

The Management of Pupils' Disruptive and Challenging Behaviour: facilitating Newly Qualified Teacher thinking through Personal Construct Psychology

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Dedication

**This thesis is dedicated with love and respect to my parents,
Fred and Betty Lee.**

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Contents

	page
Introduction	1
Pilot Study	2
Phase 1a	3
Phase 1b	3
Phase 2	4
My perspective on Interpretive Research	5
Research Overview	8
Chapter 1: Literature Review	12
1.1	Perceptions of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour 12
1.2	Deviance: a theoretical view 15
1.3	Deviance: the educational connection 18
1.4	Deviance and labelling: theorising their place in education 21
1.5	Challenging behaviour: a deviant label? 26
1.6	The 'label' of disaffection 28
1.7	The nature of authority in schools 33
1.8	Discipline and control: an educational perspective 35
1.9	Teachers' professional knowledge and competence in the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour 38
1.10	The competency framework 43
1.11	Initial Teacher Training and behaviour management: the Post Graduate Certificate in Education route 45
1.12	The trainee teacher 51
1.13	The induction period 52
1.14	Teacher-pupil interaction 55
1.15	Reflective practice in the management of pupils' behaviour 59
1.16	Student teachers' personal theories 64
1.17	An interactionist perspective on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour 70
1.18	Social Interactionism 71
1.19	Four fundamental principles 71
1.20	Quality of Interaction 72
1.21	Summary
Chapter 2: Pilot Study	78
2.1	Baseline observations 78
2.2	Ethical considerations 79
2.3	Pilot Study results 82
2.4	Discussion 87
2.5	Evaluation of the Pilot Study 88

Chapter 3: National Survey (phase 1a)	90
3.1 Survey via e-mail	90
3.2 Ethical considerations	92
3.3 Results and commentary	92
3.4 Ethos regarding behaviour management input	94
3.5 Specialist providers	95
3.6 Permeation model	96
3.7 Partnership schools	97
3.8 Specific input and timing	98
3.9 Evaluation of the National Survey	99
Chapter 4: Focus Group Discussions (phase 1b)	100
4.1 Analysis	100
4.2 Ethical considerations	102
4.3 Framework for Analysis	102
4.4 Discussion	111
4.5 Evaluation of the Focus Group Discussions	116
Interim Summary: the way forward	118
Chapter 5: Linked Case Studies (phase 2)	120
5.1 Research Rigour	125
5.2 Sampling	127
5.3 Ensuring the reliability of an analysis	127
5.4 Safeguarding validity	127
5.5 Ethical considerations	129
5.6 Conceptualising my dual role as mentor/researcher	131
5.7 Key aspects of my mentoring role	132
5.8 Key aspects of my researcher role	133
5.9 Challenges within my dual role	135
5.10 Balancing the roles of mentor/researcher	138
5.11 Tools used to mediate my dual role	139
5.12 Key benefits of my dual role	140
Chapter 6: A Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) perspective on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour	142
6.1 A PCP perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour	142
6.2 Types of construct	152
6.3 Tight versus loose construing	152
6.4 The construct of reason versus emotion	153
6.5 Self-characterisation sketches	160
6.6 The Repertory Grid: Mapping Individual Constructs	161

6.7	Laddering and Pyramiding	166
6.8	Evaluation of the linked case studies	167
Chapter 7: Results and commentary of 2003 data		169
7.1	Self-characterisation sketches	169
7.2	Themes in opening statements	172
7.3	Emerging issues	173
7.4	Vocabulary used	173
7.5	Themes in closing statements	174
7.6	Repertory Grids	175
7.7	Reflections on the process (overview)	176
7.8	Describing the basic grids	177
7.9	Eyeball analysis	178
7.10	Commentary on Repertory Grid: NQT 1 – Sept. 2003	184
7.11	Relationships between the elements	185
7.12	Relationships between constructs	186
7.13	Content comparison of NQTs' 2003 Repertory Grids	193
7.14	Reliability check	194
7.15	Commentary on content analysis of Repertory Grids (2003)	197
Chapter 8: Identifying personal changes in construing		200
8.1	Identifying personal changes in construing	200
8.2	Self-characterisation sketches 2004	200
8.3	Repertory Grids	202
8.4	Kelly's experience cycle	203
8.5	Kelly's creativity cycle	206
8.6	Changes in construing	206
8.7	Commentary on NQT 1: personal changes in construing	210
8.8	Commentary on NQT 2: personal changes in construing	211
Chapter 9: PCP and the management of pupils' behaviour		220
9.1	The applicability of PCP to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour	220
9.2	The Self-characterisation sketch	226
9.3	The Repertory Grid	227
Chapter 10: Conclusion		232
10.1	My personal approach to interpretivism and its development over the journey of the PhD	232
10.2	Findings	235
10.3	Ethical considerations	239
10.4	Policy	241
10.5	Recommendations	242
10.6	Concluding comments	245

References

248

Appendices

Appendix A:	Context of original fieldwork	270
Appendix B1:	Observation Schedule	271
Appendix B2:	Letter to schools re. observations	272
Appendix C:	Initial e-mail in survey	273
Appendix D:	Follow-up e-mail in survey	274
Appendix E1:	Letter to focus group participants	275
Appendix E2:	Questions for focus group discussions	276
Appendix F:	Blank Repertory Grid	277
Appendix G:	Participant Information Sheet	278
Appendix H:	Participant Consent Form	280
Appendix I:	Self-characterisation sketch NQT 3 (2003)	281
Appendix J:	Self-characterisation sketch NQT 3 (2004)	283
Appendix K:	Extract from Repertory Grid (NQT 3)	285
Appendix L:	NQT 1 Repertory Grid 2003	292
Appendix M:	NQT 1 Repertory Grid 2004	293
Appendix N:	NQT 2 Repertory Grid 2003	294
Appendix O:	NQT 2 Repertory Grid 2004	295
Appendix P:	NQT 3 Repertory Grid 2003	296
Appendix Q:	NQT 3 Repertory Grid 2004	297
Appendix R:	NQT 4 Repertory Grid 2003	298
Appendix S:	NQT 4 Repertory Grid 2004	299

List of Figures

Figure		page
1	Research Overview	9
2	Coding scheme for classroom observations	81
3	Comparison of behaviours observed in the baseline study and those observed in the Elton Report	82
4	Pupil Behaviour: comparison of five schools	83
5	Recorded Teacher Behaviour	84
6	Teacher Behaviour comparisons	85
7	Framework for analysis of Focus Group discussions	104
8	Network Map: Focus Group 1	105
9	Network Map: Focus Group 2	106
10	Network Map: Focus Group 3	107
11	Network Map: Focus Group 4	108
12	Network Map: Focus Group 5	109
13	Network Map: Focus Group 6	110
14	Timetable of Contact	124
15	An Individual's construct system	145
16	Personal Construct Theory elicitation tools	159
17	The Grid: dichotomous form	163
18	The Grid: rating scale or grading method	164
19	Self-characterisation sketches 2003: overview	171
20	Elements for Grids 1 and 2	176
21	Elicited constructs	178
22	Repertory Grid NQT 1 Sept. 2003	180
23	Relationship between elements in Repertory Grid (NQT 1 2003)	181
24	Relationship between constructs in Repertory Grid (NQT 1 2003)	182
25	Explanation of how the relationship between constructs was arrived in figure 24	183
26	Extract from Laddering technique	190
27	Extract from Pyramiding technique	190
28	Comparison of information taken from Repertory Grids (2003)	192
29	Reliability Table	196
30	Distribution of NQTs' constructs allocated to categories (2003)	197
31	The Experience Cycle (Kelly, 1955)	203
32	The Creativity Cycle (Kelly, 1955)	204
33	Elements for Grids 1 and 2	206
34	Distribution of NQTs' constructs allocated to particular Categories in 2003 / 2004	207
35	Overview of 2004 Grids	208
36	NQT 1 personal changes in construing	209
37	NQT 2 similar constructs 2003 / 2004	214
38	NQT 2: 2003 / 2004 constructs	215
39	NQT 3: constructs 2004	228

List of Abbreviations

CEDP	Career Entry and Development Profile
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ECM	Every Child Matters
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LEAs	Local Education Authorities
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
NAS /UWT	National Association of Schoolmasters / Union of Women Teachers
NPSL-BA	National Programme for Specialist Leaders in Behaviour and Attendance
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NUT	National Union of Teachers
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PCP	Personal Construct Psychology
PCT	Personal Construct Theory
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
TTA	Teacher Training Agency

Abstract

The focus of this study is: how can the thinking of the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), relating to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, better be understood and best be facilitated?

Phase one outlines a national survey of course input on behaviour management within secondary Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses. Data were gathered for this phase through on-line questionnaires and focus groups. Phase two investigates NQTs' personal theories about the management of pupils' behaviour utilising tools from Personal Construct Psychology. Data for this phase came from a series of linked case studies as the researcher followed the progress of four NQTs throughout their induction year in a mainstream secondary school.

Findings from phase one reveal a variety of course content across institutions with NQTs reporting a considerable 'mismatch' between what they learnt in training and what they discover is required in actual practice. Findings from phase two highlight NQTs' perceptions about discipline, control and support. The reflexivity inherent in Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) provided impetus for NQTs to reflect, not only on their *pupils'* behaviour but perhaps, more crucially, on their own behaviour. Tools within PCP provided opportunities for a dialogue; facilitated individual thoughts; enhanced a 'language for behaviour' and provided a focus for learning which promoted self-directed change. As a consequence the NQTs felt empowered, due to the changes having such personal relevance. A subsequent finding from this second phase, the implications of which go beyond this research, is the applicability of PCP's underlying philosophy for the management of pupils' behaviour.

This research suggests that NQTs need more support with their management of pupils' behaviour. Recommendations are made for the training of induction mentors in the use of PCP tools in order to facilitate NQT thinking about this specific area of their practice. It is proposed that this should focus particularly on enhancing NQTs' understanding of how *teacher* behaviour can impact on *pupils'* behaviour.

Introduction

In order to enhance the reader's ability to mentally organise their thoughts before being introduced to the ideas and concepts in this study, I am adopting an 'advanced organizer'¹ approach which provides an introduction about the way the information is structured and presented. This introduction aims to provide a safe journey through a somewhat complex research design, thus ensuring that the reader experiences a logical progression en route. In order to enhance the narrative this study utilises the first person and the language used is that of a practitioner.

My current professional role, as Deputy Head Teacher of a secondary Pupil Referral Unit², ensures that I am concerned on a daily basis with the issue of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. During the last ten years in particular I have been constantly reminded, through talking to pupils and teachers and observing many lessons in mainstream schools, that, quite simply, some teachers have significantly more problems than others with the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. In my experience there are very few pupils who misbehave in *all* lessons; more often than not there will be some teachers who manage to communicate to pupils in such a way that disruptive and challenging behaviour is dealt with in a firm, fair and consistent manner, resulting in a proactive teacher-pupil relationship.

Through previous research (Grundy, 2000) and continuing professional practice I am keenly aware that teachers bring to the process of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour³ a pre-existing system of beliefs, attitudes and perceptions that could have a significant bearing on the prevention or remediation of problems. To a layperson, learning to teach may be seen to involve acquiring a range

¹ The 'advanced organizer' approach to teaching is a cognitive instructional strategy used to promote the learning and retention of new information. Proposed by David Ausubel in 1960, this strategy is one of the most utilized methods of instruction in our schools today. In order to enhance meaningful learning Ausubel believed that it was important to have students preview information to be learned.

