

This study suggests it is possible that trainees on courses in general may value and make use of procedural strategies or moves. As a result, programmes can make this a more strongly orienting principle of their design. The CELTA course already has a strong focus on teaching procedures in its syllabus and assessment. The findings suggest that the focus might be adapted to include more use of trainee generated and led activities where they would draw out more theoretical findings from their teaching and extrapolate rationales from their practice. For other teacher education programmes, which rely more on the input of theoretical perspectives to engender practical strategies, the findings suggest a reversal of design where more focus is on the procedural elements of teaching with the theoretical aspects generated from these rather than preceding them.

My first experience of teacher education was working on a CELTA course. This has meant that I have come to recognise and accept the emphasis on procedural knowledge which is supported by the CELTA syllabus and assessment. In some ways it is a "given" for those involved with the programme that procedural knowledge plays a big part of the knowledge of teachers. However, in the past few years I have worked on a number of other teacher education programmes where this is less the case. These programmes, all leading to UK nationally recognised teacher qualifications, have a much stronger emphasis on learning conceptual content about teaching first and only then having access to practice. For example, the most common model is that trainees will spend the first four weeks of their course away from a teaching context. They will be introduced to the principles of teaching and learning and only after these introductory weeks will they be able experience a real classroom setting. The underpinning paradigm is that a conceptual framework is necessary prior to undertaking any practice. This study suggests that such a

253

paradigm may be erroneous and that teachers' introduction to concepts of teaching and learning needs to be through practice rather than prior to practice.

A corollary of having an adjusted focus on the procedural aspects of teacher knowledge would be support for an increased value placed on such knowledge. The questioning of practical knowledge as a valid concept and the foregrounding in our literate society of theoretical knowledge (Saugstad 2005) means that practical knowledge can sometimes be viewed as a less authentic form of knowledge. It is possible that teacher educators feel obliged to foreground theoretical and conceptual aspects of their programmes because this is what is deemed to be authentic and valuable. For those involved in the design of curricula for teacher education, it may be important that they design programmes which embody both a respect and a place for procedural knowledge.

In spite of its worldwide recognition within English language teaching and the large numbers of trainees who take the course, the CELTA is a relatively "small" course. It is delivered in 120 hours, often over four weeks. It is possible to ignore its importance compared to longer and more significant courses which offer national accreditation. However, some of the underpinning principles of CELTA are congruent with the findings from this study and it is perhaps time for the CELTA model to be revaluated in its potential to inform other teacher education models. This suggests that it should be the object of further research.

The nomenclature of English language teaching used on a CELTA course is familiar to tutors and tends to be spread amongst language teacher educators who work on the course through their induction as trainers. It could be said to be well-established within the community of practice of CELTA tutors. Most of the examples used by participants in this study highlight the procedural nature of that nomenclature (gist task, concept checking question); they refer to practical classroom moves. Other language teacher education programmes have a less well-developed nomenclature and other programmes I am familiar with have a more conceptual nomenclature. Terms tend to focus on teaching concepts (differentiation, assessment for learning, formative feedback) rather than on practical actions. A possible suggestion may lie in the creation of more procedure focused writing about teaching in the form of textbooks and materials.

Published materials for teacher education largely fall into two types. The first type, the "how to" type of publication, focuses on procedural knowledge and suggests specific strategies which can be implemented in the classroom. The second type deals with issues which could be termed "about teaching", where the authors discuss the pedagogical theory behind classroom activities but by and large do not suggest specific strategies for use in the classroom. I would argue that it is the second type which features more prominently on reading lists in more academic contexts such as universities. They may also be seen as more prestigious and be more highly valued by teacher educators. This study suggests that the first type of publication or publications which are somewhat of a hybrid of the two (Harmer 2007, Arnold et al 2015), where practical strategies are used to illustrate pedagogy principles, should be more favoured by publishers and those recommending reading to trainees.

CELTA is a programme of teacher education which combines subject knowledge with subject pedagogy. As outlined in Chapter one, this is relatively unusual when compared with the majority of programmes where trainees start with a qualification in their subject knowledge. The fact that trainees seemed to move from a focus on subject knowledge to subject pedagogy as the knowledge they wished to gain suggests that subject pedagogy offers a vehicle for reinforcing subject knowledge. Again, many other teacher training programmes offer subject knowledge enhancement to trainees prior to starting their teacher education programme. This study suggests it is possible to provide this through the development of subject pedagogy. It is therefore important that subject pedagogy is an inherent and valued element of a teacher education programme. In some programmes I am familiar with it is a relatively minor strand or not present at all.

The final implication of this study's insights into the nature of practical knowledge is for teacher educators. Bourdieu's (1997) concern about learned ignorance was chiefly with regard to how the "experts" might present knowledge to newcomers in the form of practice divorced from its underpinning theory. It is not suggested here that teacher education programmes do not include the theoretical and the conceptual. Participants on the study did not exclude the knowledge they gained from consideration of concepts of language pedagogy. What the study would seem to indicate is that teacher educators need to be more at ease with instruction which

takes the form of procedural knowledge and through this lead trainees to the conceptual. This may be through timing, simply focusing on the procedural first. Or it may be that teacher educators seek the procedural in their teaching and in their feedback as a priority and use this to hang their conceptual knowledge on. They could strive for an approach which theorises practice.

The implementation of findings around the nature of practical knowledge for teaching could be summarised thus:

1) Ensure participation in practice precedes or is concurrent with theoretical input on teacher education programmes.

2) Implement activities which aim to encourage trainees to explore rationales underpinning what they *have done* in their lesson rather than providing theoretical justification for what they *will do*.

3) Embed knowledge of procedures and moves of teaching in any input sessions or feedback activities. Talk about "what to do" and "what you have done" as a way of dealing with pedagogical theory.

4) Invest in further research into teacher education which promotes a focus on procedural knowledge to gain more insights into the impact of this approach.

5) Encourage the production of literature which highlights features of procedural knowledge so that this is valued by trainers and educational professionals in general.

6) Continue the use and development procedural nomenclature by teacher educators and writers as this helps trainees to reify their practice.

7.4 Dealing with "yesterday's man" (or woman)

Another aspect of teacher knowledge which was addressed in the findings was the notion of prior knowledge which participants had prior to starting the course. This aspect was explored as a constituent of teacher knowledge but also as a feature of learning, since the interaction between prior and new knowledge formed part of the learning process for participants. In this section I consider both the nature of this prior knowledge as well as the ways in which new and prior knowledge interacted

before I move on to discuss how these insights could inform practices in teacher education.

Bourdieu (1977) discussed the notion of how we carry the traces of all our past experiences which are an essential part of our knowledge in his concept of "yesterday's man". For teachers it is recognised that past experiences as learners or the *Apprenticeship of Observation* (Lortie 2002) is knowledge about teaching which they may have gained during the many years they spent as learners. Lortie suggests that this knowledge is itself a type of learned ignorance in that we see the teacher behave in a certain way and are cognisant that this is a teacher action, but we are not cognisant of the reasons for this action. In other words we know the moves but not the rationale.

This study indicates, however, that participants had some awareness of the rationale of the teachers they had experienced during their time as learners. They were aware of what had worked and why and had some articulated reasons for wanting or not wanting to incorporate the behaviours they had observed into their own teaching. The reasons were based on some understanding of the impact of the teachers' actions on learners and learning. Thus, their prior knowledge included some awareness of the principles behind those teacher actions since they partly recognised the teacher's decision making and rationale.

In addition to their prior knowledge about teaching gained from their time spent as a learner, evidence from some participants suggested a more tacit view of teaching in relation to that aspect of teaching commonly referred to as a "teacher-led" approach, where the teacher transmits knowledge to learners in a didactic manner, usually from the front of the classroom. In spite of an expressed view that teaching should be about facilitating and getting learners to do more in the lesson, when participants felt under pressure there was tendency to adopt a default strategy of explaining and telling; the teacher led approach. Participants did not articulate this way of behaving as something they aspired to do and expressed dissatisfaction with it as a teaching strategy. It seemed, however, that they possessed a tacit notion of the role of the teacher as someone who provides knowledge to learners in a didactic manner. This view represents a more traditional teaching style in which the teacher acts as the knower, imparting new knowledge and may have been gained through what

Johnson's identifies as "deeply ingrained notions" about teaching (Johnson 2009:10) we acquire from our life experiences. The teacher at the front of the class "telling" is a common paradigm in contexts within and outside the education profession. Defaulting to such a paradigm suggests an internalised view of the teacher which, though tacit and deep seated, exerted itself when participants were at a loss what to do in a teaching situation.

The way in which prior knowledge interacted with new knowledge is focused on in the literature very much as a "before and after" phenomenon, with studies considering whether trainees' beliefs changed or not as a result of taking part in a course. The relative immutability of prior knowledge is recognised (Breen et al 2001, Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005, Tillema 1998). I highlighted at the outset that the focus of this study was on the process of change and considering that process as an aspect of learning rather than reaching a verdict on whether there had been change or not.

My findings suggested there was a complex ebb and flow between prior and new knowledge as new knowledge was filtered through the lens of existing prior knowledge. On occasion this could lead to the rejection of new knowledge because the participant could not accept something they were being asked to do as it was incongruent with their experience as a learner. For the most part, it led to participants merging their prior knowledge with new knowledge to create a mixed outcome. Thus participants might use a strategy they were asked to but not use it in the same way or less often or with a different focus. This merging of knowledges allowed participants to create new knowledge without fully rejecting their beliefs gained from the apprenticeship of observation. In the next section I consider specific ways in which prior knowledge impacted on observations of experienced teachers. My findings pertinent to this section are that the relationship between prior and new knowledge is not one of exclusion; prior knowledge is not impenetrable to new insights. However, it does exert some influence and this may differ between individuals.

7.4.1 Implications of insights about prior knowledge

It would seem valuable for trainers and trainees alike to beware of the beliefs about teaching which they bring to a teacher education courses. I am not advocating this in the sense in which Peacock suggests it should be done "to work on any mistaken trainee beliefs" (Peacock 2001:177). Rather, an understanding of what each trainee brings to a CELTA course would help in recognising where trainees might have difficulty in appreciating or accepting learning on the course. Increased awareness might promote a more general understanding of their reactions to different learning events.

It is a common strategy on CELTA and other courses to ask trainees to articulate what they feel makes a good/bad teacher or to recount positive and negative experiences as a learner. Such activities certainly address the more "front of stage" view as described by Lortie (2002) in that they engender an appreciation of what the trainee liked or did not like. This study suggests, however, that trainees also bring some nascent understanding of why their teachers acted as they did and an emerging theoretical view of why such teachers were good or bad.

It is suggested here, therefore, that the exploration of prior beliefs needs to be more systematic and systemic on teacher education programmes. Trainees could be reminded in each lesson through an exploration of what beliefs about teaching may have led to the trainee adopting a certain strategy in the classroom. Typically trainees on a course are asked to provide a rationale for their teaching activities and this may include explaining why they used a particular procedure in a lesson. The expected basis of this rationale is pedagogic theory. One example from my findings was a participant did not want to use a gist task as part of a reading activity. She would be expected to use theories of reading, in particular the notion of top-down processing in her rationale. Yet there is normally no place on a teacher education course for her to express some kind of "gut feeling" that such tasks were not necessary. It can often be assumed by trainers that a trainee did not do something in a lesson because they lacked the skill or technique. There is generally no opportunity for trainees to express their discomfort with something because it clashes with prior knowledge they bring to the course.

259

For English language teachers an integral part of most training courses is the use of a foreign language lesson to return the trainee to the position of learner. The key aim of this activity is to demonstrate a range of language teaching strategies and, in particular, to demonstrate how the language being taught can be used as the language of the classroom, even with beginner learners. The value of putting oneself in the role of the learner has also been suggested for teachers and trainers (Lowe 1987, Ransdell 1993). What is less frequently done is to use the foreign language lesson as a place for extrapolating beliefs teachers may hold about language learning and teaching. It would be possible, for example, to discuss both before and after the lesson what trainees' beliefs are. The articulation of these beliefs could form part of an ongoing review of progress, keeping in mind that the aim is to acknowledge such beliefs rather than to change them. One of the assignments on the CELTA course is related to trainees' perceived development. An explicit focus on how their beliefs may have impacted on learning would further bring into relief how prior learning impacts on new knowledge.

The implementation of findings around the nature and impact of prior knowledge could be summarised thus:

1) For trainers to acknowledge that trainees, even on a pre-service course, will have prior knowledge about teaching and the role of the teacher.

2) Use activities prior and during the course to explore this knowledge more explicitly. For example, address in feedback wider reasons why a trainee did or did not do something in a lesson. This should go further than a pedagogic rationale gained through reading and input sessions.

3) Include prior knowledge and changing views as part of the progress monitoring on teacher education programmes. Review trainees' beliefs about teaching with the same consistency as other aspects of their development are reviewed.

4) Extend the use of the foreign language lesson, or a lesson in another subject on other programmes, to investigate what trainees believe about teaching before and after this focused experience as a learner.

5) *Trainers* should use opportunities for revealing their own beliefs about teaching. One strategy would be to undertake a learning experience, such as a foreign language lesson and engage in a deliberate reflection on their beliefs about learning and teaching.

7.5 How teachers learn through participation

I now move on to consider my findings which relate specifically to participants' learning on their CELTA courses. I have already addressed some aspects of learning in the section on how participants adapted procedures and also above in relation to the interaction of prior and new knowledge. Here I specifically focus on different learning events on the CELTA course and participants view of how they impacted on learning. A major part of this section considers the use of observation, both of experienced teachers and peers. This activity is part of the majority of teacher education programmes and is regarded as having a significant impact on trainees' learning. I also discuss findings in relation to conflict as an aspect of learning, which includes insights gained into the role of the individual in a social learning model. After each discussion I look at how the insights gained might be implemented.

7.5.1 Observation as mediated learning

One of the key elements of participation which seemed to contribute to participants' learning was observing others engaging in the act of teaching. On the CELTA course this included observation of experienced teachers and observing the rest of their peer group teach. The nature of the learning they experienced is characterised by the features of mediated learning (Vygotsky 1962) described in Chapter two. The example used to illustrate the concept in that chapter is very pertinent to the experiences described by the participants in this study. Kozulin (2003) explains how a child is helped to complete a puzzle by its mother through reference to a model puzzle. Thus the mother does not explain how to solve the puzzle, but presents an example of the solution. The child learned to consult the model and through this learned a way of reaching their own solution. In a similar way, the activity of observing experienced teachers on the CELTA course presented the participants with models of how to use various teaching strategies. During the activity of observation, there was no explicit explanation of the activities, just as the child was

not provided with an explanation. Participants' narratives indicated that they developed an understanding of what they were observing and were able to use what they had seen in their observations in their own lessons or were at least aware of how they could use it, even when recognising that they were not always able to.

A difficulty in working with the model of mediated learning as highlighted in Chapter two is the lack of precise identification of the stages of learning. Rogoff's (1995) suggestion of apprenticeship, guided participation and appropriation as the possible stages is echoed by Lave and Wenger's (1991) model of legitimate peripheral participation, where the learner gradually observes and then takes on a role with guidance before implementing it fully.

However, this study has provided some further insights into the stages involved in mediated learning as exemplified by the activity of observing other teachers. The first is the noticing and naming of classroom activities. Participants noticed features of other teachers' classroom practice according to a number of factors. They used the instruction from their input sessions to identify techniques they had been told about and considered examples they saw as examples of good practice. Some participants' in their narratives were able to list off certain strategies almost like a textbook of what they felt they should do.

The second feature of noticing was the implementation of something akin to a personal "search tool" based on the areas they believed were either important for teaching or an area they specifically felt was lacking in their own teaching. Here again we see the impact of prior learning where participants actively search out examples which matched with their views of teaching. In some cases, this search was so directed that they were unable to notice features which their tutors had asked them to consider. Thus the guided participation suggested by Lave and Wenger and Rogoff was partly guided by participants' own views of teaching rather than the direction of the "master" or tutor. It indicates that observation, an inherent part of participation in a community of practice, is not neutral as suggested by Lave and Wenger's (1991) peripheral participation model, the outcome of participation in a community with experts is not predictable.

The next step in learning is the incorporation of what has been noticed into participants' own classroom practice. This is the final move to the centre away from the periphery in the notion of peripheral participation. As mentioned above participants reported varying success when implementing what they had seen in the lessons they observed. Though they expressed the idea that they had learned what to do, not all were able to do it, at least not immediately. One block to implementation was their evaluation of the value of an activity they had seen. On a few occasions participants simply rejected what they had seen or felt that they needed to modify what they had seen according to their own priorities of what was important in teaching. The other barrier to implementation was the way the observed teacher behaved in a more general sense. If they exhibited such features as confidence where the participant was not confident, then there was a difficulty in implementing what they had seen. The participants were reluctant to implement a teaching strategy because they associated it with being a certain type of person. Because they could not imagine themselves being this type of person, they also could not imagine themselves implementing the strategy.

7.5.2 Observation to and beyond the edge of the ZPD

A further aspect of mediated learning as postulated by Vygotsky is the notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). This concept relates to Vygotsky's belief that a child can do more than initially thought through the guidance of a knowledgeable other. It represents a level of "potential development" (Vygotsky 1978:86) which is determined by the engagement with the more capable peers or expert. The ZPD as a "zone" is characterised by an outer boundary, the limit to where a learner may go, even under guidance. As discussed in Chapter two, the emphasis by Vygotsky on educational optimism engenders a focus on potential to reach that outer boundary. The points below provide some consideration of what might happen beyond the boundary.

In this study, the potential development of participants could be defined as becoming a more expert teacher, closer to the experienced teachers they observe in lessons and their tutors on the course. However, it is also the development towards their more capable peers, their fellow trainees who may be more expert in a general sense or more expert in certain aspects of teaching. Their views of the more

experienced teachers which they observed indicated that these teachers were working at a level of expertise they, as yet, could not aspire to. Participants appreciated that these teachers had experience and knowledge which allowed them to carry out some of the things they were learning about extremely effectively. In some cases participants felt that the learning from these teachers was limited by the fact that they could do things so well, suggesting that the level of expertise which is beyond the top boundary of the ZPD needs to be calibrated to be attainable for the observer.

Participants also noted that watching their peers gave them ideas of where they might progress to. However, a notable feature of this was the fact that there tended to be more value placed on learning from when their peers "got it wrong". In this way the ZPD was also a zone of error rather than exemplary practice. It also illustrates that the process of moving forward within the ZPD is not simply replication. Participants did not imitate what they saw but noticed and incorporated certain elements and left others. The learning experienced from looking at negative examples shows that making progress can potentially come from seeing others attempt more advanced activities and fail, as this provides some opportunity for discussion and awareness-raising which looking at exemplary practice does not seem to. In a learning context and in line with Vygotsky's concept of mediated learning, it is common to present learners with positive examples, or solutions to return to the example of the child solving problems. This study indicates an importance of presenting learners with examples from within their ZPD but with peers or even experts who fail or are unsuccessful to some extent. The guidance is then provided either through discussion with the expert as to why there was a lack of success, but it also seems that there is increased noticing of different aspects of teaching when something has failed and looking at such failures may lead to more learning.

7.5.3 Implications for the use of observation in teacher education

Most teacher education courses embed observation of teaching within their programmes and it is seen as an effective contributor to learning. From this study, the first implication for the use of observation is acknowledging the difference for trainees in the way they observe more experienced tutors and their peers. The

learning gained from watching those who are less expert and lessons where things were not successful suggests that providing a lot of exemplary practice may not be as effective as is normally thought. In general, every attempt is sought in teacher education programmes to show trainees examples of "best practice", yet this study suggests that a guided experience of "worst practice" might be at least equally beneficial.

The notion of "masterclass", where learners watch somebody highly skilled in the area they are learning is well-embedded in many areas of education. In vocational contexts, for example a craft skill such as carpentry, it is common to watch an expert carry out a technique. Likewise, as part of my preparation for this study, I was offered the opportunity to watch a skilled interviewer gather narratives with volunteer interviewees. I have never experienced a learning situation where watching an unsuccessful example was deliberately used as a learning tool. English Language Teaching text books sometimes present activities such as error correction or the use of bad writing models as a tool for learning, but these are relatively limited examples. This study suggests that such negative examples could potentially provide a valuable source of learning.

Another implication lies in the expectations of what trainees will notice when they observe. The more common approach to observation is to provide the observer with a task which should focus them on a particular point or aspect of the teaching they see. This study suggests that what trainees bring with them into the observation is possibly more powerful and may override any prescribed task. There are a number of ways a course could respond to this. The first would be to simply allow trainees to note down whatever they wish when they observe and then use this as a basis of discussion. Within the CELTA model there would be room for group sharing of observations, particularly if the trainees watched the same videoed lesson. On other programmes it might mean that the trainee simply took what they felt they needed from the lesson rather than a prescribed set of perceptions. The other approach would be to encourage trainees to whatever they wanted *in addition* to points designated by tutors. By allowing trainees the freedom of their perceptions, they may be more open to noticing what the tutor wishes to focus on.

The final area in relation to observation lies in the personality of the observed teachers and the ways they are likely to act. For participants in this study, the personality of the teacher, particularly if they were very dynamic and charismatic, seemed to be a barrier to taking learning from an observation. Given that participants were beginning teachers and may lack confidence, the teachers they watched acted in a manner they could never see themselves adopting. Therefore they were unable to see themselves using the teaching strategies because these were inextricably bound to the personality of the teacher, in their eyes. It would be impossible and undesirable to audit the personalities of teachers who are observed, but it would be useful to at least present a range of teacher personalities and styles to trainees, being mindful that for beginning teachers these might also need to include less confident or less dynamic teacher models.

A recent experience in my own work illustrates such an approach. A trainee in a placement setting was finding some aspects of classroom and behaviour management challenging. He was quietly spoken and described himself as "laconic". My suggestion that he should observe other teachers was accepted, but he stipulated that he did not wanted to see a teacher who was very loud or used shouting as a way of managing his class. He seemed to realise that these aspects of behaviour and personality were inaccessible to him and that therefore whatever strategies such a teacher would use would likely be equally inaccessible. It would be logistically impossible to match each individual trainee consistently with experienced teachers congruent with their personality. However, simply being mindful of the potential barriers to learning would support the use of observation as a learning tool.

The implementation of findings around the use of observation in teacher education programmes could be summarised thus:

1) Allow for more open responses to observation, perhaps by allowing trainees to simply notice what they wish to.

2) Provide opportunities for trainees to compare what they have noticed and explore and value the differences rather than attempting to have trainees look for similar features.

3) Use examples of unsuccessful and less successful lessons as a basis for discussion with trainees.

4) Include opportunities for trainees to observe teachers with different personalities and styles. Include teachers who are less dynamic and who do not appear extremely confident.

7.6 The role of conflict in participants' learning

Engeström's (2001) expansive learning model proposed that learning occurs when there is transformation resultant from a questioning of and deviation from established norms. With regard to the learning of teachers the model puts the trainee's right and duty to question and contest the accepted at the heart of their learning. The concept of discord need not necessarily mean something which has the nature of a dispute. Rather in facing and dealing with two perspectives which are contrasting, the individual makes choices and decisions which make their "collective journey" in development (Engeström 2001:137) arriving at a point of learning beyond where they were when they started.

I have already highlighted a number of areas where there was potential conflict in the learning process of participants in this study. Participants' prior learning caused them to accept, modify or reject the learning they were presented with on the course. The process by which they did this involved some putting together of the different teaching strategies and in line with their understanding of teacher behaviour, but also some outright refusal to engage with the suggestions made on the course. A second point of conflict was between their perception of their own personality and the model of teaching they were shown. Where the personality of the model teacher was at odds with their own, this conflict led to a rejection of the learning about teaching because it was intrinsically associated with a personality type. A further conflict was between the idea of a teacher which was gained from the apprenticeship of observation and a more generic idea of the teacher as knower. These two views were in the minds of participants and impacted on the way they wished to teach. The outcome of the conflict seemed to be that in moments of tension, participants defaulted to the view of teacher as knower and behaved in the classroom in a way directly in apposition to their aspired teacher behaviour.

267

The notion of conflict is at odds with the positive and supportive learning environment that CELTA courses seek to develop. However, it would seem that cultivating an environment which supposes agreement may not recognise that individuals are bringing different views to the programme which impact on their learning. Moreover, it is suggested that incorporating more of the disagreeing views would enhance the learning of others.

7.6.1 Implementation of insights around conflict in teacher education programme.

There is an inherent difficulty in promoting conflict on a programme where performance constitutes the assessment of the individual and decides whether they are successful or not. Participants in this study stated that even where they disagreed with suggested strategies, they would sometimes implement them to meet assessment criteria and be judged in a positive manner by the tutors on the course. As an assessor on CELTA courses I have often been told by tutors that a particular trainee did not make the progress expected because they did not do as they were told. Such normalisation of teaching behaviours is anathema to the fostering of conflict and contradiction.

A possibility would be to deliberately cultivate discord by encouraging trainees to explore where they had difficulty in accepting areas of learning from the course. This might be done in a number of ways. It would be possible to actively place tasks on the programme which ask for negative answers about what was seen or experienced, for example identifying features which trainees did not agree with. It would also be useful to encourage the sharing of the differing views of something like observations. Rather than collectively sharing what was learned, focus on where trainees differed in their views.

On a course such as the CELTA, which promotes the use of fairly standardised procedures, it is not easy to promote "multi-voicedness" (Botha 2011). As a CELTA trainer, I have difficulty imagining a scenario where there is time for disputed debate about whether a particular strategy is valuable either in the planning session or in feedback. The dilemma for the discussion here is that I have argued for the value of giving procedures as a valued part of teacher knowledge. I have shown that

268

participants generate conflict by adapting these procedures. The kind of adaptive expertise I have explored earlier in this chapter actually encapsulates a conflict in that the individual is taking agency in changing or adapting what has been presented to them in the course. A conclusion, therefore, is not that a teacher education course needs to engender conflict, but that it should value and promote the kind of adaptive expertise which has at its heart an element of disagreement with what the course is presenting as a good way of teaching.

7.7 Relationships and power and the role of reflective practice

Social learning implies that the individual is not alone in the learning process. The presence of others necessitates that the individual works in a relationship while participating in learning. As discussed in Chapter three, models of participation espoused by Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that participation is a relatively benign process. Every member of the group is engaged in the learning process for the benefit of others.

What this study shows is that there is a perceived imbalance of power between the trainees and tutors based on their relative experience and expertise and the fact that tutors are assessing the performance of trainees and eventually awarding them a grade. The other non-benign factor in the relationships is that the trainees view each other as colleagues in a struggle to complete the course and view activities which might endanger the collegiate relationship. The metaphors used to describe this struggle were quite powerful and suggest a unified group facing an onslaught from the outside.

An important result of this imbalance of power finds its articulation in the activities related to reflective practice, in particular the evaluation of participants' own and their peers' lessons (Delaney 2015). In order to maintain the group cohesion and to protect themselves and their peers from the tutor, they often withheld or distorted their real evaluation of the teaching activity. Such "untruths" were accepted by the rest of the group and participants sometimes engaged in alternative informal feedback away from the course structure. The CELTA course and other teacher education courses often include the assessment of reflection as part of the trainees' grade and it can be an important element for them to complete in order to pass their

course. Given that this reflection is potentially flawed, it is useful to question its role within teacher education programmes.

A further relationship of importance which has emerged in this study is the one between the trainee teachers and their volunteer learners. This is an interesting area to consider because the main assessment activities of teaching on the CELTA course involve the learners very little. They are somewhat excluded from the community of practice and have little or any involvement in the course activity beyond providing practice for trainees.