² Pupil Referral Units cater for pupils in danger of permanent exclusion or those who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools.

³ In order to enhance the flow of the text, at times the phrase 'the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour' will be replaced with 'the management of pupils' behaviour'. 'Pupils' Behaviour' in this context relates to behaviour which is interruptive of the teaching and learning process.

of practical skills and updating them as and when new initiatives appear. However, these skills are ineffective without an appropriate mindset to be able to take them on and use them effectively. The major theme throughout my research is that teachers' learning regarding the management of pupils' behaviour, particularly at initial stages, must integrate concerns about their professional practice with their own personal views and commitments.

This study addresses the following research questions:

Key question:

- How can the thinking of the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), relating to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, better be understood and best be facilitated?

Supplementary questions:

- What is the current training provision with regard to the behaviour management input on secondary Post Graduate Certificate in Education⁴ (PGCE) courses?
- What perceptions do NQTs have of their PGCE course regarding input on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?
- How can NQTs gain insight into how they construe (interpret and analyse) discipline, control and support?
- How *flexible* are their constructs when reflecting on their management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?

Pilot study

The whole study is prefaced by some pilot research. I wanted to gain a current perspective of the types of disruptive and challenging behaviours that teachers are facing on a daily basis and witness at first hand how process can affect outcome. In order to gain this perspective I took on the dual role of trainer / researcher. Initially I

⁴ The PGCE course was selected for this study as it is the route through which the majority of teachers gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

observed twenty minute 'snapshots' of a sample of lessons (covering a variety of subjects and two key stages) in five mainstream secondary schools. I then used the data gathered to inform a day's INSET on the management of pupils' behaviour. Observing so many different teachers and pupils with their various styles and personalities confirmed a pertinent issue i.e. that interactions between teachers and pupils can either be positive and constructive or negative and damaging; they are clearly intertwined with each other and the lines between them are far from defined.

Phase 1a

As a consequence of the pilot study the first of my supplementary research questions arose: what is the current training provision with regard to the behaviour management input on secondary PGCE courses? The mode of data collection for this was an on-line questionnaire. This had the advantage of reaching a large, geographically dispersed population in a short space of time and allowed me to contact *specific* individuals whom I had previously identified as key respondents. The survey of the universities and institutes of higher education provided an *institutional* perspective on the content of behaviour management input on PGCE courses. Following on from this I considered it necessary to gain an additional perspective: that of newly qualified teachers.

Phase 1b

In order to facilitate NQTs' reflections on their PGCE courses regarding the input they had received on the management of pupils' behaviour I held six focus groups, consisting of twenty five NQTs in total (in their first term of teaching) representing sixteen universities and institutes of higher education. The clear advantage of these focus groups was that they instigated interactive processes which encouraged spontaneous responses from the NQTs with minimal input from myself. The NQTs were asked to reflect on the behaviour management input on their PGCE courses. They were asked to identify their concerns about it; the methods of training which had had the most impact; how the course could be improved; whether they had been

encouraged to reflect on their interaction with pupils and if they felt equipped to embark on their induction year with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour.

Phase 2

In phase 2 of my research I adopted the role of mentor/researcher to a group of four NQTs throughout their induction year. This dual role involved investigating ways in which they could gain insight into their personal frames of reference regarding their interaction with pupils and the contribution of this to their management of pupils' behaviour. In my research, tools from Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) (Kelly, 1955) were used to investigate how four NQTs gained insight into their own personal frames of reference regarding their management of pupils' behaviour.

Throughout this stage of my research I looked specifically at how the NQTs construed notions of discipline, control and support. In addition I was interested in discovering how *flexible* the NQTs' constructs were regarding these notions and their resultant management of pupils' behaviour. Arguably, it is possible for a teacher's attitude to an individual pupil to be forever fixed in a particular 'mindset' which affords no chance of *alternative construction* and therefore no chance of progress.

My role as researcher in the field was qualitatively dependent on the relationships initiated and developed between myself and the NQTs. I acknowledge that the principle of ethics-in-action focused centrally on the need for me to show respect for the NQTs through setting up processes of feeding back data, sharing my findings with them and supporting them through the whole process. At the outset of the research I set out clearly the purpose of the research, the kind of knowledge sought and was prepared to re-negotiate this as my research evolved. The NQTs received a 'participant information sheet' and signed a consent form indicating their willingness to take part in the research (refer to appendices G and H). I also declared, throughout the project, the purpose of my role, the data being collected and the interpretations put on them. It was my intention that my research would allow me to gain insights into the phenomenon of the management of pupils' behaviour but also leave my research participants feeling that they too had benefited from the process.

My Perspective on Interpretive Research

As a researcher I bring to this study the following view. Most knowledge is an interpretation of experience. Each of us will interpret our own experiences through filters of existing knowledge and beliefs. We construct our own personal meanings about circumstances and events that occur within the social and cultural environment in which we live. In education and specifically in the management of pupils' behaviour teachers will construct personal meanings from the experience of their own working practices. An interpretive premise would suggest that their everyday practice revolves around them interpreting and making decisions about how to act based on their interpretation of the experience and behaviour of their pupils. The purpose of this interpretive research is to clarify how interpretations and meanings regarding the management of pupils' behaviour are formulated and implemented by NQTs in their induction year. It is the intention that this research will illuminate the theories that the NQTs have about the management of pupils' behaviour.

My personal blend of interpretivism intermingles the social theory of action which emphasises that social actors make social life and that each actor is able to be creative in doing so. Action theories emphasise the connection between action and meanings. Everyday people decide on what they do and how they respond to others. The sociological implications of this perspective would purport the view that we only know what we think and mean. We cannot know what others think and mean in the same way that we know ourselves. Teachers can only 'know' their pupils through their actions and the words that they speak and each individual teacher will put their own interpretation on those words and actions. The management of pupils' behaviour therefore is a very individual pursuit. Underlying principles may well be in existence but each individual will put their own interpretations on them and communicate them in their own way through their individual personalities and knowledge structures. My own view at this juncture is that teachers clearly cannot all behave in the same way towards their pupils but they may benefit from becoming more aware of their own behaviour and how this can impact on the behaviour of their pupils.

In adopting an interpretive stance my task was to discover the processes and mechanism through which the NQTs developed and negotiated the meanings that guided their interaction with pupils and made sense of their actions. This necessitated going into the NQTs' setting and experiencing the environment in which they created their reality. Radnor (2001) considers that qualitative information is the essence of interpretive research so observing the research participants in their social world and talking to them were the ways in which the majority of the data which shaped the research interpretation were collected. This involved listening for and reconstruing the theories and constructs used by the NQTs instead of imposing my own theories or borrowing and applying the theories of others. It was the intention that my research should not only broaden the NQTs' knowledge base but also aid a deeper understanding of both action and context.

What I began to see in the field as an interpretive researcher concurs with the thoughts of Felson and Tedeschi (1993) who utilise the social interactionist perspective in their book 'Aggression and Violence'. Their basic premise is that in the face of perceived injustice or conflict, actors use aggression and often violence to exert social influence, express grievances and maintain and enhance desired identities. Felson and Tedeschi's (1993) theory of grievance is first and foremost an explanation of the perceptions and responses of people to injustice and associated factors regarding the attribution of responsibility and blame to other people. Perceptions of injustice typically arouse anger, a fundamental issue in the management of pupils' behaviour and the subsequent social interactions between teachers and pupils. Grievance is typically defined as a judgment that one has been unjustly harmed by another person, a group or an institution (Felstiner, *et al.* 1980-1981; Stafford and Gibbs, 1991). In the management of pupils' behaviour the definition of grievance proffered here is not restricted to injury or harm but is more often than not based on a judgment that another social agent (pupil or teacher) has performed an unjust or unfair action.

The development of grievances and what people do about them is described by Felstiner *et al.* (1980) as a series of transformations: the perception of 'injury', the attribution of responsibility and blame, and the demand for some remedy. The

relationship between these notions and the management of pupils' behaviour is not inconsequential. As a result I adopted a social interactionist approach to my research (discussed in chapter 1). In addition I drew from the work of Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Psychology which is explained in detail in chapter 6. Having these underlying theories framed my analysis and identified key concepts, conceiving the NQTs not simply as passively sliding into an existing context, but rather as an interactive process between them and the context in which they were working. In this mutual interaction the NQTs were influenced by the context but at the same time *affected* the context by their interaction with the pupils.

The overall task, therefore, in phase 2 of my research was to reach an understanding of the perceptions, attitudes and judgments of a number of NQTs in relation to their management of pupils' behaviour during their induction year. I aimed to do this by:

- identifying the NQTs constructs⁵ about discipline, control and support
- highlighting any *change* in the NQTs' personal theories during which they developed, tested and reconstructed their own hypotheses about their management of pupils' behaviour

It is intended that my research should have explanatory and illuminating views on the management of pupils' behaviour, uncovering a multiplicity of individual perceptions and an increased understanding. I acknowledge that I am unable to remove my own way of seeing from the process but I did at all times engage reflexively within it and was constantly aware of the interpretive framework. Validity of the findings in my research was helped by being able to separate a descriptive analysis from interpretation. It is envisaged that the descriptive analysis should enable the reader to gain a picture of the subjects under study, hear their words and get a sense of their actions and context. Knowing that there is evidence to support interpretation generated confidence in the basis of my interpretation.

⁵ It is perhaps pertinent at this early stage in the discussion to distinguish between *constructs* and *concepts*. Conception is to do with how we interpret the world. We are all capable of forming *constructs* which help us interpret, reinforce, change or adapt our *concepts*. It is my intention to examine the NQTs *constructs* in order to interpret their *conceptions* of behaviour management.