7.7.1 Implementation of insights regarding relationships on teacher education courses

As discussed in Chapter three, the concept of reflective practice is a key tenet of teacher education processes. Programmes often state their aim as wanting to develop "reflective practitioners"; the idea being that thinking about teaching can help the teacher to link theory and practice. As discussed earlier in this chapter this study seems to confirm the notion that trainees think about their practice and develop an understanding as to the rationale underpinning what they do. They use this developing understanding to adapt the lesson procedures they have been given.

One iteration of reflective practice on the CELTA and on other teacher education courses is in the form of lesson evaluation. On the CELTA programme this is embedded into the feedback activity. On other programmes it often takes the form of a written piece, post-lesson in which the trainee describes the strengths and areas for improvement in their lesson and suggests what they might wish to do to improve further. On the CELTA course there is the additional activity of trainees evaluating the lessons of their peers verbally in the group feedback activity with the tutor and those peers they are evaluating.

Evidence from this study appears to show that this type of evaluation activity may be flawed as a result of the relationships between peers and between peers and tutors. A very strong characterisation of what happens might be that everybody is simply lying in order to maintain the status quo within the group or to not expose themselves to a negative tutor judgement. Therefore, feedback trainees receive from each other will be edited to make it sound positive, but the impact is lessened anyway by the

fact that trainees view the evaluation by their tutor as the genuine evaluation and attend to it more. When trainees evaluate their own teaching, they may simply reiterate feedback from the tutor, because they see them as the expert and not an "impostor" (Brookfield 2012) or they may invent the evaluation which will be most likely to put them in a positive light with their tutor.

It is not suggested here that the CELTA or any other teacher education programmes abandon the opportunities for teachers to think about what they have done in a lesson or to think in an evaluative manner about their own or peers' teaching. There are some possible ways forward which might make these activities more meaningful. The first suggestion would be to refrain from assessing the evaluations trainees make of their peers in the way it is currently embedded in the CELTA and perhaps to remove the assessment of peer evaluation and self-evaluation in CELTA and other programmes. The assessment of a potential untruth is in itself unreliable. In addition, not being assessed may somehow help trainees to be more honest. Another approach which might engender more honesty is to allow trainees to comment on their peers' lessons without the tutor present. Participants in this study commented on how they would sometimes give more honest feedback on the way to their car or later in the day. These ad-hoc moments of honesty could be better incorporated into the CELTA programme.

The CELTA and other teacher education programmes often uphold the ideal of facilitation of learning, where knowledge is drawn out of participants in the co-creation of new knowledge. This study suggests that trainee expectation is that the more expert member of the community, the tutor, is regarded as having more valued viewpoints. In Chapter three I discussed Brookfield's notion of "Impostorship" (Brookfield 2012:222) where disquiet was caused by asking learners to comment as experts. Perhaps CELTA tutors may wish to consider using more tutor-led feedback and evaluation rather than feeling they ought to get everything from trainees. This would suggest a slightly different paradigm of managing feedback where, normally, the first step is to ask the trainee what they thought of the lesson. There may be a place for simply stating the tutor opinion from the outset.

Gray's (1998) study on the use of language learners' diaries to support the evaluation of trainees' lessons proposes a focus which, in my experience, is little

used on CELTA and other courses. Learners are often seen as non-experts in teaching and as a result, their views do not tend to be sought. This study suggests that trainees themselves use the reaction of learners to modify their teaching strategies and that this is a part of their learning to adapt their lesson procedures. This would indicate that getting learner feedback consistently or focusing trainee feedback on the reaction of learners might provide additional membership of the community of practice, one which could enhance the learning of trainees. A discussion with a CELTA trainer (Ansell 2015) who incorporates feedback from trainees, indicated that it provided valuable insights for them, but was time-consuming and difficult to work into the current course design. Evidence from this study suggests that it might have value in replacing some of the activities involving potentially fabricated feedback from other trainees with opportunities to gain feedback from learners.

The implementation of findings about relationships on the courses in this study could be summarised thus:

1) Acknowledge the difficulty of accurate assessment of reflections by trainees about their own and their peers' teaching and do not include them as part of the assessment of trainees' performance.

2) Provide non-supervised opportunities for trainees to reflect and provide an evaluation of trainees and their peers' teaching.

3) Implement more tutor-led feedback to fully acknowledge the expert role which the tutor fulfils.

4) Use feedback from learners as part of the evaluation activities of a teacher education programme. This could be done by asking for more formal written feedback or the use of learner diaries. It could also include a more consistent focus on the impact on learners of classroom strategies in a tutor's evaluation of a lesson.

7.8 A summary of ideas from the implications

In the table below I present in summary form some common activities which are used on CELTA courses. I have also asterisked the ones which I have experienced

on other teacher education courses. Beside each activity I present a slightly adapted form of the activity that would respond to the findings and their implementation which I have discussed so far in this chapter. It is not suggested that the activities on the left would be abandoned, but rather that they might be supplemented by those on the right.

Common activities on CELTA courses (*and other teacher education programmes)	Suggested alternatives.
*Trainees discuss/write about "What makes a good teacher" or "My favourite teacher"	Trainees evaluate teachers they observe or their own lesson through an evaluation of "what the teacher believes about teaching".
*Trainees watch video of experienced teacher and make a note of specific techniques.	Trainees watch a video of an experienced teacher and note whatever they wish. They then compare this with others and discuss why they looked at specific areas and why they were more meaningful. Trainees watch a video of an ineffective lesson and discuss why it was ineffective and what could the teacher have done.
*Trainees observe a range of experienced teachers "live".	Trainees meet a group of experienced teachers in a social setting. They then select the teachers they would like to observe.
Input sessions focus on a language area: for example, "past tenses".	Input sessions focus on "how to teach past tenses".
Input session on reading skills explores	Input session uses example of ineffective

the concepts of "top down" and "bottom up" processing.	reading skills lesson to analyse the procedure and possible improvements.
*Feedback on a lesson begins by asking the trainee how they felt the lesson had gone.	Feedback begins by the tutor giving their view of the lesson.
*Trainees' evaluation of their lesson forms part of their overall assessment.	Trainees are not expected to evaluate in a similar way to their tutors and are not negatively assessed if they have different views of their own or others' lessons.
Trainees' evaluation of their peers' lessons form part of their overall assessment.	Trainees are allowed to evaluate anonymously or without the presence of tutors.
*Trainees complete written self-evaluation of lesson.	*Learners* complete a written evaluation of lesson.

7.9 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

In this chapter I have drawn together the key findings and have suggested possible implementations of these findings. I have tried to acknowledge how all my findings are limited by the size of the study. They are based on interviews with twelve trainees and therefore represent a small slice of the totality of participants engaging in teacher education. I would now like to discuss other ways that the study is limited and suggest how further research might extend some of the areas which are unexplored.

In chapter four I highlighted the reasons for my choice of a part-time course to select my participants. The part-time nature of the CELTA courses allowed me more opportunity for access and potentially more time for participants to reflect and follow up the interviews with further thoughts. I also explained why the selection of participants was opportunistic and relied on volunteers. These choices mean that I have not examined the potential impact of the stress and intensity of a full-time

CELTA course, which brings with it additional pressures, but also perhaps a different group dynamic. Doing a similar study with a full-time course group might supplement the findings of this study.

I explained my reasons for focusing my research questions on trainees rather than trainers. My focus in this study was the narratives of trainees and I acknowledge this more limited focus as a deliberate choice to hear the voices of those in situ in the learning process. However, it could be argued that the trainers on the course might have a very different view of participants' learning and the journey and processes described by participants might be viewed very differently. For example, a trainee explaining that she had learned something might be contested by a trainer who could see no evidence of this. Having both views might bring to light more insights into the learning process.

An initial consideration for this study was to look comparatively at trainees on a CELTA course and trainees on another programme where, perhaps, recognition of the importance of procedural knowledge was not so prevalent. It was deemed to be too broad a remit for my thesis. However, it would be a valuable focus of further research.

Finally, further research could be built around the implementation of some of the ideas outlined in 7.8 above. A course which was modified to include some or all of these suggestions could be investigated as a comparison with the way a CELTA course is normally conducted.

7.10 Conclusion: Simplicity and complexity

Knowledge and learning are complex concepts and the discussions in this thesis have added to that complexity by providing some further insights from a very specific learning context. However, I hope that the findings have also provided some increased clarity through the articulations of participants' views in this area and have therefore, at the same time, contributed to the simplification of the concepts.

I have suggested that as teacher educators our awareness of and strategies to deal with the prior knowledge trainees bring with them to a course needs to be far more systemic and systematic. We need to be able to recognise where such knowledge is

a barrier to seeing and noticing, let alone learning. There are some potentially simple solutions to this through activities, but the nature of prior knowledge is complex and this must be kept in mind.

As teacher educators we also need to acknowledge the nature of our relationships with trainees and their relationships with their peers and learners. We can too easily assume that the caring ethos of a course focused on development only has benign relationships. Perhaps we need to accept the role of "expert" in the dynamic, one who knows, but also one who has power. We would therefore simplify our role by accepting it.

To conclude, I would also say that teacher educators and the designers of teacher education programmes may benefit from becoming more comfortable with the procedural nature of teacher knowledge and accepting that it is the essential foundation for other, more conceptual knowledge rather than its alternative or its "poorer relation".

I finish with an extract from a book that considers the nature of knowledge of another profession: doctors. In it the writer suggests that our preoccupation with more complex forms of knowledge can lead to serious errors and negative consequences. He proposes a procedural solution: a checklist.

> Here, then, is our situation at the start of the twenty-first century: We have accumulated stupendous know-how. We have put it in the hands of some of the most highly trained, highly skilled, and hardworking people in our society. And, with it, they have indeed accomplished extraordinary things.

> Nonetheless, that know-how is often unmanageable. Avoidable failures are common and persistent … And the reason is increasingly evident: the volume and complexity of what we know has exceeded our individual ability to deliver its benefits correctly, safely or reliably. Knowledge has both saved us and burdened us.

> That means we need a different strategy for overcoming failure … And there is such a strategy – though it will seem almost ridiculous in its simplicity,

maybe even crazy to those of us who have spent years carefully developing more advanced skills and technologies.

It is a checklist.

(Gwande 2010:13).

I am reminded of a contribution from participant G discussed in Chapter four, where she describes how a focus on the simple rather than the complex has helped her learning.

> *I have shifted – I think what I've done is I've focused on very specific things to improve on and I think that's made me able to improve overall just by – instead of thinking, "Oh I'm not that confident," or, "I shouldn't be so worried," or kind of big general things like that, actually to try and focus on specific areas and improve on those.* (G3, 1:19-22)

In our thinking about teacher knowledge and learning we may often look to those who, in Gwande's words, have that "stupendous know-how": the experienced and expert teachers and teacher educators. In this thesis I have given voice to those with conventionally less know-how: trainee teachers. I believe they have provided a different perspective, one which can contribute to a better understanding of how we might seek to "make" teachers.

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Appendix 1

This appendix contains the three interviews with participant H. After each transcript is
an example of the coding sheet used to capture the data in the interview.

Interview 1 - H

JD: I gather that you're one of the ones who has no teaching experience, am I right?

HR: Yes, not-

JD: Prior to the course.

HR: No I don't have any teaching experience in front of a classroom, I teach cello
privately but that's one-to-one.

JD: Right.

HR: So it's not the same thing obviously, but it is a form of teaching. Not in a
classroom though.

JD: But- so you've done some one-to-one and obviously you've been a learner on
courses.

HR: Yes.

JD: And what- from that experience, what do you think- what ideas have you gained
already about what teaching is and what teachers do? What are the important
things to do as a teacher?

HR: Well I suppose what I've learnt myself is there's a certain amount of the teacher
having to give the information, so that's kind of the more structured, formal bit,
but the the interact- where we were interacting a lot I found very useful, because
for me I found I retained more with interaction with the teacher and the other

students.

JD: That's in your own learning?

HR: Yes in my own learning, yes. Yeah.

JD: And is that something you would like to do then as a teacher?

HR: Well I think that because I've experienced that and benefitted from it I feel that would be useful. Especially in a lang- when you're teaching a language. And also- I mean it's years since I learnt a foreign language, but funnily enough I'd signed up on a Spanish beginners' course before I actually applied to do this course which I started last night, so it's very interesting- it's quite useful to get that perspective again from- see a Spanish person, who speaks English, but teaching us Spanish.

JD: That will be really interesting for us to explore maybe, you know as we go one.

HR: Yes I wondered.

JD: How you've picked up from that. But did you do a foreign language at school?

HR: I did. I did German and Latin to what was O-Level then, and then I did French A-Level. But I didn't take it further.

JD: And from that do you have any ideas about what- what's important for a language teacher?

HR: Well I think- I mean my Latin teacher it was very formal and quite boring to be honest. Because she would just stand at the front of the class and- and the French was a bit like that but there was a bit more interaction. But it was very focused on the grammar and learning vocabulary. So the speaking of it wasn't paramount, which I feel now is really important, so getting students to speak as

301

quickly as possible, and even if it's just a few words it gives you confidence. Sorry, I might be digressing here but last night when I started the Spanish, he got us talking within ten, fifteen minutes. And it made it fun as well.

JD: Yeah. So you've had an experience that where you didn't do a lot of talking, where it was the teacher lecturing, and now you've come to the realisation that it's important to talk. Where do you think you realised that along the way, if your experience in school wasn't that much-?

HR: Well I think I realised it at school.

JD: Okay.

HR: To be honest. And soon after and looking back at- because I went as a teenager, I spent three weeks in France with a French family and pen friend and they- I mean my pen friend spoke a little bit of English but the family spoke none, so it made me speak French, and I learnt- I've always said this- I learnt more in those three weeks than I learnt in the classroom. That- to retain, to be able to use.

JD: Yeah. So has that given you things that you want to aspire to as an English language teacher? The way of teaching?

HR: Yes I want- I want to- I think it's important to get the students speaking as soon as possible because that will give them confidence in learning and motivate them to learn more, and to make it fun because that will encourage them to learn and- I mean obviously the grammar and vocabulary is important, but that- incorporating that into an activity where they can speak or- or an interaction between- between them.

JD: Yeah. And at school the grammar and vocabulary was sort of like the lists of words- lists of things to learn was it?