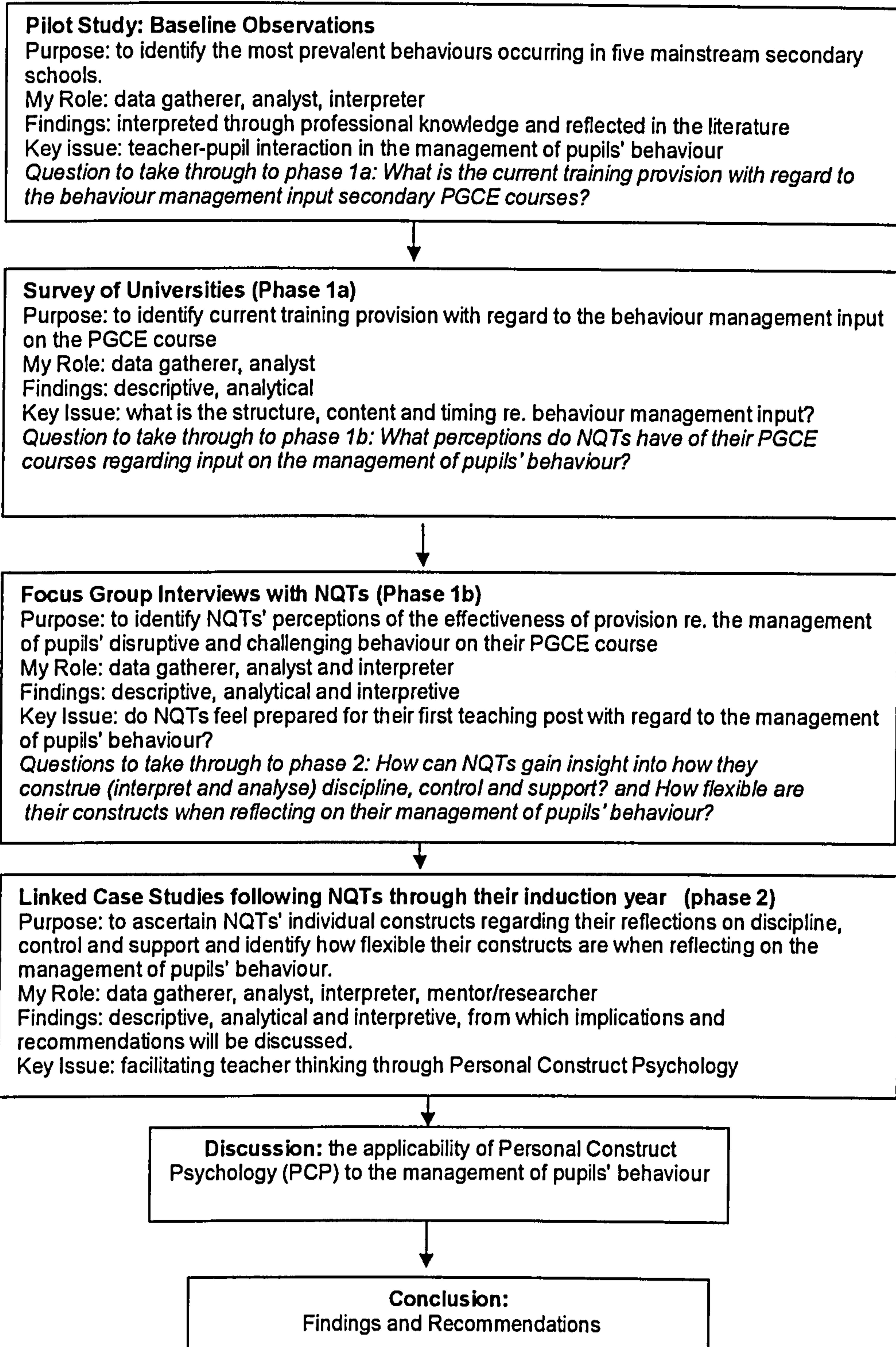
As human beings we do things for a purpose. The world at large and the minutiae of everyday life mean little if we do not have the means to make sense of it. Through an enhanced understanding that reality is interpreted experience and by using this notion throughout the research, the potential benefits for the NQTs, through their acts of reflection and our ensuing discussions, were that they furthered their understanding and felt empowered to consider alternative strategies and approaches in their management of pupils' behaviour.

Research Overview

My research design was constructed to reflect the complexity of the data gathering process whilst at the same time providing a logical progression through the investigation. Refer to figure 1 p. 9 which highlights each of the stages of the research and appendix A which provides concise information about the context of each stage of original fieldwork.

Figure 1: Research Overview

Key Question: How can the thinking of the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), relating to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, better be understood and best be facilitated?



Chapter one presents a review of the literature pertinent to the topic of the management of pupils' behaviour. Perceptions of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour in schools are discussed along with issues concerning deviance, labelling, authority, discipline and control. Attention is then focused on the PGCE route through to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) with sections on the trainee teacher and the induction period. The chapter concludes with a discussion on a social interactionist perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour.

Chapter two describes the pilot study with results, analysis and interpretations of the baseline observations. Chapter three discusses the on-line survey which gives an institutional perspective on the behaviour management content of PGCE courses and highlights key areas for discussion. Chapter four analyses and interprets the focus group interviews providing an NQT perspective on the behaviour management content of PGCE courses, utilising a system of network maps.

An interim summary looks at the way forward through to phase 2 (the transition from MPhil to PhD) stating what is known and what needs to be found out. Chapter five outlines the practicalities of the research setting in phase two and describes the conceptualising of my dual role as mentor / researcher. Chapter six outlines a Personal Construct Psychology perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour. Chapter seven examines data collected at the beginning of the NQTs' induction year concerning their personal constructs about discipline, control and support. Chapter eight identifies the personal changes in construing that occurred during their induction year.

Chapter 9 discusses the applicability of Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) to the management of pupils' behaviour focusing on the relevance of specific tools within PCP in facilitating the interview / mentoring process. Chapter 10 concludes this study, discussing the findings and makes recommendations relating to the research's key question: how can the thinking of the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), regarding the management of pupils' behaviour, better be understood and best be facilitated?

Arguably, if NQTs are not given suggested strategies for solving their own problems they may become dependent on external expertise rather than their own capabilities. Learning practical skills is useful only when backed up by the knowledge of cognitive processes. Unless this happens change may *de-skill* rather than *skill* the teacher. Acquiring theoretical knowledge linked to good practice is important for developing teachers who are confident in behaviour management; and who make informed choices leading to informed action. Arguably, the more that is known about trainee and NQTs' experiences in the management of pupils' behaviour, how their practice in the classroom develops and the factors that impinge upon this development, the more it will be possible to construct theories of professional growth that could inform Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and the induction year.

Chapter 1 : Literature Review

1.1 Perceptions of Pupils' Disruptive and Challenging Behaviour

Schools are complex social institutions in which the majority of pupils behave within certain restrictions imposed by legitimate authority.¹ Teachers are meant to convey the standards of the wider society by example and by the application of rules, their authority being supported by the giving of positive and negative sanctions. According to Frude (1992) the school, like the family, is a powerful agent of socialisation. Holt (1981) holds a minority view, expressing the notion that true education can only take place outside school and dismisses the idea that the school is the focal point for socialization. He points out that rather than facilitate the social process it restricts it, as pupils are confined to a narrow age gap, social class or intellectual ability cliques. He also remarks that the social life of school prepares children to function anti-socially because of the need to defend themselves against hostility.

Arguably, some degree of hostility is an integral part of school life as the classroom may be viewed as a social microcosm in which pupils will experiment with certain behaviours and as a consequence learn the limits of acceptable conduct. Among those aspects of behaviour subject to experimentation will be issues relating to power, control, manipulation and retribution. By contrast to many other problems faced by teachers in schools however, the management of pupils' behaviour has particular salience as it can be perceived as intensely personal. If this happens several problems may arise: some teachers may find difficulty in maintaining a dispassionate perspective, they may become defensive and develop negative relationships with certain pupils and, perhaps worst of all, become inflexible and intransigent to any suggestions of alternative approaches.

Once the term 'behaviour' is used in context with a school pupil it is likely to have negative associations; in other words if teachers talk about the 'behaviour' of certain pupils it may well involve terms such as challenging, disruptive, violent, or anti-social.

¹ When authority is perceived as legitimate the person following the command does so willingly, i.e. they recognise and accept the authority of the other, therefore following orders is not simply done through coercion.

The term 'challenging behaviour' in particular indicates that the challenge may be caused by the effect that behaviour has on the lives of others. Overall, from an educationalist's perspective it points to types of behaviour that may have a negative and restricting effect on learning development and potential (O'Brien, 1998). Tattum (1982) is more specific, indicating that challenging behaviour could include aggression to other pupils and staff, rudeness and insolence, horseplay designed to disrupt the work of others and general hostility to any form of authority. Findings in the Elton Report² (1989, p.237) state that 'talking out of turn, calculated idleness or work avoidance, hindering other pupils and other forms of persistent low level disruption' are the most frequent and wearing kinds of challenging behaviour in the classroom.

Galloway and Goodwin (1987) suggest that many pupils displaying challenging behaviour have poor social skills. When they engage in socially disapproved of behaviour they have insufficient social skills to negotiate themselves out of the trouble that this creates. This is certainly an interesting notion; however it could be argued that the social skills of some *teachers* are sadly lacking and they too can become instrumental in exacerbating pupils' behaviour. From my professional experience many 'problems' relating to the management of behaviour in schools are not to do with the original misdemeanour, but the resulting teacher-pupil interaction which may ensue. The contribution of the staff member to an angry or inappropriate outburst is not given enough attention and consideration; all too often the pupil's angry outburst is construed as a problem solely within the pupil. Without doubt, some pupils do bring enormous difficulties to school but it is absurd to pretend that teachers and schools do not play a part in the circumstances that create challenging behaviour. As this is the case I would argue that any discussion regarding the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour must also examine the part that teachers and schools contribute to this social interaction '...any incident is a climax or crisis in a number of stories. Both pupils and teachers carry their stories with them into school, the clash of stories makes a multi-layered epic' (Schostak, 1983, p.113).

² A Committee of Enquiry into Discipline in schools was established by The Secretary of State for education and science in March 1988 in response to concern about problems facing the teaching profession; this is known as the Elton committee. The subsequent report *Discipline in Schools; Report of the Committee of Enquiry* (1989) provided guidance for teachers on dealing with misbehaviour.

Zarkowska and Clements (1994) suggest particular component criteria for deciding if behaviour is challenging. These include behaviour that is contrary to the social norm and causes significant stress to those connected with the individual. A description of challenging behaviour being contrary to the social norm could place it within the broader and more inclusive sociological analysis of social deviance. Following Cohen (1971) social deviance can be defined simply as behaviour that violates normative rules, normative rules being guides for behaviour which orient an individual's actions in any interaction with others.

The norms and laws of society are the parameters of conformity generally assumed to reflect social functioning. Deviance is a behaviour, which falls outside these norms and laws. To stray from the norm therefore is to deviate from socially acceptable behaviour. Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist introduced the concept of *anomie* in his book 'The Division of Labour in Society', published in 1893 . He used *anomie* to describe a condition of deregulation that was occurring in society. This meant that rules on how people ought to behave with each other were breaking down and as a consequence people did not know what to expect from each other.³ It is normlessness, Durkheim felt, that led to deviant behaviour. He also considers that the concept of deviance, as it exists within the boundaries of our society, could be indicative of man's ability or undesirability to associate himself with his fellow humans on anything more than a superficial level. No longer are people more concerned with others than they are with themselves. This move away from benevolence has caused considerable harm to man's reputation, as well as to the manner in which people interact with each other and their environment.

³ Durkheim used the term again in his study on Suicide (1897), referring to a morally deregulated condition. Durkheim was preoccupied with the effects of social change. He best illustrated his concept of *anomie*, not in a discussion of crime but of suicide.

Interpreting the deviance of individualism as a means by which to illustrate how society has lost its compassion of others is a simple matter of applying social responsibility. To have social responsibility is to be aware of the impact of one's actions on others. Arguably, pupils with disruptive and challenging behaviour at times seem unable to anticipate or recognize this potential impact, suggesting perhaps a lack of social responsibility. Whether this leads to or exacerbates deviance is an interesting theoretical question. It is pertinent at this point therefore to address the following question: does a lack of social responsibility lead to or exacerbate deviance?

1.2 Deviance: a theoretical view

Although a sociologist may use the concept of deviance to describe a divergence from a particular set of rules, the common use of 'deviance is bad' is quickly encountered. Durkheim (1893) asserts that deviance is an inevitable and normal feature of any society. The elimination of deviance is impossible because it would require absolute uniformity of consciousness among all individuals in society. Disagreement is built into the fact of the uniqueness of individual experience and so, presumably, therefore is the inevitability of deviance. In Durkheim's study on suicide (1897) it is suggested that deviant behaviour is not pathological but essentially normal behaviour being designed to respond to particular social circumstances. From a somewhat ironic perspective, deviancy cannot exist until a socially created norm is violated; in other words until an individual or group deems otherwise it is presumably just another course of human action.