HR: Yes I can remember up on the- it was probably blackboards then! But just lists-

you know, like the verbs all conjugated, that's the word isn't it I think? And- yeah so having to learn lots of vocabulary and the structure of sentences, which is all obviously important, but for me- I mean it may work differently for other people- but for me- and I think this is true, well from my experience and from what I've spoken to other- to friends about is that you learn more by speaking. And obviously if you can live in that country for a while. Yeah so-

JD: Some of the learners you teach- again, because of their background- may actually be very keen on the lists of verbs and vocabulary, and how do you think you'll deal with that then? If they're kind of saying, "No, we want to do more grammar, we want to do more lists of verbs"?

HR: Well I think that's where- I mean I'm just going with my gut feeling really.

JD: No no that's fine, it's just what would you say to them? Would you try and persuade them? Or do you think you'd-?

HR: I mean I think it's a balance, because obviously without the verbs and vocabulary and grammar to an extent you can't really say a lot, but it- I think it's just building it up a bit from even one or two words up. So perhaps showing them that we will be learning those things and vocabulary, and we will do it with perhaps memorising things and games or something, but- and perhaps sometimes there is a need to learn a list of things or how a sentence is constructed- constructed using a particular verb or something, and then try and talk through examples of that. So I think it's- it would be important to write an example on the board or list of perhaps how a verb is conjugated, or- and then use- then encourage them to speak, just learn simple sentences. Perhaps in pairs or something, or-

JD: I know you saw a video last week-

HR: I don't know if I'm explaining very well.

JD: No, no I understand. You saw a video last- a very short video last week.

HR: Oh yes, yeah.

JD: When you looked at that, is that a way you would aspire to teach?

HR: I thought he was- it was Tony I think- he was great. I thought I'd love to be able to teach like that. But I think it's a lot to do with personality as well, of the teacher. And I don't know at this stage whether I will be able to do that naturally to start with. I think a lot of it will come with experience. Because I found- sorry, am I talking too much?

JD: That's what we're here for!

HR: I've found with my cello teaching, and it's only one-to-one, that at first because I hadn't done much of it before, I did some on my course but- I was quite apprehensive and quite- I had very formal structures to my lessons. And then gradually as I gained more confidence with it I- yes I always have a plan and a kind of goal for each student, but I appreciate now it has to be a bit flexible, because it depends completely on their individual personalities. Which is easier as a one-to-one. That is going to be a challenge within a group.

JD: But is it something you would want to incorporate, that flexibility, in your- in the way your deliver your lessons?

HR: Yes I think- so I think that would be important to do that, but within the overriding, I suppose, needs of the group. Because you can't just focus on one person, can you.

JD: Of course. Yeah.

HR: But with the cello teaching, yes, I've found- and that's kind of given- I'm jumping here- but I've found that very much a lesson can suddenly go one way because

they ask a question, all that kind of thing. And their personalities, you know. Or maybe they don't want to do something that I've suggested so we try and look for something else. So I think it's still keeping to what I want to achieve long-term, but also in mind what the student wants to achieve, because they all want different things. And I guess within a group they will all want slightly different things and slightly different needs. Because I've got the impression that they could be different levels, I'm not sure.

JD: Well there's- you will be teaching two levels- two separate classes at different levels.

HR: Right okay.

JD: But within- obviously within any class-

HR: Yes, there's-

JD: There's going to be stronger and not so strong students.

HR: And students that perhaps prefer to learn one way and not another. So it's trying to provide what each student needs, but the whole class as a whole so you still move forward and achieve goals. But I think the was Tony was teaching was- they all seemed to enjoy it, and I think also with that sort of teaching, as it's in pairs or in a group and it's a fund activity, they're more likely to learn. I know myself, like I said, I remember things better, rather than just reading it. And obviously you can back it up with reading afterwards. But also it would give confidence to people who aren't so extrovert perhaps and wouldn't speak up in class. Rather than- I mean he didn't pick on anybody in a horrible way to sort of speak, but said, "Oh, would you like to-" well he did it in a more encouraging, supportive way, rather than just like, "You," so you feel awkward or I'm going to make a mistake. So I think that's important, to make- to allow someone to- I mean I know myself, because I'm not extremely extrovert or- you know, I'm- but within a class where it's made fun and you don't feel you're going to be a fool if

you say something wrong, then I'd speak up, and I think if I can create that sort of environment that would be encouraging. So you don't get somebody who's a bit- or scared to say, they're not going to learn very fast then.

JD: I mean you're aware of the different elements of the course, the teaching practice, the taught sessions and those. What bits are you expecting to learn most from? What bits are you looking forward to most on the course?

HR: I'm expecting to learn the most- I think- I'm expecting to learn the most about myself I think from the teaching, because of to do- I mean I know, like I was saying, I know I'd like to do it, but it's the reality of actually doing it. Sorry, I've forgotten your question exactly.

JD: What kind of- you know, do you think that's- what about the input sessions, will you learn from that? Or do you see any place where you're going to get the most learning?

HR: Well I feel that I need to get all the learning I can from the classroom sessions because they will be the foundations of what an approach is to teaching in the classroom.

JD: Is that what you hope to get most from then, the different ways of structuring things or-

HR: Yes I suppose the, yes, the ideas about where- like when you first have a new class, where to start and what level to start at really. And what's the most important thing to teach first with a language and then sort of how you build it up and- and so I think those things really. But obviously I need to go- which is obviously part of the learning- back to the grammar, the structure, the forms, the- all of-

JD: So all about the language.

HR: Yes. Which- that's quite- proving quite a test for me, a challenge. Which it's not impossible but because I haven't done- I mean I did English A-Level but that's years ago and obviously I wrote essays on when I was doing music. But you don't think about what the actual verbs are or- do you.

JD: No.

HR: So that side of it is- I think that's what I will get a large chunk from. I mean I'll learn obviously from everything else but that's the bit that I feel I know the least about in a way, if that makes sense.

JD: Yeah. And are you expecting that that will mostly come from the taught sessions, whereas the actual teaching learning will come more from the practical sessions? Or do you see that division at all?

HR: I do see a division but the classroom sessions, like with the grammar, that to be would be a necessary foundation to then leading to- and obviously with other things- but leading to the teaching.

JD: Did you find-

HR: Sorry-

JD: No go on.

HR: I'd need- that's the thing that I feel I need to just be so knowledgable and have it at my fingertips to be able to teach it, so that's the quite- that's a challenge.

JD: If you were-

HR: Because it's quite a short amount of time.

JD: Yeah. If you were teaching music and you were learning to teach music to

groups and you knew you knew the knowledge if you like, of what you were teaching, what would you hope to learn then on a course like this if you were learning to teach music? What about teaching would you hope to learn?

HR: Oh I see, from the teaching aspect, in front of a group, in front of a class?

JD: Yes, so I know you've done some one-to-one, but if this was a course learning to teach music to groups and you already know the music stuff, what would you hope to get out of the course in terms of teaching?

HR: Well how to structure my lessons, the lesson plans. And sort of the balance, like I said before, of- obviously there'd be a certain amount of standing up there teaching particular things, and then I think the group activity or in small groups, or even in pairs, but to get- to teach that quite quickly- well I'm not saying it very well, but to get them doing that sort of thing quite quickly, so a balance between- but also to make- so that I'm very approachable and open, and also, you know, trying to make eye contact with everybody and making sure all the students felt they were included. There's so much.

JD: Yeah there is so much. I mean you mentioned already the issue of personality and some of the things you described seem to be more linked to how you are as a person. Is that something you'd expect to cover on a course, an introductory course to teaching? Or is that not the case?

HR: I don't- I don't think necessarily specifically, but I think it just will come out naturally. Because I- I've done- I had to do presentations on my music and obviously perform, and also when I was working in my career I had to do presentations. But- so that actually helps, I think that's going to help. But that's much more formal because you're standing there, you've planned it all- well, I will with the lesson but I mean- you have- you can say, "I'll take questions at the end." You haven't perhaps got that interjection which could throw you off. So-

JD: Because you talked about flexibility being important.

HR: Yeah well I think so.

JD: Yeah, no no no, I agree.

HR: So I think there will be- I get the impression there will be- and if we want there to be- some help if we felt, you know, we got up there and the first lesson we're- I'm just sort of completely struck dumb or something. I mean I'm hoping I won't be but- because I am really excited by it and challenged- you know, feel- so yeah I really want to do it, so I think for me, if I've prepared well enough, I think that will be a good start, and I think the key for me is to not try and- because I'm quite a perfectionist, not try and be perfect about it in the first session. Just to relax and try and just be myself. Because then I'm more likely to do a better job than be, you know, trying to get everything perfect. And you know you can't plan it can you, because you don't know- the students are all different. So it will be a very different experience.

JD: You mentioned that idea of being yourself and you talked about the video yesterday or last week. There's a kind of a personality thing that you felt was different to the way you are, so do you think that the teacher you saw last week is something that you would never want to be because that's not you?

HR: Oh no, I actually admired him, I actually thought I'd like to be like that. And I think there are- you know everybody behaves in certain way in certain situations and with certain people, and there's times when I am, you know, very relaxed and can be quite confident and chatty and- and then there's other times when I'm like terrified or whatever. Or I feel I can't- I'm just not like that. I mean there's varying degrees of it, aren't there, different personalities. But I'm hoping that I could be- come close to that. And I think I would if I- because I know I am at times, if I'm really confident with what I'm doing and just being myself, then I think I could do that. And I think it- if I can come up with some good ideas of how to do that by the tasks or activities or the way I run the lesson- because if the students are relaxed that's going to make me more relaxed and I'm going to feel, "Well this is good,

309

there's a good- they're enjoying this," you know.

JD: You know that after- in the teaching practice, at the end, students give feedback to each other and the tutor gives feedback. How do you feel about that student feedback, you know, getting feedback from your peers and giving feedback to your peers about the lessons?

HR: I think that's a really good idea because we're all in the same boat, but I think- I wonder if people will try to be nice because they don't want to be-

JD: Will you try to be nice because you don't want to say anything?

HR: Well I'll just be honest I think, without being- constructive criticism. Because we- sorry I'm going back to my music- but we did role playing of teaching lessons one-to-one when we were- we did an instrumental teaching and learning session and- sessions- and so two students, one would be the teacher and one would be the pupil, and we had feedback from all the students about that, and the tutor. And at first people were less sort of- not dishonest but they were being too nice really, and then when people felt comfortable- and you know, we talked about that as well, "Look you've got to- constructive criticism." And that was very helpful, because nobody was saying, "Oh you're awful," you know, or- and everybody's got strengths, havent' they, and everybody's got weaknesses. So it helped, it really helped. So I think if people- they may not be quite as honest as they might as time goes on. Well I think it's good because you're all in the same boat and again it makes you feel less uncomfortable.

JD: And it- when you hear feedback from a colleague and from the tutor, do you think you will pay more attention to the tutor's feedback? And did you in that role play situation with the instruments?

HR: If I'm honest I think I probably did, because they've- I think, "Well they've got the qualifications, they're the professional, they- they know what is expected."

310

JD: Did it ever conflict? Did your mock student ever tell you something different to what the tutor said?

HR: Yes I think there were times when-

JD: Yeah, and how did you resolve it? Did you kind of say, "Oh well the tutor knows, therefore-"

HR: No I don't- I think I just looked at- I can't think of a specific example, but I just looked at the feedback really. And it's kind of balancing it out of it, isn't it.

JD: So by the end of April, Helen, when the course is over, what do you hope to have gained in terms of skills and knowledge on the course?

HR: Well I hope I've gained enough knowledge to be able to teach English to foreign students. And-

JD: So is that knowledge about English?

HR: Yes.

JD: Or about teaching?

HR: Well knowledge about English and in- and then- because without that I can't teach it. And but also the skills that are needed to teach it. So that I could confidently teach a class. I mean I see myself- I don't know, but I would expect that I could- well I'm hoping that I could definitely teach a beginners' class. What I'm going to find difficult is perhaps teaching a group where they've- they're a bit higher level, so they've got more knowledge of the language. I mean that could be easier but it could be more difficult. So-

JD: Wait and see. Okay well thank you very much Helen, that's really, really interesting. Is there anything else that you'd like to- that kind of strikes you about

311

just your impressions of what you're going to learn on the course or about your prior experience of teaching?

HR: Well I'm really excited about the course, it seems really interesting, all the- the way it seems to be approached and taught seems as though it will be fun. But obviously it's going to be very intense because it's only four months. Which I still can't get-

JD: Some people do it in four weeks.

HR: I know, I still can't get my head around how I'm going to actually be able in that time to be standing there teaching. But I'm going to do my- I want to- I know I can do it. Well that sounds big headed. I'm just sure I can- I want to do it so much, so that's half of the battle isn't it. But yes, so I think I'm still, "Wow, am I-?" How can I possibly be ready to do- to stand up in front of foreign students and teach by the end of four months. But- but I'm not letting that bother me, I'm just taking it [inaudible 23:25] one step at a time.