An interesting perspective on deviancy can be found in Samuel Butler's 'Erewhon' (1872)⁴. When the traveller Higgs discovers the remote land of Erewhon he finds a strange race who treat their sick like criminals and their criminals like sick people. In the land of Erewhon, if a person falls into ill-health, catches any disorder or fails bodily in any way before they are seventy years old they are tried, held up to public scorn and sentenced more or less severely as the case may be.

⁴ 'Erewhon' is not either in form or content a conventional novel. It originated in a set of articles which Butler wrote for the New Zealand paper, *The Press*, during his time as a sheep farmer between the years of 1860 and 1864. The land of 'Erewhon' is used by Butler as a background against which to discuss ideas that interest him. One of his issues is that there is no real logic in human behaviour, or the institutions that are an expression of it.

However, if a person commits a deviant or criminal act they are taken to hospital, tended most carefully at the public expense and receive hospital visitors who enquire about the symptoms that led to the deviant or criminal act.

'..... questions which he will answer with perfect unreserve; for bad conduct, though considered no less deplorable than illness with ourselves, and as unquestionably indicating something seriously wrong with the individual who misbehaves, is nevertheless held to be the result of either pre-natal or post-natal misfortune' (Butler, 1872).

Deviance is problematic, yet intrinsic to any conception of social order. It is problematic because it disrupts and it is intrinsic to a conception of order in that defining what is expected and acceptable is usually done in opposition to what is unexpected and unacceptable. At its simplest definition however in order for a category of deviancy to exist a person must be seen to be *violating* rules. Becker (1963) considers that the person or people acting in the role of moral entrepreneur serve as the creators and enforcers of these ever-present 'rules'. New laws are being established all the time, which in themselves create new categories of deviance.

In order to understand what causes deviant behaviour it is important to consider the structure and institutions of social control which define appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. As society has evolved, perceptions have changed about what is and is not considered to be deviant. Biological characteristics that are defined as deviant, such as disabilities, have lost the label of 'deviant' over time, presumably because there is no sense of personal responsibility. To be defined as deviant in today's culture one must be able to choose a deviant alternative to the norm or actively choose not to conform to rules and regulations. According to Giddens (1984) the human being is a purposive agent. Awareness of social rules, expressed in practical consciousness, is the core of the 'knowledge ability' which specifically characterises human agents. As social actors, all human beings are highly 'aware' in respect of knowledge which they possess and apply in the production and reproduction of day to day social encounters.

O'Malley (1996) argues, however, that the diversity of culture is such that the 'norm' is no longer identifiable. The only constant is change. This can be seen in the circumstances of social development where society as a whole and individuals within

society are likely to progress on the basis of past learning experience and to develop according to the social, political and economic paradigms of the present. People change, cultures interact and as the world becomes more aware of the aetiology of certain deviancies the level of tolerance increases.

Laws have been enacted that protect the rights of those felt to be unjustly labelled as deviant. At one point in the relatively recent past the individual with a disability was swept away from mainstream society and hidden away, all in the name of the 'social cause'. As the paradigm for disability has changed the view has been somewhat 'reframed' to consider the abnormal element as a personal characteristic that requires the emphasis to be on the individual and how they can function within society rather than conforming to a standard behaviour or ideal. The recent emphasis on Social Inclusion is a prime example of this notion.

Any consideration of a single, deviant behaviour must surely begin with a question of how and why an act has become defined as deviant. The commonality of all contemporary viewpoints regarding deviancy is that *reaction* is what determines an act as deviant therefore making the feature of deviancy external to the so-called deviant (Becker, 1963). Social groups create deviance by making rules whose infraction constitutes deviance. From this point of view deviance is not the quality of the act the person commits but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an individual.

This raises two interesting questions. How does the education system come to define a given pupil's *act* as deviant and specifically how does a teacher come to define a given *pupil* as deviant? Given that acts or actors are defined as deviant, what does the education system and the teacher actually do about it? This debate inevitably involves the reaction to deviant conduct or deviant persons. Hargreaves *et al.* (1975) suggest that the most obvious questions that spring to educationalists' minds is that of the effectiveness of the treatment. In other words the immediate common sense knowledge by which teachers forge a link between the deviant act (the rule breaking behaviour), the deviant (the offender of the rule breaking) and a particular reaction which may be considered relevant and appropriate. This notion is inherent with

difficulty however as every teacher is an individual with different perceptions of an event or circumstance and indeed what constitutes an act of 'deviance'.

1.3 Deviance: the educational connection

Herewith lies a potential difficulty. Teachers are not homogenous in their views about what constitutes a true learning experience, an appropriate teaching method or in many of their definitions of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. What one teacher may consider challenging or deviant behaviour another may diffuse quickly and pass it off as an unnecessary but quite manageable nuisance. There is an enormous grey area in which behaviour that is treated as challenging in one school or even in one department within a school will not be treated as such in another. I am reminded of a provision in one school where pupils can be withdrawn by senior members of staff for behaviour which is causing 'major concern'. This system produces many anomalies, not least the different interpretations by teachers of what behaviours *constitute* a 'major concern'.

From Holt (1965) to Gray (2002) there is evidence to suggest that what some teachers may perceive as challenging behaviour might from another point of view be interpreted as a legitimate protest or their strategy for coping with aspects of schooling that are problematic for them. Problems need to be understood in terms of the complex relationships which make up the 'social world' of the school (Pollard, 1982). To relate pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour to the whole context of schooling is essential. This notion should enhance the possibility of raising questions about the efficacy of strategies aimed solely at the pupil, often in isolation from the context in which the behaviour occurs.

Recently there has been something of a 'moral panic'⁵ about behaviour in schools. Happlin and Blair (2005) draw attention to a deepening crisis of indiscipline undermining efforts to raise standards in schools. Reed (2005) reports that the leader of the largest teaching union, the National Union of Teachers (NUT), considers that an

⁵ Cohen (1973) maintains that societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become a threat to societal values and interests.

independent inquiry is needed into levels of bad behaviour and what is causing it, stating that drugs and knives are finding their ways to schools whilst disruption in the classroom is 'damaging education for young people and driving teachers from the profession' (p.6). In March 2005 Ofsted produced a report entitled 'Managing Challenging Behaviour' in which it clearly recommends that more systematic training should be provided in behaviour management (p.4). Hill (2005), a journalist with The Observer, runs a particularly emotive headline 'Secret film reveals shocking state of chaos in British classrooms' and asks 'Are our children really out of control?' (p.7).

It could be argued, of course, that the media help to perpetuate the deviance defining process by way of negative coverage. The public relies heavily upon what is reported through the media; their own interpretation of the state of pupils' behaviour in schools often mirrors what they are fed by various press reports. It is no surprise that the only image people see from the media's standpoint, which is mostly negative, is the one they adopt for themselves.

In addition, however, teachers' unions have conducted regular surveys of their members documenting their continued anxiety about pupils' behaviour and deviancy in schools. Eamonn O'Kane, General Secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters / Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT) states: 'Surveys conducted by NASUWT have revealed that teachers are subjected to totally unacceptable levels of verbal abuse'.⁶

In schools there are usually formal, precise statements which attempt to furnish the conditions for orderly interaction by stating the boundaries of acceptable conduct: these are clearly manifested through behaviour policies, codes of conduct, home-school agreements and classroom rules. Guidelines for enhancing acceptable conduct will often stress a fair, firm and consistent approach. In classrooms there may be little ambiguity about the rules; unfortunately, from my own experience, the same cannot be said about the sanctions.

⁶ <http://www.teachersunion.org.uk/Templates/Internal.asp?NodeIID=69779&Arc=O&Pr...>
(accessed 12.02.05)

Even when the consequence for a particular rule infraction has been specified ahead of time, its logic may be more in the mind of the teacher than the pupils. In the recipient's view, any act of discipline may be experienced as punitive: unreasonable, unfair, denigrating and disempowering. Unfortunately, in my opinion, too many school personnel see punishment as the only recourse in dealing with a pupil's challenging behaviour. Often the most potent negative sanctions are used in a desperate attempt to control an individual and make it clear to others that certain behaviours are unacceptable. Along with the punishment, a demand for future compliance is made along with threats of harsher punishment if compliance is not in evidence.

As with many emergency procedures the benefits of using punishments may be offset by negative consequences. These may well include increased negative attitude to the school and its personnel along with the possibility of exacerbating the pupil's challenging behaviour. The Hargreaves Committee on secondary education (Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), 1984, paras.3-16) recognised that 'the response of the punishment and rejection tends to make pupils worse, not better ... the most urgent need is to change the way we perceive these pupils'. A lack of recognition of our own feelings and agendas with regard to pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour may enhance the possibility of making judgments about pupils which, on closer scrutiny, could be difficult to justify.

What two teachers make of the same English syllabus is likely to be different, let alone their perceptions of what constitutes pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. In teaching, our personal position towards issues is far from incidental. Our personal, social and cultural identity is inextricably involved in our classroom work (Salmon, 1995). The *content* of teaching is intensely personal to each teacher. It is not simply a case of passing on objective knowledge; rather it is an attempt to share with others what is personally meaningful. My recent observations of many hours of classroom management engaged me in considering my personal view of some professional practice. In my opinion, for example, one teacher's Spanish was not the Spanish of a colleague: the syllabus was the same, the lessons were not. One lesson was stimulating, encouraging, well paced, interactive and fun; the other lesson was none of these. What gave importance, value and vitality to one person's teaching style

and interaction with the pupils was hers alone and it is precisely this or the absence of it, which is the real substance of the management of pupils' behaviour.

1.4 Deviance and labelling : theorising their place in education

There is a force, however, that arguably worsens the situation: the deviance defining process, which serves to effectively and negatively *label* the deviant. 'As a model it possesses an elegant simplicity which is underpinned by a complex understanding of social interaction' (Thomas and Loxley, 2001, p.84). The term 'social interaction' presupposes that group life consists of interaction between members of a group (i.e. society consists in the interaction of individual human beings). Blumer (1969) places a primary importance on the interactions themselves, seen as they are as a process and formation of the meanings that underlie behaviour. The actions of others must be constantly considered in the decision making process of the individual; thus it is the interaction, real or imagined, with those others, that is the first and most important determinant of the behaviour of an individual.

Labelling theory focuses on the reaction of other people to the behaviour of an individual and the subsequent effects of those reactions which create deviance. When it becomes known that a person has engaged in deviant acts he or she is then segregated from society and thus labelled. Becker (1963) notes that this process of segregation creates 'outsiders' who begin to associate with other likeminded individuals. When more and more people begin to think of these individuals as deviants they respond to them as such; thus the deviant reacts by continuing to engage in the behaviour that society now expects from them. Becker's theory (1963) is focused on a criminological perspective but the similarity with what is happening in schools is all too clear. The reaction of teachers and senior managers to rule breaking is a key process that determines outcome. If a young person in school is stigmatised with the 'bad one' label they may well take on board this information they receive from others and test it out for accuracy. The young person may continually receive these messages and become more integrated into the 'stereotype' and the 'rule breaking' habit. If we explore Maslow's theory (1970) this person will be looking for safety, their

place and belonging in a group and look to become the best at whatever the group see as important, in this case challenging behaviour towards teachers.