END
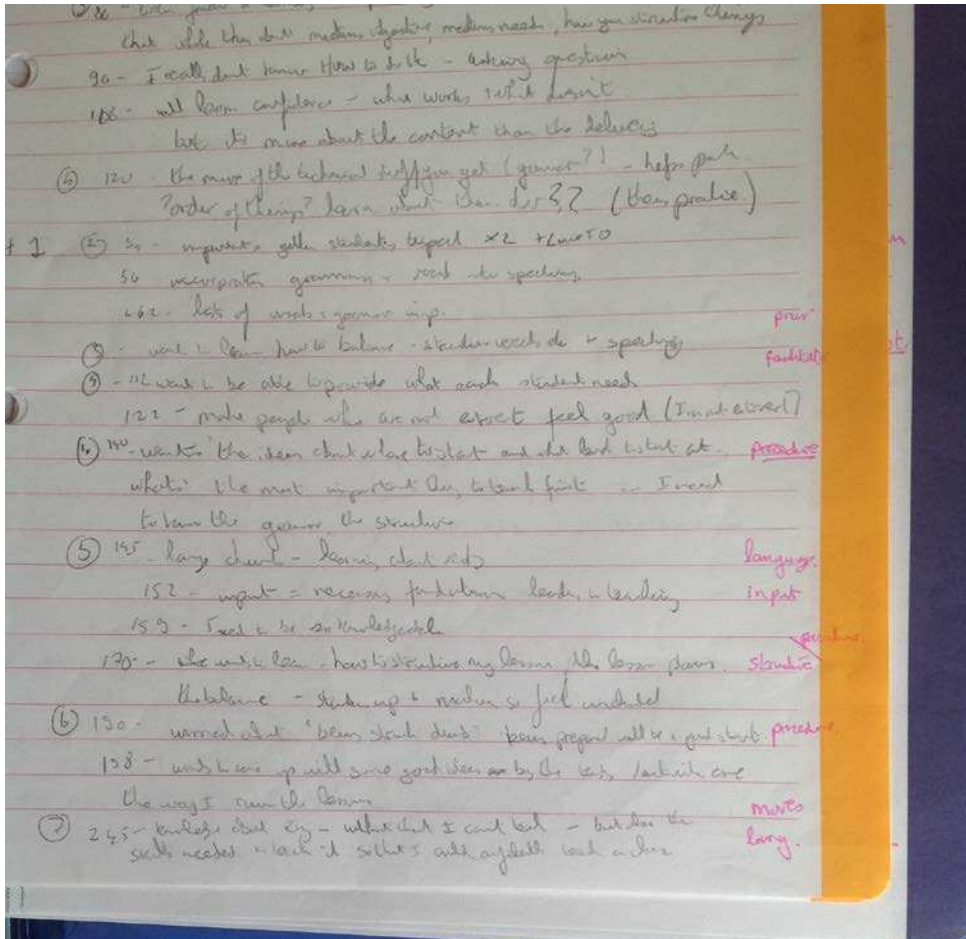
Interview 2 - H

HR: […] weekend because of the lesson I was going to have to teach, which was grammar, which was really hard. But I think I've come out the other side and it's sort- because it's so much to learn at first, all the terminology and jargon, if you like, but also- well, just everything. So you're having- I felt I was having to think about everything and trying to absorb it all, which is really difficult all at once and not much time, it didn't feel, to do things, and-

JD: How many lessons have you actually taught?

HR: Three.

JD: Okay, right so that's good. Yeah.

HR: Yes, and I've got an hour on Monday, it's my first hour. But I've been planning it and I'm pretty much there- because I'm away this weekend, which is probably good in a way because I'll switch off from it. And so it's focused me to do it. I've kept on top of things, but the planning seems to take a long time. But Mark said it will at first, it's- because it's all new and- but it was getting very intense and I was- I think I was trying too hard, if you know what I mean. I needed to kind of just relax a bit, not think about it too much. So I'm actually looking forward to Monday. I mean that sounds daft-

JD: No, no, no.

HR: Because it's what I want to do, but at first it's all a bit scary.

JD: Of course it is, of course it is.

HR: But it's actually beginning to link- I can find myself now when I'm thinking about the lesson planning all different things, all the assignments, all the things are linking together a bit better, and why you do things a certain way, and it's

coming a bit- dare I say it- a bit more naturally. You know, not thinking, "Oh what- what was it they said?" and having to look it up and then trying to work out what it means, you know, re- sort of think about it. So it's- yeah, it's coming, it's exciting. No, I'm really enjoying it, I really love it. I know I've done the right thing, it's just a bit scary thinking by 8th May it'll all be over. But then I think the best thing would be to try and get a job as soon as possible.

JD: And put it into practice.

HR: And throw myself right in, because I kind of liken it to- well like learn- it's not a very good analogy I suppose, but like learning [inaudible 2:22] but when I did my music here, it's not until I got out into the real world teaching that it gradually became much more natural, and things you had to think about when you were learning it or for an exam or something, you- came more naturally and you do- then you suddenly realise you're doing something spontaneously.

JD: Can you tell me a bit more about what you said about it all coming together? Because that was quite interesting, that- I mean can you- going back to sort of from that first lesson you taught, can you remember any key points where you had- I don't know- you know, the light bulb moments, "Oh yes, I get that," or anything that you can remember?

HR: Well funnily enough in the- I was a bit nervous about the first lesson but not overly, because I knew- I kind of thought, "Well they can't expect amazing things because we haven't done it." So I think I found that lesson easier, but- and the second one than the third one. So in the first two there were moments when I was spontaneous, which- and those moments I really loved. It was like I reacted to somebody who asked a question or something and I wrote something on the board and it wasn't in my plan because my plan was very precise and everything. I think it's like a something to hold onto. But- sorry, I'm probably not answering your question very well.

JD: No, that's all right. So the other bits of the lesson were literally following the

plan?

HR: Well yes, but I didn't actually- I didn't look too much at a script or anything, I just had to have it in my head, and I felt that I had to follow it so I didn't fall off, if you know what I mean. And I think what I meant about coming together is- like for example, the first lesson plan I wrote, it- the terminology kind of- you know, systems and skills, and like contextualising and concept questions- it was just really hard to understand- well at first what that meant, but then how do you actually implicate that for each thing you're teaching? And obviously it varies, doesn't it, depending on when you're doing grammar, or vocabulary, or reading. So those sort of things are linking better together, like introducing the topic and then like contextualising, concept questions, and linking it through to then actually getting the students- eliciting from the students, getting them involved. That's sort of link-

JD: You know all the terminology, even "eliciting" is very-

HR: Well I'm trying- well, that's because that's one of my big focuses, because I've been- I was- because Antonia's my tutor and she- she was saying that if I take the focus off me more and I make them work harder, then that will make me feel better because I was doing too much teacher time, talking time. And I could see that, but I think at first I was afraid to make the students- I didn't want to make them feel uncomfortable or- you know, so I got- but they're quite competent because they're upper intermediate, so you can push them. But now- you get to know the students.

JD: When do you change the group?

HR: Two weeks' time.

JD: Okay.

HR: I think I've got two more lessons with this group. Funnily- I'm probably not

answering your question-

JD: No, go on.

HR: Does that- did that help?

JD: Yes, it's really useful.

HR: I had this- I really believe that teaching beginners was probably easier than teaching a higher level, but I've completely reversed my thinking, because the upper intermediate, and the advanced I assume, or even intermediate probably, they- you can talk to them quite fluently and quite normally. There's the odd thing they don't understand, they might- they'll ask. But- and obviously you check for understanding, but I observed an elementary lesson last week, or on Monday, and I realised that you have- although maybe what you teach is easier, it's how you teach it, and checking that they understand is much more difficult. And things- the tasks were taking them much longer and- so I- I think it must be much harder. Which I hadn't thought, I thought it'd be much easier.

JD: It's interesting you said about the sort of teacher talk and maybe doing a little bit more talking, because when- when we spoke initially and before you'd started teaching, and I asked you about what- what you thought what kind of teacher you wanted to be, and your- one of your concerns was that you wanted the students to talk more.

HR: Yes.

JD: Why do you think that it happened that one of the things you need to work on is you talking too much? It's interesting.

HR: I think it's because I- I thought that if- that if I gave them too much to do- or because I'm a teacher I should be talking the most. If I gave them too much to do, that wasn't kind of- that was putting them under pressure. And the silences I

317

found difficult to deal with, because Antonia said don't be afraid of the silences. Like if you ask them a question, just wait or try something else. But it's that- that takes a bit of spontaneity, doesn't it. Like asking them a question and then it might go off at a tangent, so you've got to be able to think on your feet. So that's the bit that doesn't come so naturally, even though I want it to. And I think it's partly because I- because I'm almost afraid of that spontaneity, because it might- I might lose control of where I am. Does that make sense?

JD: Yeah, absolutely.

HR: I might fall off and-

JD: Yeah, no, no. I just think that's so interesting when you talked about your foreign language learning experience, you were very clear that the best teachers were the ones who got you to talk as students. And it's interesting, and yet what you're struggling- what you're learning to do now is actually get the students to talk more, rather than- that would be- you'd almost think that your difficult would be the students were talking too much.

HR: Yes, I know. But I think that is the reason.

JD: Yeah, yeah. I'm sure, I'm sure-

HR: If that makes sense.

JD: That does, yeah absolutely.

HR: And it's- I'm someone who if I'm doing something, I want to do it really well, and so like- it's completely unrealistic, but I want to do a hundred per cent and so I don't want anything to go wrong or- and so I think probably not letting go enough was me feeling I was in control more. Which actually, ironically, I don't think I necessarily am.

JD: You also mentioned that you wanted- one of the things you wanted to get out of the course was that idea of how to structure and plan. So is planning still important to you? Is that- do you put a lot of effort into that structure?

HR: I do. Partly because it's a safety net for me, because I- but I think in the right was because I know that if I go in very well prepared, I'm more likely to do a good lesson. But it's almost too much, I think, preparation. Because I was talking to Antonia about this in my tutorial, and I said- because she said, "Your lesson plans are very well prepared and-" and I said, "Oh, do you think I've got too much detail?" and she said, "Well we won't worry about it at the moment." So I think there is probably too much detail, although I have actually tried to not to put so much detail in this one for next week. But that's kind of something- if I've got that in my heads, it's- I feel more in control, more comfortable going into the lesson.

JD: When you did your one-to-one with music- with the music, did you also find yourself planning a lot? Or was that much more spontaneous?

HR: I do. No, funnily enough at first I'd sit down and I'd write what was a lesson plan for what might just be half an hour teaching. And when we used to do- we had to do role-playing of it in the model- module I did for that, Instrumental Teaching and Learning, and I would plan exactly what I- almost to the point of what I was going to say. Not- I mean that sounds crazy, but it was just to feel secure I think, because at that stage when you're learning I just can't be that natural about it. I think partly because it's new, and partly because I want to get it right. But I- funnily enough I was saying to my husband just this week, I'm hoping- and I'm sure it will eventually- this teaching will become the same. My one-to-one teaching cello, I do have a plan because all pupils are different, they all require different things, so I have an overall plan of what I want to do with them, say over the term, and I- and they keep a notebook, I write in it and- and if they've got a particular goal of an exam, obviously I have to plan what we're doing each week. But the lesson I just- it's just completely natural and spontaneous and- and that- if I look back, I'd never have believe that to become like that.

JD: You mentioned that there were a couple of spontaneous moments in the lesson. Why do you think that was? Or how were you able to sort of break away from the plan? Do you recall?

HR: Yes, I think it's because the students started to respond, and for some reason I think that's always in my mind, "What if they don't say anything? What if they just sit there?" And it was that sort of interaction that then sort of sparked that spontaneity really, and I felt really sort of, "Oh, I'm really enjoying this." Because- I think because they were responding to me, and it was almost like, you know, "They're responding to me!" And it-

JD: Did you deviate then away from the plan, or did you still- you still kept to the plan?

HR: Well, I kept to the overall plan, but- and there was a moment when- it was the first week I think, or it might have been the second week- oh it was the second week. One of the girls didn't understand a particular word, and it was a word that was- I thought one or two might not understand it, it was "immersion" actually, but it was in the sense of being immersed in an English school for like weeks, or a month or something, and you did everything in English. It was in Japan I think, or something. And she asked about the word, and I tried explaining it, and then I suddenly had an idea that- and I said, "Well let's- we'll read it, we'll go through it, the whole thing, and then see if you understand it in context." And it just came to me, like- and I checked that she did, and she- I asked her what she thought it meant after we- and she got it pretty right. So that- well Antonia said that was a god way of doing it, but I hadn't planned that.

JD: Where do you think- where do you think it came from, that idea?

HR: Well it was partly because I thought, "This is really difficult to explain," so it was kind of putting it back onto her in a way, but I did think in context it might be easier to understand.

JD: Do you think it came in any way from discussions you'd had in input about contextualisation? Do you think that had any-

HR: Maybe. Yeah, maybe. Although that was only in like the second week, but possibly, yes. It probably- I mean yes, you're right, because it probably wouldn't have come if I hadn't had some- I don't know, it might have done, from my music or something perhaps. But it wasn't a conscious thing, so I think that's where if I could just relax a bit. Though the most- sorry, I'm-

JD: No, go on, carry on.

HR: The most difficult thing, I find- because I said to Antonia, it's only because I've had a tutorial with her recently, is the first few seconds even, or minutes, of starting the lesson- because I started the classes the last two weeks, and actually I'm going to be starting it this week- is trying to get their attention straight- you know, when you want to, and I know if I feel really confident and get their attention in the first few seconds, minutes, then I feel much, much more- much happier. So we've looked at ideas for that. Rather than me talking and it's not very interesting for them necessarily, is to use visuals or something to just get their attention straight away and then get them- ask them questions and get them trying to think of things. And I think that would make me feel much more comfortable.

JD: One of the things you've been doing obviously is looking- watching your peers teach and going to do those observations. Has that given you any kind of learning moments that you have- that you recognise or that you remember? Is there anything that you noticed either with your colleagues or with the other teachers, that you think, "Oh I'm going to do that," or you have employed that in your own teaching?

HR: Yes, there's some actual ideas that I've picked up, but also just the way they teach as well. And it is the ones that- the observations where there was more

interaction between the students or with the teacher, rather than the teacher- I mean there hasn't been any lessons where the teacher's just talking all the time, but where there's more interaction I think it's an overall better lesson in a sense. The students seem to be more engaged.

JD: And have you noticed how that happens, what the teacher does to make that happen? Have you picked up on any ideas there?

HR: Well I think it's the ideas of the activities, what they do, and often it's related to real things, or things in their lives. So like making it personal seems to tap- get their attention quite well, and because they- they probably talk and think about some of the things outside of the classes, even if they might not do it in English. But for- actually I was observing one of our group in the elementary class last week, and she- she was really good, and she right from the beginning- because I thought I could really learn from this- right from the beginning she'd got their attention by involving them, not telling them, asking them, and she also brought in real things because she brought in Pancake Day into her thing. So that was- I thought that was very good.

JD: And obviously I mentioned last time the idea of the feedback at the end of the teaching practice and, you know, about giving a critique of somebody else's lesson and receiving it from your peers. How have you found that process?

HR: Oh, I've found that really useful actually. Because it- there's- we go through the positives but also then the constructive, and we've all got different- in my group- different strengths, so we all learn from each other.

JD: And is there- are people willing to say things, you know, things that you have to work on?

HR: Yeah. Yes, yeah.

JD: And do you find it easy to tell somebody else that they're-

HR: Well I don't think it's easy, but it's how you say it. And I think if you start off with the positive stuff. And it's not negative stuff, is it.

JD: It's kind of what you could do- what you could do better. Yeah. And have you picked up anything particular from any of the feedback sessions? Or any of the written feedback? I don't know-

HR: From?

JD: From either the tutor or from your peers. Is there anything you feel has kind of moved you on in terms of your teaching skills?

HR: Yes I think- well I'm really trying to work on- the main thing is less teacher-centered sort of thing, and whole class- and eliciting more questions, really, from the students. So I have been trying to work on that and I can do better on it. And I think I'm going to be pushed harder this week, so- they're the main things.

JD: When you get the feedback-

HR: Do you want to look at it? Because you said- I've brought-

JD: Yeah, if you had any that would be great- about how you-

HR: I think it, I don't think I've missed anything, but I think it- they cover what I said.

JD: I remember asking about the notion when you hear feedback, whether you- whether you pay more attention to what your peers say or what the tutor says, I don't know how you found that? [inaudible 19:46]

HR: Sorry, I haven't re-divided it. That's like the latest one, that's the first one.

JD: Is that- is this the grammar lesson that you were worried about?

HR: Yes.

JD: Yes, okay. And tell me about that then, what actually- you were very worried about it because it was grammar?

HR: It was really hard to plan because I was teaching "would" and "used to" and there's so many- you can slip over into another meaning of it, so I tried to keep it really simple, but I don't think I did. Ironically I picked off an exercise from the internet, which actually I- which really it's unlike me to not really look at it properly, but I think I was finding it really hard to do the planning, and I obviously hadn't realised- there were so many options they could choose from to fill in these gaps, and some of them you could use both, you could use more than one, and it wasn't actually a very good exercise. And I'd actually made up my own and Antonia said, "Your own one was better," and so- because they were struggling and I suddenly realised half way through they were struggling, and it wasn't quite what I'd- you know, I mean I got through it but-

JD: Were you-

HR: I mean I taught the form and I put- she said my use of the whiteboard was good and everything, it was just- the thing is with these grammar things, it's- you've got to really understand it yourself, haven't you, to teach it. And although- I mean obviously speaking English it's really kind of being sure of the grammar yourself to be able to then teach it. So- and I was just scared of my mind going blank or something when I was up there and I wouldn't be able to explain something. So I think it- I mean I did it, but I didn't- I felt it was quite rigid because I wasn't relaxed really.

JD: And you wanted- you wanted that control.

HR: At the end of it I kind of felt I just wanted to run out of the room. But it actually

wasn't as bad as I felt. Apparently.

JD: So when you had the feedback and obviously the feedback was more positive than you felt, how did you find that experience? Did you- were you relieved, or surprised?

HR: I was, and I was surprised, and I kind of thought, "Oh maybe they're just saying that to be nice." But I- which I don't think they would. Maybe- I don't think Sue and Terrence would. But Antonia obviously definitely wouldn't. So I think for me it's believing that I can do it. I mean okay some lessons will- she says some will go, you know, and it'll go up and down like that as you go on through the course. But when I'd kind of- I think it was a bit of a shock, because I felt I'd done better the first two weeks, so to me I should just be going like this, so I think that's why it was a bit of a shock. But when I actually thought, "No, no, no, just take the constructive criticism- the constructive points and the positive points and then move on." So that's what I've done.

JD: And you mentioned about the TTT. Is that- have you identified that as the- as a key area for you to improve on? Or-

HR: Yes it is.

JD: Because it came up in one of the other ones, well the whole class work as well.

HR: It is. I mean it's not that I haven't got the students involved, it's- I think it's the balance, isn't it, because one class- it's not giving- it's giving the students things to do but getting them to vocally interact as well. Because there was one class I observed where they were being given exercise after exercise and you could see they were having trouble with some of them, and you could see they were kind of getting a bit- just weighed down really, struggling. So it's that balance, isn't it. Right, I think this really is to do with- yes, me not saying too much to introduce things, and- because you don't- I think I have this concept that you have to stand up there and really make sure that you knew what you were going

325

to teach them, and actually you don't really have to tell them, just get straight in there and start doing it and everything. I mean a brief- and getting them involved as soon as possible, otherwise you- the strain is on me then, so the focus is on me, and that- and I've got to put it more onto the students.

JD: So what have you planned for Monday then that's going to look- kind of try to address that?

HR: Well I'm- I've got some pictures because it's all- the chunk of it is about vocabulary, vocabulary to do with crime, and the second half of it is a bit of grammar as well. So I've got some pictures that I've blown up that I'm going to just stick to the board and have them covered up when they come in, and then uncover them so that hopefully they all look, and then just start talking about crime and what words- do they know any words and take it from there. Kind of brainstorm. And then I've got some fun sort of exercises they can do in pairs and groups and- but also combined with that- so it's not all sort of them looking down, writing- and some oral stuff as well. And I'm trying to make the grammar as interesting as possible. That's not very easy. So I'm hoping that first few minutes, if that starts well and I write up vocabulary- because they're keeping- they keep little- or it was suggested they kept little notebooks of new vocabulary so they can write it in there. So hopefully that will kick the lesson off well and then I'll feel better. And I've got it well planned, and I feel confident with the exercises I'm giving them, things like that. So I'm actually looking forward to it.

JD: Good.

HR: There must be something wrong.

JD: No, not at all.

HR: No, no [inaudible 26:12] because it's something I really want to do, but it's just scary.

JD: It is nerve-wracking. You talked at the beginning about learning the terminology and things like eliciting and concept checking. Do you find those techniques are sort of now in your head, or you are able to do those things? I know you know what they mean, but would you- do you think they are skills you still need to develop, or they're already developed?

HR: Oh no, I think they're skills I still- that still need developing. It's coming easier though. And actually ironically on this lesson, I had good-

JD: Was good concept checking, good concept-

HR: Yes, and yet I really struggled I thought to find those questions. And in the first assignment it was concept questions that I was a bit weaker on. I mean I was- did fine in everything but it was just that I was a bit weaker on, and that was- so this came after that so I'd obviously learnt a bit more, even if I didn't realise it. And I have been- in class when tutors have asked for concept questions, I have suggested one or two and they have been fine, so I think it is coming, it's just not quite natural yet.

JD: And the-

HR: And the eliciting's not quite natural, but it's coming.

JD: Those two things, eliciting and concept checking, do you think that you actually do those in your music teaching?

HR: Oh yes, yeah. That's true. I hesitated because I'm thinking, "Do I?" Well yes, I do.

JD: You just don't call them that.

HR: Especially for younger ones, because- because I- like the adults will say if they don't understand something. It's so true, like the younger ones won't say, or

327

they're not so keen to say.

JD: So what will you ask them then, what kind of things would you ask them?

HR: Well one girl I teach, she has trouble with rhythm, so I will actually do kind of clapping games and things like that with her. I'll ask her, "Well how many beats do you think are in this bar?" That type of thing.

JD: Concept checking.

HR: Yes. I think it comes back to I'm trying to make it too difficult, too- does that make sense?

JD: It's just interesting because I think it is- it is new terminology but in actual fact it's just a new name-

HR: Yes.

JD: Because I thought it was very interesting, there was one thing here where it said- there was a comment about- yeah, it's the classic thing, asking, "Do you understand?" and that's not a good concept checking question. But I know you would probably never ask that in your music lessons.

HR: No, I don't think so, no.

JD: It's just really interesting.

HR: Or probably not- I mean I might do, to be honest, with some of the adults.

JD: Because you know they'd say-

HR: I think they would, although they may not I suppose. But I suppose it's whether you know somebody well enough, don't you. You know whether they'll say or

not. But no, not with the younger ones, yeah.

JD: So some of these things it seems a little strange, actually you're probably doing them, you just don't call them that.

HR: That's true. And one of the things I- I think it's taken me a few weeks to really realise that I was almost trying- thinking too much about it and trying to make it too difficult, and to make things simple. As long as you get over what you want to teach. Because that's what the students are going to understand if it's put clearly and straightforwardly, aren't they.

JD: What's been your best moment so far on the course?

HR: Well I think- I think it has to be the teaching, even though it's mixed with- you know.

JD: What about the-

HR: I'm paying to do this, why [inaudible 30:11]- It's what I want to do but-

JD: The first two minutes after you sit down, how is that? You know, when you've done your lesson?

HR: After teaching?

JD: You've done your teaching and then you sit down, how do you feel then?

HR: Well the first two lessons, because I had some moments of, "I'm really enjoying this, I feel I can do this, this is-" and moments of I felt spontaneous, and that's how I think, "Oh I could really do this." I felt relieved but I felt so much satisfaction, especially after the first one. The third one I actually had doubts. I started thinking- I went home a bit upset inside, thinking, "Can I really do this?" You know. I thought, "No I can, I can, it's bound to go up and down." So-

329

JD: And the feedback session after- on the final lesson, the actual sort of discussion, did you find- did you learn from that? Or did you get-

HR: From the last one?

JD: Yeah, the last one, that grammar one, in the actual discussion did you find that helpful?

HR: Yes, I did. And- yes, because there were more positive things than- I tend to focus on the negative stuff and not the positive, because I want to do it all right. I don't think about- you know, I think, "Well on, you-" They were saying, "You did that well, you did that well," and- because you don't always feel or see the things you do well, do you? You just kind of- if something goes wrong you- well not that anything went majorly wrong, but if it's not going as right as you want it to you focus on that. So that was good to get that feedback, positive things, and then- and then- excuse me- just learn how to improve on the other things.

JD: And do you find you get the- what you take in is more from the tutor, or from your peers, or equally? When you go away after the feedback, what do you think stays in your mind more?

HR: Probably the tutor, but my peers as well, because- because I can learn from them. Because like I said, we've got different strengths, so I- I can pick up and learn things.

JD: Can you think of an example of-

HR: And we're all quite supportive of each other. There doesn't- the whole group actually is really nice, there's no- it doesn't feel like there's any competition between- which I- you probably- I don't know, you might get in some groups sort of thing.

JD: Can you think of an example of a strength that one of your peers has, you don't have to say who it is, that you don't- that you feel you don't and could learn from it?

HR: Yes, the- well there's two things, actually each one of them has particular strengths that I would like. One of them is quite naturally authoritative, which I don't think I am. Unless I'm feeling very confident. And the other one is very good at this eliciting and- yes, the concept question thing. So-

JD: And have you picked up why that is? Have you picked up anything- have you noticed what he or she does that makes it good?

HR: Yes, it was particularly last- or the week before last, was the just taking what she wanted to teach and getting the students straight away to give her words. And they did, they were, you know- and I think that's what I have to try and remember is, because even for Monday I'm thinking, "What if they don't know any of these words, what if-?"

JD: Because it sounds like what you're going to do on Monday is that, that you're kind of taking that-

HR: Yes, yes.

JD: What your colleague does.

HR: Because I thought it was quite- it was a really good idea and it got their attention straight away.

JD: Good.
HR: So I think it does really help watching the others.
JD: Okay Helen, thank you very much.

END

Coded notes from interview 2 on what H feels she is learning.

JD: Okay so just sort of- I asked you kind of to think about back over the course Helen, is there anything that struck you that- that sprang to mind about your learning over the course?

HR: What specific things that helped me?

JD: Yeah, anything that helped you, that now that you've got to the end of the course, looking back are there any key points that you think, "Oh that's really sunk in," or, "I really got it then," or- is there anything you can think about?

HR: Well timings-wise, the first three weeks probably I just felt completely saturated with information and you know that feeling, "How am I actually going to be able to stand up there and teach because I don't know what-" I didn't feel I knew what I could teach, if that makes sense?

JD: Yeah.

HR: And then once the terminology and things became a bit more familiar, and realising that you don't- you know, you prepare for a lesson, but it doesn't mean you have to know everything all the time. So it felt like I was more in control then and things started to fit more into place because I was getting more familiar with the terminology and what I was learning, some of it was sticking. Because I've looked back over my notes recently and also just the assignments- I remembered looking at that piece of paper with all the assignments on when I first started, thinking, "How am I going to do this?" Especially I remember thinking that of the last one because it was asking about your-

JD: Your reflection on your teaching, yeah.

HR: Yes and what you've learnt. And I'm thinking, "Well how am I going to do that?" because at that stage of the course you haven't learnt anything that you actually-

I suppose it sounds all very unfamiliar and you don't know how you're going to get there in four months. But you do.

JD: And now that you've got to the end,you know, thinking of what you expected to learn on the course, is that what you've got out of the course? Or is it more or is it less?

HR: I feel I've got more than what I expected in a way but of a different thing than I expected in a way. Because I- because we're given like reading lists to start with, aren't we, and all this information, and I had this image that I'd have to know all this, you know, quite early on. Which is a ridiculous- you can't possibly- but that's what I felt and- and I have learnt through reading and obviously doing the assignments and the lectures but I think where I've learnt the most is actually in the classroom, for me, doing the actual teaching. Obviously you need the theory and the how to plan and that's been really good, but I've learnt a lot about my teaching, obviously, from teaching practice. But overall I feel I've learned so much more than I expected, because I just didn't believe I could learn this much in four months.

JD: And when you say about learning from the teaching practice, do you mean you doing the teaching, or the feedback, or watching others, or everything, or all of those? Where do you think in the teaching practice you've got most learning from?

HR: Well I was thinking about this actually last night and this morning and I've learnt- it's been really, really useful having the feedback from the tutor, but also the feedback from the two other people in my group. Because we all have different strengths and different things we need to work on and needed to work on, and it's good to see someone else, you know, you could observe and learn from them and- so that's been invaluable for me, that feedback both from peers and the tutors. And also observing some of the qualified teachers as well, that's been really helpful. And- because then I could try putting into practice those- the bits that they- the tutor points out, and obviously the peers, that I can work on. And

334

that's really helped me to focus for the next lesson. The only problem is you kind of- you start focusing on that and the other bit goes. That will come.