In education it could be assumed that the power regimes and the deviance defining process illustrate behaviour in schools in such a negative light that teachers are often steered towards feelings of helplessness and despair rather than finding energy to be pro-active and understanding. This despairing image of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour in schools is so successfully displayed by the deviance defining process that it has created a sense of compassion fatigue in many teachers and senior managers inasmuch as the problem can be seen to be so insurmountably intractable.

To counter 'nature versus nurture' biases in thinking about problem behaviour, it helps to approach all diagnosis guided by a broad perspective of what determines human behaviour (Benedict,1993). A common sense approach would surely be to suggest that each pupil is an individual and brings something different to a situation, therefore experiencing it differently. The danger, however, within this simple concept is that what may get lost is the essence of the reciprocal impact the pupil will have on the environment, resulting in possible change in both.

Arguably the role of the teacher is to assess this change along with the circumstances of the individual and to provide alternatives, guidance and new information that will, hopefully, facilitate change for the better. Only within the criminal justice system is there a pre-ordained set of norms that must be adhered to. In all other circumstances the individual has the right of choice and the right to be free of stigmatisation within the professional setting. In most cases the individual, if they choose to change or are compelled by law to change, is able to learn coping mechanisms and behaviour strategies that will alleviate any stigma and allow functioning within the current social paradigm. The key is for the individual, with support and guidance, to relinquish the label and the stigma associated with it. The exception again is criminal activity where the behaviour may be extinguished but the label, based on the sanctioning, continues.

It is imperative that teachers are aware of the labels that may be attached to those within the system, consciously or unconsciously. The individual who brings attention to him/herself can often be automatically assigned a 'problem' and a corresponding label. This can, however, have unfortunate consequences. Labels may, on the one hand, clearly locate difficulties within individual pupils. They may even in some cases justify exclusion or relegate the problem to a specialist. On the other hand they can leave teachers feeling de-skilled and helpless and, perhaps worst of all, carry no possible clues to strategies or ways forward.

As early as 1938 Frank Tannenbaum was addressing the effect of 'labelling' whereby a person who is described in a certain way will naturally tend towards that behaviour. Tannenbaum's vision was expanded in the 1950s and '60s by Lemert (1967), Erikson (1962), Kitsuse (1962) and as previously noted, Becker (1963). Although it may not have been their intention to establish a theory, the points of convergence among these four sociologists form the structure of a theoretical perspective.

The first shared proposition is that sociologists should not attempt to determine the aetiology of deviance. This is because first causes are many and varied. In short, the argument is that social action is too complex to be understood in its entirety. While it is virtually impossible for sociology to determine why individuals originally deviate (primary deviation) it is possible to explain why people continue to deviate (secondary deviation). Lemert (1967, p.18) argues that secondary deviation is 'pragmatically more pertinent for sociology than primary deviance'. Primary deviance is the initial deviant behaviour and is short lived. Most people will engage in this level of deviance from time to time and will never proceed to the secondary level. Whether the act will proceed depends on how public the act is and what the tolerance quotient of the reactors is, because it is an individual set of values that determine the severity of the act.

Secondary deviance is the persistent involvement in deviance, and the possible submergence into a deviant subculture. The deviance becomes secondary when the person begins to employ his deviant behaviour or a role based upon it as a means of defense, attack or adjustment to the overt and covert problems created by the

consequent societal reaction (Lemert, 1967). Kitsuse (1962, p.248) is even more adamant, 'I propose to shift the focus of theory and research from the forms of deviant behaviour to the processes by which persons come to be defined as deviant by others'. Clearly labelling is relatively unconcerned about why individuals *originally* deviate.

The second point of consensus is that behaviour is not the determining factor in deciding what is and is not deviant. In short the *action* is not as important as the *reaction*. When society reacts to behaviour by conferring a negative label on a person e.g. deviant, the label may well have consequences for the future. 'One of the most crucial steps in the process of building a stable pattern of deviant behaviour is likely to be the experience of being caught and publicly labelled as deviant' (Becker, 1963, p.31). This statement would suggest that a label has power of its own, bearing a lasting force on an individual's life. The label itself may serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is a person is characterised in a certain way and then begins to exhibit the traits that were said to exist. This is consistent with the early work of Cooley (1922), notably his well known concept of the 'looking-glass self', which suggests that an individual will develop a self-identity that corresponds to the perception of others. In short other people serve as mirrors for self-reflection.

A label not only influences how others will perceive an individual but how they may actually treat them. Rosenhan's study (1973) illustrates this point. Over a three year period eight 'normal' individuals voluntarily committed themselves to a variety of mental hospitals. Once admitted into an institution however the volunteers had great difficulty convincing the hospital staff that they were part of a research study and therefore for a 'different' reason. This led Rosenhan to conclude that once a person is designated abnormal all of his other behaviour and characteristics are coloured by that label. Indeed that label is so powerful that many of the pseudo patients' normal behaviours were overlooked entirely or misinterpreted profoundly. This is a key point for the labelling theorists. They make no attempt to explain why a person first commits a deviant act but they argue that once this has taken place the individual is stigmatised negatively, then the force of the label encourages subsequent deviant behaviour

(secondary deviation). Once this label has been attached by teachers, doctors, educational psychologists etc. it becomes part of an individual's status.

Assigning school pupils categories of 'difficulty' has, in certain circumstances, been shown to lead to negative labelling whereby pupils become 'written off' and so become condemned by the self-fulfilling prophecy (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968; Hargreaves *et al.*, 1975; Rist, 1977). This suggests that a person who is told that he or she is a 'trouble maker' will naturally exhibit behaviour that will continue to earn them that label⁷. According to the labelling theory of deviance proposed by Becker (1963), the stigmatised trait is transformed into a master status that so overwhelms the individual's other traits in the eyes of society, that it becomes the only characteristic by which that person is known and evaluated. I often talk to teachers and senior management about pupils with disruptive and challenging behaviour. The negative issues are always free-flowing and paramount but there is often a certain hesitancy when they are asked to extol a pupil's strengths.

Labelling is certainly a pertinent issue in schools, where the rules to be broken can be variable, often unclear and subjectively applied. For Foucault (1991), subjectivity and objectivity are problematic. They are achieved through power regimes and it is suggested we are constantly exposed to a myriad of rules of strategy across institutions. These 'rules of strategy' (Foucault, 1991, p.308) could be viewed as integral to the rejection and exclusion of those that don't fit the system. According to Foucault (1991) all behaviour falls between good and bad marks, good and bad points. Behaviour, which falls beyond these limits, demarcates 'the mad, the bad and the dangerous' from those who are seen to be average. Clearly it is an enormous problem differentiating between these categories.

The problem with labels in schools is that they tend to be negative, focusing on deficiencies, thus placing an emphasis on what individuals *cannot* do and providing reasons for exclusion from activities that are reserved for those who do not deviate from the norm. Additionally, when an individual is approached in terms of a label the

⁷ Richeson, J. Scott (2000)
Labelling Theory lecture at <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/crijus/courses/label.htm>

inclination can be to revert to the medical model and try to 'cure' the person. This happens despite the fact that the problems of most pupils in school who display challenging behaviour are not rooted in medical history. Arguably, many of their troubling symptoms would not have developed if their individual, environmental circumstances had been appropriately different.

1.5 Challenging behaviour: a deviant label?

Over the last decade or so, in tackling the management of pupils' behaviour in schools, attention has been paid, not only to the pupil but also to the school-based systems, which may exacerbate such behaviour. This is a welcome move, which places emphasis on the simple mechanisms of a school's operational procedures rather than the examination of the background, motivations and supposed traumas of the pupils. Whilst not suggesting that this approach is some form of panacea, handled sensitively and orchestrated carefully, it is encouraging progress to those firmly ensconced in the management of pupil behaviour in schools. Thomas and Loxley (2001) comment on this shift of emphasis with some caution, stating that the emphasis on change by the school rather than the pupil is in danger of being merely a replication of the exclusionary phenomena of the past. These phenomena are created by mindsets and professional systems that accentuate rather than attenuate difference. There is much truth in this view but nevertheless a school-based rather than a pupil-based approach is to be welcomed, with a proviso that training regarding this notion is of paramount importance in order to avoid the 'passing of the buck' back from the school to the pupil when school-based strategies appear to be yielding little success.

One may hold the view that schools today are in a fragile position. Challenging behaviour, exclusions from school and problems with absenteeism are topics high on the educational agenda. How is it that schools with the best intentions, staffed by people who have the pupils' interests at heart, so often fail to meet the pupil halfway and to engage with pupils on their own terms? Unfortunately, many schools would appear not to recognize that the root of the problem might be found *within* the schools. In some cases they can be seen to be finding security measures to prevent problems rather than actually increasing the support for the pupils displaying the difficulties. In

essence there is a danger of schools relying on kneejerk sanctions to address the problems: the intensifying and automatic use of punishment such as detentions or loss of privileges, as opposed to a more pro-active approach leading to the identification of what may lie *behind* the behaviour and therefore leading to the possible prevention of the unacceptable behaviour in the first place.

This pro-active approach however has significant training implications both for initial teacher training and in-service professional development. With regard to the latter in particular, the DfES has recently launched (January, 2006) a national training programme entitled the 'National Programme for Specialist Leaders in Behaviour and Attendance' (NPSL-BA). I have been involved in the writing of modules for this programme which has identified (with the help of Sheffield Hallam University) that there are some 30,000 people in the UK involved in this specialist area who may benefit from increased training in behaviour and attendance along with a raising of their profile and responsibilities. I watch the progress of this new qualification with interest and optimism.

It is pertinent for all educational establishments to review their systems and approaches to the management of pupil behaviour through structured systems of education, training and support (Grundy, 2000). Crucial to any form of training is the eradication of the false legitimacy of 'labels' appertaining to pupils displaying behaviour distinct from the norm. 'Metaphors and constructs which are used to generate understanding about such difficult behaviour are often misleading, evoking as they do all kinds of quasi-scientific explanation' (Thomas and Loxley, 2001 p.46).

A wholly different concept and view is needed with regard to the response to the management of pupils' behaviour, which, hopefully, may emerge out of current thinking on inclusion. There needs to be a shift from the 'clinicizing of unacceptable behaviour' (Thomas and Loxley, 2001 p.55) to a clearer understanding of the fact that schools for many pupils present an environment that can be difficult to manage. This inability to manage and cope can lead to pupils in schools becoming disaffected. However, is this just another label?

1.6 The 'label' of disaffection

Disaffection almost implies something about individual attitude and therefore individual responsibility. The notion of disaffection is complicated when used as an umbrella term because it confuses individual attitudes with the many other issues that may contribute. How is disaffection manifested and what might these contributing issues be?

It could be argued that pupils reject school because they feel rejected by it; the resultant disruptive behaviour may be a strategy for coping with the humiliation of academic failure or with the fact that teachers seem uncaring or ineffective. Pupils may challenge school because they feel the values it holds are incompatible with the world as they see it. As things are now many institutional traditions embody rules and routines, which some pupils find discriminatory and oppressive. The role demanded of pupils especially in the latter stages of compulsory schooling, can be childish and demeaning, running contrary to the maturity they may well have established in their out of school existence. Many school rules are based on a genuine concern for pupils but all too often their underlying reasons are seldom discussed or negotiated; consequently they are perceived by some pupils as being arbitrary impositions of teacher power.

Most disaffected behaviour can be understood as an implied if inarticulate critique of schooling. When pupils feel critical of school they have comparatively few ways of expressing their frustration and criticism. They can only stay away, be disruptive or withdraw or not participate. Faupel (2002) considers that disaffected pupils are basically those without affection for schools; either for their teachers because they don't feel valued by them or for the system which compares them adversely with others or for tasks they may find boring, irrelevant or frustrating. Faupel suggests that disaffected pupils are likely to perceive that they are being put at risk by psychological threats to their sense of worth and value, and their reaction is often highly emotional as a result. Kinder *et al.* (1999) suggests that schooling provides pupils with the possibility of engaging in three notable relationships: with each other, with teachers

and with the curriculum. An unwillingness to operate successfully within this triptych of relationships is a significant characteristic of the disaffected pupil.

However Mongon and Hart (1989) consider that school may not be the primary cause of their difficulties; it may simply be a site where they give vent to feelings which have quite different roots. Lee (2005, p.14) quotes Martin Rogers from the Education Network as saying 'This issue (behaviour in schools) is far more complex than most politicians and commentators have recently been suggesting. It is not an issue caused by schools, nor one which schools alone can solve'. Lee (2005) also quotes Sir Alan Steer, chairman of the government's task force, who agrees with Martin Rogers, stating that 'Schools can have a huge influence on bad behaviour and if they are not doing that bulldoze them to the ground. But they are not in total control. We are always going to have children coming into school with behaviour problems because of their social background' (p.14). These two notions, which suggest that the school itself or factors outside can be responsible for disaffection are clearly connected. It could be argued of course that it is precisely that school is such a demanding experience that pupils who are already emotionally vulnerable choose to reject it.

Different components of social and family background are strongly correlated with individual manifestations of disaffection. The influence of peers can be a significant factor. Kinder *et al.* (1999) found examples that were many and varied. The sample ranges from pupils with experiences of painful isolation due to bullying through to pupils who exercised powerful stimuli to anti-social behaviour. Given the indisputable importance of making and maintaining friendships at school, problems in this area are not surprisingly a key component in stories about disaffection. Family circumstances may play a part: family values (condoning or corroborating absence); family problems (relating to health and relationships); family events (bereavement, new partners); or family choices (relocation to new schools). Clearly there could be considerable overlap in these categories. Not surprisingly 'looked after' children represent the most extreme examples of family dysfunctionality.

Weber (1978;1982) argues that the causes of pupils' challenging behaviour should be perceived as complex and multifarious. They include a number of variables relating to

internalizing causes such as traumatic or behavioural, and externalizing causes such as cultural or environmental. Of particular interest is his reference to an additional category of causation – the case of an uncertain cause. The latter refers to the many occasions when there is no reasonable explanation to a pupil's behaviour. Weber (1978) argues that most of these causes lay beyond the reach of the working teacher. Furthermore he argues that a causal basis to learning failure would not necessarily lead to a resolution of the difficulty; the teacher may still be faced with a pupil's challenging behaviour. He suggests that a learning-centred approach is essential to behaviour management. This approach recognizes the fact that often a key factor in pupils' challenging behaviour is their inability to tackle the learning task. This understandably results in a cycle of failure and an alienation from the values of an educational culture; as a result they become alienated and disaffected with the learning process.

Raynor (1998) suggests that an educational re-conceptualisation of behaviour management should reflect the psychology of learning. At the heart of this conceptualization is the notion of individuality and a sense of self as learner, as teacher, as thinker and as a participant in the process of teaching and learning. As Banner and Raynor (1997) remark, this is perhaps illustrated in the idea that the construct of learning style may offer opportunity for success in teaching the hard to reach and reaching the hard to teach.

Disaffected pupils are likely to exhibit a wide range of pedagogical preferences. As a consequence, lack of compatibility in learning and teaching styles may unknowingly contribute to disaffection or stress within the learning environment. Research by Ince (1999) would support this view. Results of her study indicate that the school in which her research was based needed to investigate effective teaching and learning styles and promote them at school, department and class levels. In addition there was a need to develop more collaborative working practices between both pupils and teachers. The lack of an identifiable school ethos and culture was also considered to contribute to pupil disaffection.

There are without doubt particular features of mainstream education, particularly at key stage 4, and the way that pupils relate to schools as institutions which may well contribute to the extent of disaffection in schools. The identification of the National Curriculum as a factor constraining the ability of teachers to engage pupils is an often-heard complaint. Certainly its rigidity and assessment imperatives may exacerbate feelings of disaffection amongst de-motivated pupils. Ofsted (2005, p.9)⁸ states clearly that there needs to be a focus on improving the quality of teaching and the provision of an appropriate curriculum that engages the more difficult pupils. Clearly some learning goals need to be tackled by all pupils in the same way but others can be achieved through a variety of routes that take account of different needs and motivations. I am not suggesting standards should be lowered to the lowest common denominator but teachers need to continually reflect on their teaching styles and methods.

The rhetoric which frames the National Curriculum is universal: every pupil is to benefit, every young life enhanced. However it could be argued that the present situation acts, albeit inadvertently, to disadvantage some pupils. Where schools are forced to compete through league tables certain groups will suffer; not just those with 'special needs' but pupils who are in any way 'different' from the norm may represent unwelcome members of a class.

Fortunately the revised curriculum and the greater degree of flexibility at key stage 4 are more consistent with inclusive principles and will go some way to re-engaging disaffected pupils, although the stigma associated with non-academic study and no formal qualifications has yet to run its course. Initiatives at key stage 3⁹ are also welcome as they should identify children falling behind their peers and prevent damage to self-esteem linked to lack of confidence and fear of failure, all of which can exacerbate disaffected tendencies.

⁸ 'Managing Challenging Behaviour', Ofsted, 2005 ref:HMI2363

⁹ Key stage 3 strategy (DfES, 2004) aims to raise standards by strengthening teaching and learning across the curriculum for all pupils aged 11-14.

Research surveys (Kinder *et al.*,1996) on pupils' views on disaffection identify the curriculum as the most important cause of truancy and disruptive behaviour. Pupils view the curriculum as boring, lacking relevance and repetitive. Some of these replies, however, may mask pupils' learning difficulties stemming from earlier key stages, which as a result contributes to disaffection in later years as pupils lack the basic skills to cope with the curriculum. Teacher surveys also report that staff identify the reduction in non-teaching and pastoral time as a major factor behind the problem of disaffection (Kinder *et al.*,1996). This is a recurring notion that a key factor in reducing exclusions is the availability of appropriate pastoral support. The Government's support service 'Connexions'¹⁰ for all young people aged 13-19 (and up to 25 for those with special needs) aims to ensure a smooth transition into adult life for all young people. This should, of course, be a 'back-up' to what is already occurring in schools regarding advice and guidance.

Arguably the moral basis for the desire to respond appropriately to the diversity of pupils in each school setting rests on the application of the principle of equality of value. However, failure to apply such a principle can have serious consequences: neglect of certain pupils, insufficient care over curriculum matters and the devaluation of pupils, which may lead to a pool of resentment and disaffection. Pupils who are disaffected and exhibiting behaviour problems are often marginalised and the recipients of treatment which undermines their sense of being valuable and valued individuals (Cooper, 1993). As a result and at any time this can fuel an impulsive or angry response and lead to withdrawal and disinterest. This may lead to a 'climate of hostility, resentment and suspicion' (Schostak, 1983, p.69). Assuming there is a continuum between devaluation, dissatisfaction, disaffection and disruption in school then presumably one would wish to intervene at the start of such a chain.

De-valuations are an inherent part of our society of which schools are a part; arguably one vital aspect of both pupil and teacher education should include efforts to counteract them. Attention to the development of effective preventative responses to disaffection will have much in common with strategies that are likely to enhance the

¹⁰ www.connexions.gov.uk

educational experience of *all* pupils. This should involve paying particular attention to teacher-pupil interaction and how this sits comfortably within the framework of teacher authority.

1.7 The Nature of Authority in Schools

Teachers have to earn respect from their pupils alongside their authority; if there is little respect then it is more than likely their authority will be challenged. Durkheim's translated work as cited in Slee (1995)¹¹ states that the individual controls himself only if he feels himself controlled, only if he confronts moral forces which he respects... where this is not the case, he knows no limits and extends himself without measure or bounds.

It could be argued that the authority invested in teachers is not natural; it is part of a system of power relationships in society. Teachers may find that they are involved in enforcing this system and may well adopt the mantle of authority with pride (Booth and Coulby, 1987). However, whilst the battle may be weighted in their favour, their authority still has to be fought for and once gained has to be maintained. Unfortunately there is a great temptation for such an illusion to become a delusion of grandeur or 'power trip' in which a challenge regarding teacher authority can be taken personally (Clarke, 1998).

Many teachers today may well question whether in fact they actually have authority any more, especially when confronted with pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Yet however difficult these pupils are to teach, in any school there are usually several teachers who manage to get through to them, experiencing less antagonism and less disruption to their lessons than their colleagues. I spend many hours talking to disaffected pupils and this reveals that even for the most disruptive there are always certain teachers for whom they have respect and consequently do not display their disruptive and challenging behaviour. What kind of teachers are these? How do they exert their authority whilst maintaining sound working relationships with their pupils?

¹¹ Slee (1995) is quoting from Durkheim's philosophy lectures at the Lycee de Sens (1883).

Teachers have fundamental powers in relation to authority which extend according to status. However the considerable differences in authority granted to teachers by pupils are likely to derive from the personal qualities they demonstrate rather from the positions they hold. Tattum (1982) points out that respect for teachers can no longer be assumed as a social fact. No longer is the office held in awe and teachers who draw heavily upon unquestioned authority as an endowed right leave themselves open to mimicry and ridicule. It could be argued that the basis for teacher authority nowadays rests firmly on the effectiveness of teaching and teacher-pupil relationships. In other words if a teacher does not provide stimulating and intuitive lessons, is uninterested in the pupils' efforts, does not show respect for the pupils by using tactics which are unfair and inconsistent, then authority may not be granted by the pupils and the teacher will become particularly vulnerable.

Beck (1994) considers that we should see a positive role for authority in teaching (whilst remaining aware of its great dangers and potential abuses). He considers that authority in teaching/learning should be more reciprocal, corresponding to the respective knowledge and experience of the various participants. Teachers have a great deal to learn from their pupils, not least their view of what is intelligible, interesting and relevant. It is of course readily accepted that in many subjects the teacher will clearly know more than the pupils but this should not detract from the vital importance of pupil input. The question should always be asked 'What do the pupils have to offer here?'. We must not pre-judge the direction in which authority will run. Ellsworth (1989) points out that teachers can often, because of a belief in their ascribed status, foist their beliefs and values on their pupils and fail to enter into a reciprocal relationship with them.

Relationships are not simply beliefs that people have about the way they should interact with other people, they are expressed and negotiated in the actions themselves and the manner in which those actions are performed. Ensuring authority as an exercise has many similarities to commanding respect; it is a commodity that is *earned* rather than obtained by demand. A good teacher will exercise authority in such a way that those who are managed are part of a process that sees respect grow. How then does a teacher exert this authority?

1.8 Discipline and Control: an educational perspective

Careful consideration and theorising of the distinction between discipline and control is of primary importance to teacher training in that it encompasses substantial underpinning principles for the management of pupils' behaviour therefore providing scope for more effective practice. Dewey (1916) provides a particularly clear distinction between discipline and control, stating the former to be educational and the latter as subordination. Slee (1995) supports this view by suggesting that control is an impediment to learning and orderliness and strongly states that control externally applied, devoid of moral or logical force, may not only impede the improvement of individuals and their community, it frequently interferes with school effectiveness.