JD: And you- when you stand up and teach you do forty minutes or whatever, once you've sat down do you think just the standing up was a learning experience in itself and doing it, or do you think you needed that feedback afterwards to get the learning from that teaching?

HR: Oh no, I learnt a lot from standing up and teaching. I think probably the most because you- I'd learn about myself and things I wanted to do that don't always happen, and things that I had been doing I didn't do- you know, because I think you're still learning, aren't you, even at this- obviously at this stage, and I think until I go out there in the real world, that's when I'll really, really learn even more. Because you're- well you're having to rely on yourself a lot more, aren't you, and gaining the experience will- will obviously build on all this.

JD: Obviously out in the real world there won't be anybody watching your lessons and then you won't have that feedback. Will you miss that in a way in terms of your learning?

HR: Yes, I think- again I was thinking about this, because I think I would quite like to sort of start by nobody watching me, and then maybe have a- if possible, wherever I was working- have someone just come and sit in and observe, which I would imagine they might do anyway, because you're probably on a bit- like a probationary   thing or whatever. And so that would be quite helpful to have some.

JD: And that time when you have the nobody observe, what will you do in that period? Is it just you don't want the pressure, or what do you think you will use that period for? Supposing you got a job and somebody said, "Okay we're going to give you six weeks, nobody's going to come into your class." How do you think you might use that six weeks?

HR: I will- I think what I'll try and do is focus on the points where I can- need to work on to improve on those points. I think I'd take maybe one a week or something, because I couldn't take the whole lot every lesson, it's too much to think about, and really try and improve on those.

JD: And how will you know how to do that? Will you take something from reading? I mean so supposing you have a point, I don't know, "Give better instructions," how will you know what to do?

HR: Well I've learnt from the lectures, and the course, and the feedback, and got notes. But every lesson- because I do prepare quite detailed and methodically which helps me, and so I will still do that. At least when I'm- until I feel I don't have to do it as much, because I want to do the best lesson I can and that will help me. But it'll also be partly- sorry, I'm digressing slightly- but partly the fact that there is no-one watching me, because although I haven't felt intimidated in a sense, because the tutors are all lovely and everything, it's just you still are conscious of someone there and I think that pressure taken off- I feel I'll be more able to be myself. Because that's the bit I found- like I said to you before I think, I found quite hard to just totally relax and just let myself go, if you see what I mean.

JD: So in the teaching that you're doing now, what bits of yourself are missing do you think? Is it just the not relaxed or is there more?

HR: I- because I'm concentrating so hard- I mean I have quite good rapport with the students, and yesterday for example- because it was my last teaching lesson-

JD: Oh so you're finished now?

HR: Yes, but I knew that I'd- I'd been told that I'd passed anyway, but I wanted to do my best, and I was more relaxed, in some of it anyway. So I was smiling a bit and joking a bit and it just felt- I still felt like I wanted to do my best so there's an element of not totally- I mean I don't suppose I'll be totally relaxed til I've done,

you know, months of it, but- I'm trying to explain but-

JD: So is there an element a bit on the course when you're being watched or when you're being assessed that you're not quite doing what you- what your personality [inaudible 9:11]?

HR: Yes, I don't think there's sort of- I don't think the more relaxed kind of- I'm not sort of naturally really extrovert, but that side of my personality doesn't come out- hasn't come out very much in teaching because I'm concentrating so hard on what I'm doing and trying to do it all- that's the thing, I've got to learn not to do- that's one thing I've learnt well is not to do it- worry about trying to do it perfectly. Because I'm a bit of a perfectionist so everything I do, like I want to do it really well, so I'm really kind of quite hard on myself. As Pam was saying to me yesterday, "Don't be hard on yourself, you've-" you know, I've done well and the thing is- she said, "You've only done six hours' teaching." If you actually look at, analyse it, it's true isn't it. So- so it's that side of- it's bits of spontaneity that have come out in my lessons when I've felt they're going well and felt I was in control of everything, and that's what I really want to aim for. Obviously it won't be like that all the time. I mean I don't mean I'd be joking about all the time, I just mean more my- myself coming across. And that's when my voice will project better because when I'm a bit nervous I- that tends to go quieter. But I- some of that is because- like not totally myself- is because I'm trying to do everything to the book in a way. You know when like- if you teach vocabulary there's a certain way of doing it, and if you teach grammar you've got to, you know, teach the form and the function, etcetera, and so it's- and the concept questions, they don't come that naturally yet. So it's all that type of thing which when it comes more naturally sort of I can just think of a concept question and- so I think it's coming away from following a plan too much, which will be good. And I think I'll be able to do that more when I'm not being watched, and you're not thinking, "I've got to pass this." I mean obviously I want to do it really well. I suppose the only thing that just concerns me slightly is how do- how will anyone know that I'm doing fine? But I suspect that someone will sit in on one or two.

JD: Yes, yes they will in a new job. And also the students say.

HR: Well yes and if they're not learning anything it would be obvious wouldn't it.

JD: Yeah.

HR: I'm rambling a bit.

JD: No, that's absolutely fine. You talked about the ways of doing things, like ways of teaching vocabulary, etcetera. Did you find anything on the course, any way of doing something that you were asked to use in a lesson that you actually didn't agree with, that you thought, "No actually that's not a good way, I don't think that's a good way to do it"? Is there anything you felt you wanted to question? Or were you fairly sort of accepting of what you were asked to do?

HR: Yeah I don't think there was anything that kind of shouted at me "that's not a good idea".

JD: And in the feedback sessions, I know you said they'd worked very well so far, did you find that they changed over the course? That people were saying more towards the end? Of different kinds of things? I mean I'm talking mainly about the- you're a group of three, aren't you?

HR: Yeah.

JD: So the other two students and yourself.

HR: I think to start with we were all- you know, you don't want to criticise. Although it's constructive criticism, you don't want to say anything too- you want to say everything very positive about someone else. Partly probably because you want them to say it about you, but also you don't want to knock someone. But it's a way that you say it, isn't it. And the tutors managed to encourage- like encouraged us to be honest and- so giving- if you give constructive you give the

positive as well, so the focus is always strengths and then something that isn't quite as strong.

JD: You mentioned about the learning from those peer- the peer feedback, does any example or anything spring to mind where a peer said something to you after the lesson that really sort of made you think, "Oh yes, I should have done that," or, "I should do this," or something that really made you realise something about teaching?

HR: I think- because they very much gave feedback which was very similar to the tutor, which was good. So- well I think the key thing is- although I was aware that perhaps I didn't project my voice enough sometimes, sometimes when I felt I was I obviously wasn't. And also one point when- when you're using the board, that's one thing I hadn't really thought about when I did it the first time, your back is to the class so you're kind of shutting them out. Even if it's only for a little bit. So it's finding- it's kind of that balance of using the board but not too much.

JD: And that's something your peers pointed out to you?

HR: Yes, and- I mean the tutor did as well but as I say, a lot of the things were very similar that they pointed out.

JD: And when peers were saying the same thing as the tutor, did that just reinforce it or did you think, "Well the tutor said it so that must be true"? Or did you find it easier to understand because the peers were explaining it to you? Something like the board- the board thing, obviously the tutor would say it and your peers would say it as well. Did you feel different when your peers said it to you?

HR: They- because they were asked to give feedback first, which I thought was good- in some ways if was more- I found it more difficult to take that from my peers than from my tutor because-

JD: Why do you think that is?

HR: The tutor's there to do that and I mean unless- you know, I wouldn't be on the course if I could do it all brilliantly. I think because although I- like the two people I was with, we were a really good group because there was no sort of competition in that sense, and very supportive of each other. So it wasn't difficult to take what they said, it was- I kind of always wanted to be better- the one that was the best. Which I never said it to them, and they probably quietly thought the same, but- so yeah.

JD: So it's easier to take that feedback from the tutor who's sort of in a- I suppose in charge if you like.

HR: Yeah, even though you want some good feedback from the tutor as well.

JD: And there's nothing from either your peers or the tutor that you felt, "Mm, actually that's not the case, I don't really agree with that"? Or was there anything that stuck in your mind that you were a bit concerned about?

HR: Oh there was- it was only a little thing about how to teach grammar- is this- anything?

JD: Yes, anything you can think of.

HR: The first week I did a grammar lesson with one of the tutors- the second tutor, so in the elementary group, I explained the form and function and then when- in the feedback the tutor said that that's probably not necessary- you can do it but it's probably not necessary because they probably- it's probably too much information for them, they wouldn't understand. And- and I said, "Well I did it because we were taught to do that," but she was pointing out that- and I could see her point in a way, that with elementary it might be too much information. But then the following week one of the others did it and she- the tutor was actually saying, "You needed to explain the function, meaning a bit more." So I was slightly confused, but I actually didn't challenge it, I don't know why, but-

340

JD: So it's just those conflicting-

HR: Yeah slightly. So I- but from my understanding it's really- I suppose it's a judgement you have to make. Because yesterday I taught some grammar and I did use it and she- and that was fine. So you know. And I mean obviously no-tutors aren't perfect, nobody's perfect.

JD: Nobody's perfect, exactly. Helen, in the very first interview I know you talked a bit about your music teaching, your one-to-one music teaching. Looking back on that now, is there anything you've got from the course that you think were you to go back to that teaching you would use or do differently now that you've experienced this course?

HR: Yes, and actually I've tried- I've already started to do it because I've got a little girl I teach- well, she's eleven. And she- her concentration span isn't very long so- and I think I sometimes- because one of the things I've been picked up on sometimes, especially with the elementary group, is too much language- that I'm using the meta-language. Is that-? And I realised I probably do that with this girl and perhaps it's too much information to take. So I simplified my instructions with her and she does seem to be responding better. I noticed that particularly last week. I mean she hasn't actually said to me she doesn't understand but I think I was hitting her with too much to try and do.

JD: And you've changed that a little bit now?

HR: Yes. And I've also- although I've- it's different, one-to-one because you're project- you haven't got to project to a class, have you? But I- I realised I probably use too much language sometimes.

JD: But she's not a second language speaker or anything, this student?

HR: No, it's just that too much-

JD: It's just the language, yeah.

HR: Information really.

JD: And thinking about planning- you know, if you take on some more individual students in the near future and thinking about planning for them, is there anything in your mind that you would be more careful of or more mindful of now that you've done the CELTA course?

HR: Yes. I mean I've always been aware of it but really knowing what my aims are for each lesson, plus a longer term goal. Which I have done with my pupils but I think it's something that would probably help me to even go back to writing down actually. And although I keep a notebook and for the pupils as well, I think it could help me to make better use of the time sometimes. Because it's like when you teach in a class, the time goes so fast, doesn't it?

JD: Absolutely, yeah. I know you said you were very- a very good planner, and you put a lot of care into your plans-

HR: Well I didn't realise that until I was told it! Although I mean I did put a lot of effort in, but-

JD: Did that- does that mean that when- although at the beginning you were doing group planning, did you find that most of the planning you did more independently rather than in that group planning session? Did you find most of it you did sort of at home on your own?

HR: Yes, yeah. But it was good to get initial ideas and support from each other. And actually we did sometimes get in touch with each other and-

JD: And was the getting in touch with each other about ideas or just about, you know, "How far are you going to go and where do I start?"

342

HR: It was partly that and sometimes ideas, if somebody got a bit stuck, or how you would approach this.

JD: Can you think of anything that you- that you've I suppose "stolen" from another trainee or an experienced teacher? And idea-

HR: Yes. One that's really worked- I may have mentioned it that I was going to try it before when I saw you last. When teaching vocabulary, the last couple of times I've used visuals. So I've just got them off the internet or magazines and put them up or held them up and it- I've found that if I start with that- because it gets the interest of the class really quickly, and that's really-

JD: And that's something you saw-

HR: Yeah, I saw one of my group do. And also another thing I saw one of them do was get students to come up and write things on the board and that- I did that yesterday actually, and that works really well.

JD: Did you feel then though that when the teacher did that that that somehow worked? Why did you think that that was a good idea?

HR: Because the class just seemed really- the students seemed really pleased to be- they felt they were taking part in the lesson, really actively taking part. And coming up with ideas and putting them onto the board. It wasn't kind of picking on one or two of them, they all felt involved. I think that's why it worked. They seemed to be pleased to come up. Once or twice I noticed in one class that one of the others did, I think it was last week, one of the girls really didn't want to come up, but the teach- the student- the teacher really encouraged her to and she actually- she obviously felt pleased once she'd done it.

JD: After the initial hesitation.

HR: Yeah, getting that encouragement and praise I think. Because one of the most difficult things- I think I said to you before- I find with the lesson is starting it. I found- that was a way I found of starting- getting their involvement straight away. Because that's something I've had to work on quite hard, is to cut the teacher talking and make them do the- do the work.

JD: So what kind of things are you looking forward to developing more now, when you go- hopefully get some teaching. What areas have you been advised to focus on or do you think you've-

HR: Yeah, I've been advised to focus on really projecting my voice, really be aware of that. And very clear, simple instructions. Because there's always a tendency, you feel you're not giving enough instructions. Particularly to the elementary ones. But then they can't understand complex instructions. And to get the students talking a lot more and working in pairs, like interaction with each other, just speaking as much as possible to use the language. And me getting them to- especially with the elementary. I've got to get them to- I've got to model more, and they need to- and drill them more. So like constant- because you feel that you're doing it- over-doing it, but actually you're not, and I tried to put myself in that position where I was learning a language, how- you forget how difficult it is. And I am going- I don't know if I said to you, I did start to learn Spanish at the beginning of the year, but I couldn't do it with the teaching, it was clashing. So I'm going to go back and do that. It won't be til September, but I think that will really help. And to get ideas from another teacher as well.

JD: You mentioned about you didn't realise until you came on this course that you were such a good planner, is there anything else you've found out about yourself that you didn't know beforehand?