Arguably one of the most palpable forms of interference is poor teacher-pupil interaction. More and more pupils are becoming less compliant to heavy-handed control techniques, hypocritical teacher behaviour and poor teaching. The 'control' tactics of previous eras, where teachers and pupils were cast as adversaries to one another, as having two distinct interests, the first to lay on restrictions whilst the second to escape the severity of punishment, has no place in today's education system. Unfortunately however, my observations of classroom behaviour over many hours of late would suggest that some teachers still resort to these heavy handed tactics, often exacerbating pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Wilson (1971 as cited in Slee, 1995, p.28) argues that control is inappropriate in the context of education since it does not issue from the logic of the task or goals of education:

'Both discipline and control are forms of order, but the order in each case is of a logically different kind ... control is a way of ordering things which is considered necessary for getting things done. By contrast discipline is the form of logical and evaluative order which must be learned if one is to understand what is involved in doing something'.

Slee (1995) points out that Wilson is not promoting charisma as the progenitor of interest. Pupils' acceptable behaviour is not to be gained through entertaining pedagogical performance, rather it should emanate from the pupil through a transactional educational process.

Clarke (1998, p.292) proposes that there is almost a universally agreed view of classroom organisation that relies centrally on 'control' and argues that this misconception is the cause of much misery and unrest in schools. He points out a salutary warning for all teachers in highlighting some of the practical problems that the reliance on control brings: 'While having the appearance of, and indeed requiring great power the approach is effectively weak. Any individual refusal must compel the teacher's attention and stops the proceedings. Regular refusers can do this whenever they like, and they often have a mandate from many classmates'. At this point teachers usually resort to stepping up the power play, perhaps using what Ritchie and Ritchie (1981, p.84) refer to as the 'power politics of authority' where the teacher becomes a police officer rather than a pedagogue. Within this scenario of teacher and pupil as adversaries, the disciplinary system can lead to alienation (Parker-Jenkins, 1999). It is well known, especially by pupils, that a teacher's power is limited. Even when 'reinforcements' are called some pupils may decide to challenge the system, consuming huge amounts of time and resources in the process.

According to Clarke (1998, p.295) to say that children are disciplined is therefore to say something quite different from saying they are controlled; 'Controlled children believe in the external value of the directions of the controller at least sufficiently to follow them. Disciplined children on the other hand observe the internal values of the activities that they are engaged in because they subscribe to them'. A broader understanding of discipline may enhance teachers' ability to think beyond controlling, regulating and punishing to reposition the issue as one concerning curriculum, teaching and sound teacher-pupil relationships. This is more congruent with what Slee (1995, p.22) refers to as a 'principled theory of discipline consistent with educational aims'. In my view, teachers need to question more thoroughly their own styles and strategies and be prepared to adapt and change them if necessary. Central to this discussion is the capacity of teachers to be flexible, sensitive, motivated and confident. Importantly they need to question whether pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour is the total responsibility of the pupil or are they themselves playing a significant part in the process? Docking (1987, p.57) stresses that it must be appreciated that a controlled pupil, even a self-controlled pupil is not the same as a disciplined pupil in the educative sense. 'It may be argued that class control is a necessary condition for

the development of 'educative discipline', but it is not a sufficient one since the achievement of the first does not guarantee the second'.

Without doubt pupils can display challenging behaviour which defies and disrespects their peers and teachers. Evidence from my continuing educational practice suggests that schools need to become more creative in dealing with discipline issues, rather than relying on coercion and compliance leading to an increase in 'control' by teachers. Discipline policies in school communicate powerful messages to pupils about their worth, value and power along with expectations and beliefs about who the pupils are and what they can do. As a consequence schools need to step back more and examine the hidden curriculum behind disciplinary policies, otherwise there is a danger that we will reinforce the pupils' lack of voice and efficacy. We may also reinforce an often-heard complaint from pupils that there exists no democratic, legitimate avenue for them to question authority and personally and intellectually challenge the status quo. This can affect disaffected pupils in particular by reinforcing their feelings of low self-worth and resignation.

It could be argued of course that the exercise of authority and power is seen as an integral part of the teacher's role but Parker-Jenkins (1999) suggests that the misuse or abuse of such power needs to be considered. In practical terms this would require an opportunity for the pupil's voice to be heard in an acceptable manner and forum and, where appropriate, with support mechanisms. According to Parker-Jenkins (1999) in many American States school principals receive training to ensure that 'due process' has taken place in order to facilitate the students giving their side of the story, especially when the offence may lead to loss of privileges or exclusion. Unfortunately however, institutions can be remarkably resilient to change. Traditionally children have been seen as powerless subjects reliant on the ideas of paternalism or liberalism to improve their position (Freeman, 1983).

The discussion so far suggests that pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour is not something to be stifled or extinguished without consideration for its function or motive. Dealing with such behaviour requires a positive mindset on the part of teachers and professionals who must look beyond managing or correcting it and begin to explore its

underlying purpose and outcomes. As Neel and Cessna state (1993, p.33) 'when students act, even demonstrating behaviours we view as disordered, they act for a purpose'.

Chandler, Dahlquist, Repp and Feltz (1999) recognise the problems faced by many educators who lack adequate training in the prevention and mediation of challenging behaviour. Being unclear as to which strategy to choose they may either fail to address difficult behaviours, resort to unnecessary punishment or choose strategies that do not address the function of the original behaviour. It is also necessary to shift the perceptions of some teachers towards accepting that their own behaviour and classroom management techniques can influence their *pupils'* behaviour. Giving teachers opportunities to explore and reflect on their own value systems and beliefs concerning pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour and where the responsibility for that behaviour lies is, I would argue, a crucial issue for ITT (and, indeed, on-going professional development). Addressing pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour proactively through positive behaviour intervention and pro-active teacher-pupil interaction is an important step towards a realisation and acceptance that the school and the personnel within it *can* make a difference. Is this a notion that can be taught or is it something that needs to be learned?

1.9 Teachers' Professional Knowledge and Competence in the Management of Pupils' Behaviour

Although subtle, there is a difference between wanting to be taught and wanting to learn. If teachers want to be 'taught' they may want to be told what to do, how to do it, where to do it and who to do it to. If teachers want to 'learn' then they arguably may want to share experiences and thoughts with others so they can evaluate for themselves what might work for them and how it may fit into their own teaching style. The former is deemed to be relevant to the intellectual development of teachers, whereas the latter is more specifically concerned with the development of particular areas of knowledge and skill that are instrumental to the task of teaching (Cruickshank and Metcalfe, 1990).

It could be argued that *teacher education* is involved in the all round education and development of teachers, whereas *teacher training* refers to a more mechanistic approach to teacher preparation involving the mastery of well-established routines¹². Regarding the management of pupils' behaviour I consider that these two competing ideologies are rather simplistic and unhelpful. Obviously the management of pupils' behaviour does involve the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills that are essential to effective classroom management.

It is also the case, however, that behaviour management involves teachers in reflecting on their *own* behaviour, being able to reason about actions taken, being able to justify decisions taken and consider how different approaches may affect outcomes. The continued use of the education v. training distinction may in fact cloud the merits of each perspective. There is also a danger of the distinctions between them becoming blurred as the two terms can almost be used interchangeably, both referring to the overall professional preparation of teachers. That is the understanding on which the terms will be used throughout this study.

Developing student teachers' competence and skills in planning, teaching and analysing their lessons is one of the main topics dealt with during their professional training. Theoreticians and researchers have developed several important concepts about professional knowledge and competence. Shulman (1987) and Wilson *et al.* (1987) coined the concept 'pedagogical content knowledge'. This is a type of knowledge unique to teachers, based on the manner in which teachers relate their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching) to their subject matter knowledge (what they know about what they teach). The concept of pedagogical content knowledge refers to teachers' interpretations and transformations of subject knowledge in the context of facilitating pupils' learning (Cruickshank and Metcalfe, 1990).

¹² The notion of education versus training has a long history back to Ancient Greece. In Sparta, boys who were seven years old entered a complex system of collective education organized by the State. They passed up from one class to another, under the direction of masters and gymnastic instructors submitting to regular training. They learned reading and writing for basic needs but all the rest of their education was to make them well-disciplined, steadfast and notorious in battle.

Carter (1990) relates to teachers' 'practical knowledge', their knowledge about classroom situations and ongoing dilemmas they face while teaching. He maintains that teachers interpret situations and make decisions under uncertain conditions. Thus they are for the most part involved in 'practical' thinking leading to actions, often quickly decided upon, in a variety of situations. Undoubtedly, teachers must be able to reflect in-action and reflect on-action (Schon, 1983). They must be able to understand the reasoning behind their pedagogical decisions, identify difficulties encountered in their classrooms and consider possible solutions. This is a particularly pertinent concept in the management of pupils' behaviour.

Eraut (1994) has much to say about the development of professional knowledge and competence and provides guidance on determining the knowledge base of a profession. He highlights Schon's (1983) argument that knowledge *application* leads to a hierarchical view of professional knowledge in which 'general principles' occupy the highest level and 'concrete problem solving' the lowest. Schon argues that a definition such as this excludes situations and phenomena which professionals may perceive to be central to their practice. Behind Schon's argument lies a view that the term 'knowledge' should have the broadest possible meaning (e.g. besides propositional knowledge it should also include tacit knowledge, process knowledge and know-how).

The ordinary person perceives the world as ordered: a synthesis of past experience and has knowledge of what to expect in the future. Schutz (1967) calls these patterns of order the 'schemes of our experience'. We do not question them unless a special problem arises and even then we are unlikely to probe deeply. They also provide the framework through which new experience is interpreted and, in this way, order the future as well as the past. However, in varying degrees, according to the intention of the individual concerned, schemes will adjust and develop in the light of new information and new schemes may be constructed to handle new types of experience.

Schutz's (1967) views have much affinity with Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory. The key message in Personal Construct Psychology is that the world is 'perceived' by a person in terms of whatever 'meaning' that person applies to it. Each person has the freedom to choose a different 'meaning' of whatever he or she wants.

In other words each person can choose the meaning that they prefer or like. Kelly calls this *constructive alternativism* i.e. each person is capable of applying alternative constructions (meanings) to any events in the past, present or future. Indeed the theory clearly suggests that all our present perceptions are open to question and reconsideration suggesting that even the most obvious occurrences in everyday life might be utterly transformed if we had the notion to construe them differently. Kelly (1955, p.26) insists that 'whatever exists can be reconstrued'. In any situation there is always the possibility of looking at things in other ways. Abandoning previous convictions may be difficult; at times it is only by venturing to try out a different kind of understanding that progress can be made. Central to Kelly's (1955) theory is the notion that people may construe their particular environments in an infinite number of ways depending on their intuitiveness, imagination and the commitment of their experimentation. Individuals are not bound by stimuli but they may be bound by the extent of their construal of the situations they find themselves in. Personal Construct Theory is expanded upon in chapter 6.

Teachers may hold deep beliefs concerning behaviour management and such beliefs could be viewed as 'existing within' the personal construct system that an individual has developed around the 'experiences' of behaviour management and training. Support for such is provided by Tillema (1994) who comments upon the range of evidence which acknowledges that teachers have elaborative and substantive knowledge structures of their own. Such 'structures' have been gradually constructed on the basis of their experiences and as such have become highly stabilised as a result of these experiences. New ways of looking at or different understandings concerning the management of pupils' behaviour can be, as Salmon (1995) suggests, potentially threatening, for if such new knowledge appears to challenge some of the existing beliefs that teachers hold it is likely, of necessity, to be resisted.