HR: Well yeah, actually it's weird because almost from the first week or two, especially the people in my group, they said, "Oh you're so organised and you're so calm," like they were asking me for things, and then one of the other ladies phoned me up because they were- needed some help, and- and it made me feel

really good, and I didn't realise I gave this aura of calm and organisation because underneath I'm not organised! But the planning bit I actually- I was saying to my husband- I think, even though I didn't realise it, probably comes from when I did my music degree here I had to obviously meet deadlines and be very on top of things. I was working initially as well still, and also my job that I did I had to meet deadlines a lot and plan a lot and- and I suppose it became second nature. So I think probably those skills, without me realising it, have come in really useful with this course, and the assignments as well, because I'd written essays and things. So- but I hadn't really consciously thought about it. So- but yeah. So I suppose I learnt that- crumbs, well perhaps I come over calm then and- a lot of the time- and then maybe underneath I'm always feeling slightly-

JD: That's not a bad thing.

HR: So- because I was told I had- the first lesson I did- I have a calm presence in the classroom, so that was nice. I didn't- it's not something I had really thought about. So yeah, you do learn a lot about yourself.

JD: Anything else you'd like to add?

HR: I don't think so, except I've learnt so much and learnt a lot about myself, and I love teaching. And I think I can- I believe I can really go on and develop and "blossom" is the word one of the tutors used. Like because it's out there that you really gain, don't you, the experience. Once you've qualified in anything, and the real life and doing it on your own almost, really. And this has been really- it has been helpful, it's made me think. I hope it's helpful to you?

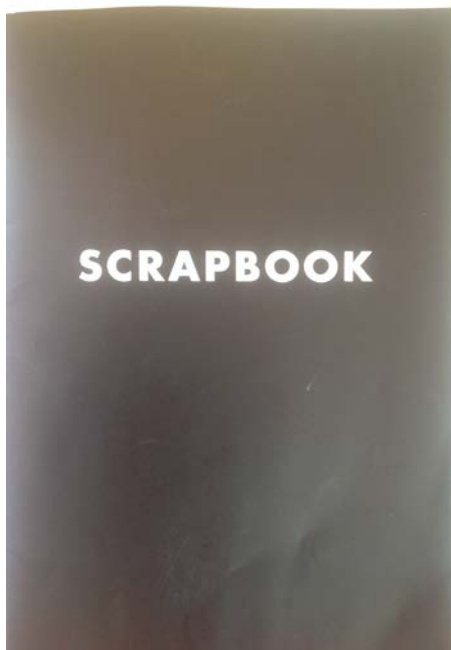**JD:** Very much, thank you, thank you so much.

END

Coded notes from all three interviews with H on the processes impacting on learning.
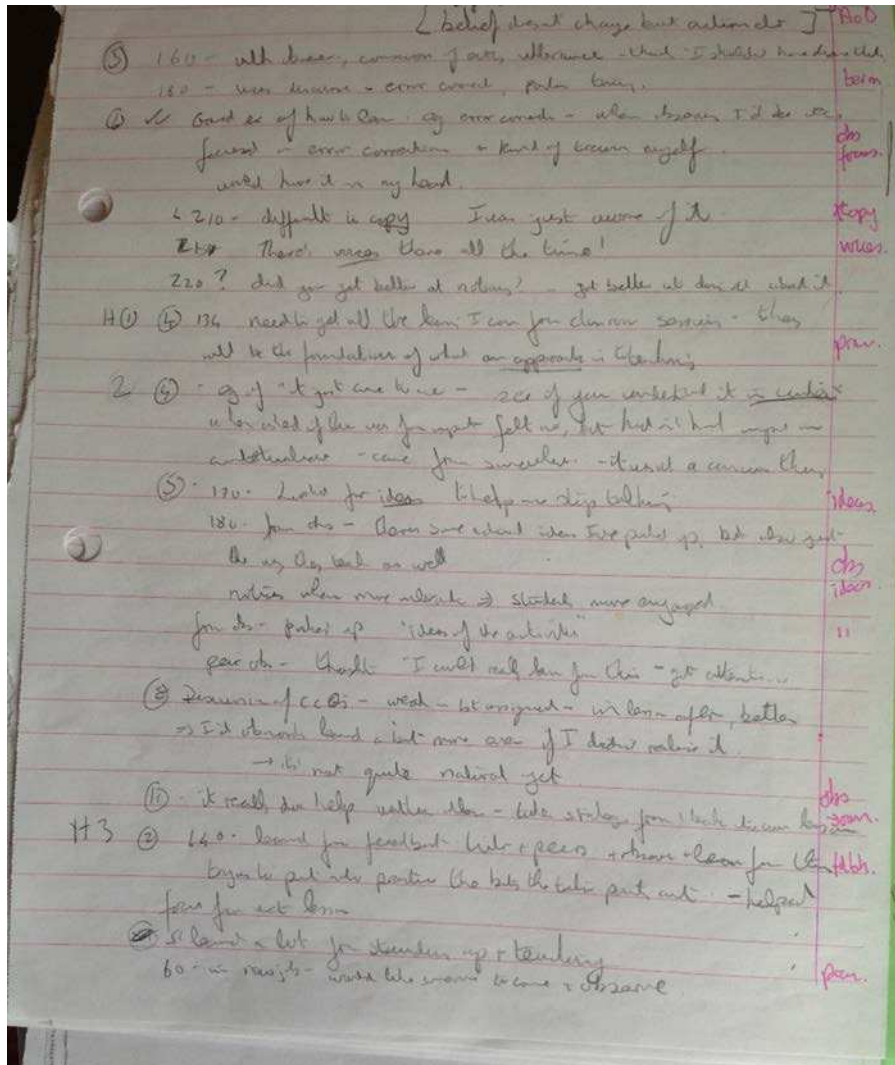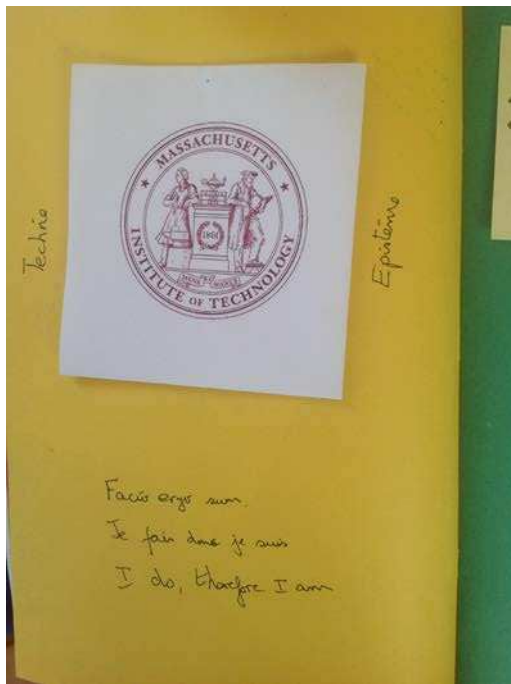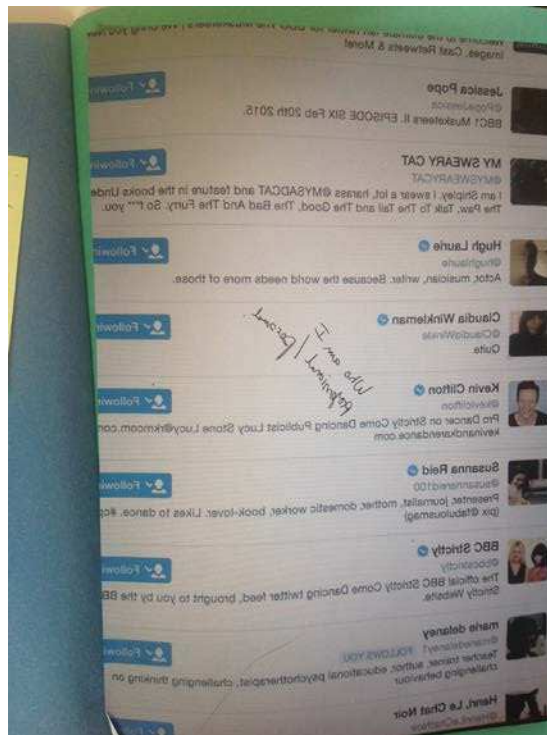
Appendix 2

Cover of the scrapbook

Recording of the insight around memory and moment

Reification

Notes from CELTA assessment on whether teachers are born or made.
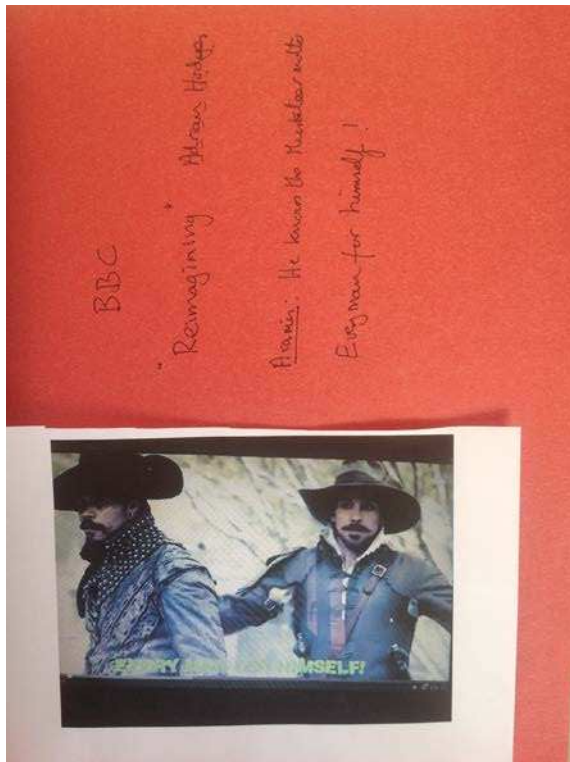

348

Technē and Episteme through the logo of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Identity and social media

Reimagining and modification of scripts in newer versions of classic films.

Teaching memes and scripts in other areas of learning

Pilot study (Jan-May 2011)

Trainee	Male / female	Age	Background and experience
N	M	62	Retired from work and looking to begin a new career in English language teaching. He took a Trinity TESOL course (similar to the CELTA) 20 years previously, but did not have any opportunity to practice teaching as he was in full time civil service work. He felt he needed to update his skills by retaking this course but hoped that some of the skills he had learned would be refreshed by the CELTA programme.
T	M	27	Completed a first degree and had undertaken a number of part-time, non-teaching jobs. Was interested in training to be a school teacher and felt that the CELTA course would give him a taste of teaching in order to inform his decision to apply for a PGCE programme. His aim was to use the qualification to begin some "Homestay" work, where he would provide individual tuition and accommodation to learners at his home.
E	F	45	20 years' experience working in the health care profession in various roles. In the last 4 years had been tasked with providing training for other health care professionals, many of whom had English as a second language. She felt that the CELTA course would enhance her ability to provide effective training and would help her understand some of the communication barriers in the way doctors and nurses interacted with patients.
S	F	52	No prior teacher training but in her local area has been involved for 5 years working on English language summer schools. For the most part this consisted of providing cultural context for learners through focusing on British life and culture and organising trips to local areas of interest. She felt that she needed to develop more strategies to deal with the language aspect of this teaching and hoped the CELTA would provide her with both the knowledge about language as well as strategies for teaching. She wished to continue with her summer

Trainee	Male / female	Age	Background and experience
			school work using these more developed skills.

Main study (Jan-May 2012)

Trainee	Male / female	Age	Background and experience
M	F	64	No prior classroom teaching experience or training. For 3 years she has worked as a facilitator for Weight Watchers groups. This involved running input sessions to motivate participants and to provide them with information about nutrition and diet. She was interested in taking on additional work as an English language teacher but also felt that the CELTA course would further enhance her ability to run and manage the Weight Watchers' sessions.
L	F	57	No formal teacher training but had been working for 1 year as a teaching assistant at a secondary school. This involved working with the main class teacher and providing support for students on a 1:1 basis. Some of her learners had English as a second language and she felt that the CELTA course would improve her understanding of language learning and help her support these learners more effectively. She also felt that gaining a qualification would lead to her being able to take on a more independent teaching role in the school.
H	F	56	Qualited with a music degree and played non-professionally. For the previous 2 years, she had taught cello to secondary school students 1:1. She hoped to supplement this work with some English language teaching as she lived in an area where there were many language schools. She also felt that the skills she would learn on the course would further enhance her ability to teach cello.
J	F	28	Completed a degree in Geography. No previous teaching experience or training. She wanted to undertake the CELTA course with a view to travelling abroad to teach English.
G	F	47	Studied Italian at university and had lived for a year in Italy. Generally interested in languages and had

			done some informal English conversation classes during year spent in Italy. Her interest in teaching was also enhanced by her continued participation in language classes as a learner. Two friends had previously taken the course at the same institution and had suggested that she also do so. Her plan was to use the qualification to have "Homestay" learners, teaching them 1:1 at her own home.
C	F	54	Qualified as a secondary school teacher in Ireland and had worked in secondary schools there. She had 8 years teaching at a further education college where she was a full-time teacher within a humanities curriculum team. Her plan was to leave her post at the college and take up part-time work in English language teaching.

Supplementary interviews (October 2014- February 2015)

Trainee	Male / female	Age	Background and experience
O	M	26	Qualified with a degree in English literature. Was very inspired by his own experience of an "Access" programme at a further education college and wanted to be a full-time teacher in the further education sector. His only previous teaching experience was teaching snowboarding to children in the winter prior to his beginning the CELTA course. His participation in the CELTA course was parallel to his taking a PGCE programme to qualify as a teacher in further education.
U	F	23	Had just completed a degree in English literature. To gain some experience of teaching she had undertaken some part-time voluntary hours (not English language) in a further education college over a year. This included sitting in on lessons and supporting individual learners at the request of the main teacher. Some of this work was with learners who needed support with their reading and writing skills, though not those with English as a second language. Her participation in the CELTA course was parallel to her taking a PGCE programme to qualify as a teacher in further education.