Newly qualified teachers in particular are constantly exposed to feedback about their functioning and personality from various sources such as their pupils, colleagues and mentors. Thus their professional development takes place under conditions of stress and is connected to their involvement of their self-confidence and self-awareness (Calderhead, 1991). As a consequence this tension may have a detrimental effect on

their development and their ability to think about aspects of their profession other than their 'survival' (Wideen *et al.*,1998). Beach and Pearson (1998) examined strategies used by novice teachers dealing with conflicts in the classroom. During the first half of their first year of teaching, most of the strategies provided limited, short-term solutions. The Newly Qualified Teachers found it hard to propose strategies on the basis of a wide range of considerations. However, during the second half of the year, a change in teachers' perceptions occurred, and they began to present long-term solutions, based on reasoning anchored in their own beliefs, rather than on the perceptions and beliefs of others.

With regard to the management of pupil behaviour, Newly Qualified Teachers, when analysing a lesson, should learn to identify problems with their classroom management, elaborate reasons for the problem's existence, suggest possible resolutions and relate them to the theoretical principles underlying their professional knowledge. The interpretation of the situation, however, will be influenced by their preconceptions about the essence of teaching and the connection between these conceptions and the reality of the situation observed (Panasuk and Sullivan,1998). Therefore the ability of Newly Qualified Teachers to grasp what is happening in the classroom, to explain and pinpoint the significance of the observed events depends on the creation of schemata connecting their theoretical and practical knowledge, and applying them in their teaching (Bames,1989).

Knowledge and competence about the management of pupils' behaviour is mostly gained through social interaction. Pupils and situations are encountered, communications received and events are experienced. While some of this may be defined as *process knowledge* (Eraut,1994) much will remain at the level of simple impressions. These impressions gained from experience can contribute significantly to professional action. One reason why learning might remain initially at the level of impressions is that there is no specific learning intent; another is that the flow of experience and need for simultaneous action is so rapid that little further attention can be devoted to reflection until some considerable time has elapsed.

Penso and Shohan (2003) consider that the following conditions are vital to the acquisition of professional knowledge by teachers: a) they must be given opportunities and tools for reflective thinking and b) they must have the opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired in real-life situations. This may lead to a facilitation of pedagogical decision-making likely to improve their professional functioning. Eraut (1994) considers however that the intellectual problems of attempting to describe, share and develop *practical* knowledge so that it becomes more widely available are formidable indeed. Practical knowledge is never tidy and an appropriate language for it has yet to be developed. Without doubt the development of a 'language for behaviour' would enhance and develop individual thinking and perception regarding the management of pupils' behaviour.

1.10 The Competency Framework

It is now the case that teaching is described in terms of competencies, i.e. what the teacher should know, understand and be able to do (DfES, 2002). It is often assumed that such a competency model enables a clear understanding about what teachers need to know and be able to do, resulting in greater precision with regard to the assessment involved in initial certification. This, however, has some drawbacks concerning behaviour management. Overall it risks being too prescriptive, placing too tight a definition on 'good' or 'acceptable' or 'competent' practice. What counts as competent may well be context specific. A teacher may be deemed to have good classroom management skills in one school but may present a different picture in another school with different groups of pupils. The difficulty of providing a list of competencies with regard to behaviour management is that this may create an illusion that it is quite straightforward and that once a predetermined set of knowledge and skills has been learned, behaviour management has been mastered.

Additionally the competency perspective leaves out of account those aspects of behaviour management that are not easily defined e.g. attitudes, judgments and perceptions and the nature of teacher-pupil relationships. These are areas of intrinsic importance within behaviour management but are ones in which definition in terms of knowledge and skills seems quite elusive. Lists of competencies define an end

product in teaching but are in danger of leaving out of account *how* teachers actually achieve competence. It would almost seem that learning in teacher education is perceived to be relatively unproblematic. In other words as long as trainees access appropriate course content and experience in schools with feedback then that will result in competent teaching. Learning about the presentation of themselves in relation to behaviour management is different than learning about schemes of work and lesson planning. Behaviour management involves more than the mastery of a limited set of consequences. It is a complex process. It is also a lengthy process, extending well after initial teacher training.

The management of pupils' behaviour is certainly a skill but unlike commonly cited examples such as riding a bicycle or running a marathon, it involves a substantial amount of rapid decision making (Watkins,1997). Events happen quickly and teachers have to make decisions quickly, especially when dealing with pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. These decisions do not involve deliberative processes but are interactive decisions made on the spur of the moment in response to rapid readings of the situation and the overall purpose of the action. Such decisions are often quite intuitive and the teacher concerned may often find it difficult to provide a rational explanation. The combination of tacit knowledge and intuitive decision making is often difficult to manage (Molander,1992).

With regard to behaviour management, teachers need not only to be competent in the classroom but also be practitioners who understand what they are doing, why they are doing it and be prepared to reflect on and review their strategies to suit changing contexts and circumstances. This clearly presents a tension between the need for teachers to *understand* teaching and the need to be able to *perform* teaching (Calderhead and Shorrock,1997). The theory versus practice debate, however, tends to be oversimplified assuming a clear-cut distinction between theory and practice (Eraut, 1994). Most certainly, with regard to behaviour management, the two sides of this debate should run concurrently, with students having the opportunity to discuss their concerns, try out new theories and discuss them again (similar to the action research cycle, Lewin,1946).

If an approach to behaviour management is to genuinely represent an educational response, it should, arguably, seek to develop a 'working understanding' of this topic within the educational context. For this to happen there needs to be an 'educational conceptualization' of behaviour management. It should, as a consequence, address notions which surround the subject of learning success or failure, academic performance and effective education. These issues, after all, are the crux of the teaching profession and the learning context (Watkins, 2000; Tigchelaar and Korthagen, 2004).

The influence of the learning context demonstrates clearly that behaviour is a relative concept. It is by nature subjective, inter-active and context-bound (Raynor, 1998). Behaviour management lies in the 'eye of the beholder'. It is self-evident that what is unacceptable for one teacher may be entirely acceptable for another teacher. Yet behaviour management can also be viewed as a social construct which derives its meaning from a shared and objective understanding. Whilst no-one would deny the existence of several factors in an explanation for pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, it is the *learning context* which can often exacerbate the situation. Ultimately the training of teachers in behaviour management must focus on school and classroom for reaching an understanding of the management of behaviour within an educational context. So how is the topic of behaviour management addressed within secondary ITT courses?

1.11 Initial Teacher Training and Behaviour Management – the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) route

The PGCE¹³ in England and Wales is a one-year course of professional training for teaching and is the route to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) that is the focus of attention in my research. The overwhelming majority of *secondary* school teachers are trained through this route. Of the 36 weeks of the PGCE course, 24 are spent in schools. Higher education institutions (HEIs) transfer funds to schools in recognition of this increased participation in and responsibility for teacher training. The amount of

¹³ www.tda.gov.uk

funding transferred is not determined centrally but is decided by individual HEIs. This creates a market place in areas where there is more than one ITT provider, with the amount of money schools are likely to earn from collaboration, amongst other factors, being taken into consideration before joining an ITT partnership¹⁴.

Revised standards for QTS and revised requirements for initial teacher training took effect from September 2002 (DfES, 2002). These replace DfEE circular 4/98 and have the same legal standing. They set out the Secretary of State's Standards, which must be met by trainee teachers before they can be awarded QTS. These standards are categorised under three main headings: Professional Values and Practice, Knowledge and Understanding, and Teaching. The professional standards are detailed and wide ranging in their breadth and depth¹⁵. It is a considerable challenge for HEIs and their partnership schools to provide opportunities in all areas for all students.

A close examination of the standards, which are expressed as outcome statements indicating what trainee teachers must know, understand and be able to do, reveal that 3 out of 42 outcome statements (7%) highlight behaviour management. Those awarded QTS must understand and uphold the professional code of the General Teaching Council for England by demonstrating that:

- they demonstrate and promote the positive values, attitudes and behaviour that they expect from their pupils (S1.3 Promoting Positive Values)
- they know a range of strategies to promote good behaviour and establish a purposeful learning environment (S2.7 Promoting Good Behaviour)
- they set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour constructively, and promote self-control and independence (S3.3.9 Managing Behaviour)

¹⁴ Each ITT institution has partnership arrangements with a number of schools in their locality. The schools and the university collaborate in the planning and delivery of the course; the schools facilitate and support the student's teaching experience and collaborate with the university in the assessment of the students.

¹⁵ Teacher Training Agency, Handbook of Guidance, 2005 edition (this handbook accompanies *Qualifying to teach: professional standards for qualified teacher status and requirements for initial teacher training*).

These three standards are cross-referenced to 6 other standards making a total of 9 standards in all which are relevant to behaviour management (21%). Trainee teachers of today participate in the extremely demanding task of meeting all 42 standards in order to obtain their QTS. The standards are extensive and complex, however, and it is questionable whether the standards which relate to behaviour management may be at the risk of being diluted due to the extent of the overall task. My particular concern is that the emphasis on compliance, responsibility and procedural knowledge may encourage a simple imparting of knowledge to trainee teachers rather than a discourse related to attitudes, judgments and perceptions, which my study argues is a crucial aspect of behaviour management.

The standards relating to behaviour management are comprehensive and the suggested evidence required to meet the standards is suitably erudite. However what sets behaviour management issues apart from many of the other strands in the standards is the fact that they do not fit neatly into boxes which can be ticked negatively or positively (as opposed to subject knowledge, lesson planning and schemes of work for example). Issues regarding behaviour management involve a depth of consideration and analysis that is inevitably time consuming.

The suggested evidence stated in the handbook accompanying the standards is certainly helpful but, from a training perspective, is an extremely tall order given the amount of time available on the PGCE course for theory, reflection and development. The stress made in DfEE circular 9/92 on trainee time in school and school contribution to ITT, resulted in an extension of time on teaching practice in participating schools, consequently reducing time in the HEIs. The reason for this was based on the prevalent theory that trainees learn classroom management techniques better from models within mainstream settings and that the best theory emerges from practice.

However, according to Aspland and Brown (1993) and reiterated by Burnard (1998) the unstable and unpredictable nature of the classroom and the inadequacy of skill from one context to another make training in intelligent alternatives far more appropriate than a reliance on the 'expert' model. Taking this argument one step

further, the rise in recent years of PGCE trained teachers who qualify in a system that has many issues competing for time allocation (behaviour management amongst them) could result in unprepared models for future teachers.

Classroom discipline problems appear to have concerned teachers since time immemorial and will more than likely continue to do so with unrelenting regularity. Again and again we hear of teachers reporting the behaviour of their pupils to be amongst the disturbing and worrying aspects of their teaching experience as well as a major factor contributing to teacher discontent and burnout¹⁶. Indeed the ability to exert classroom discipline is arguably one of the most essential aspects of teaching as well as an absolute prerequisite to achieving instructional objectives and safeguarding students' psychological, social and physical wellbeing.

The Elton Report¹⁷ (1989) brought the general issue of behaviour management under scrutiny. It recommends that all parties involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the curriculum should recognize that the quality of its content and the teaching and learning methods through which it is delivered are important influences on pupils' behaviour. It finds a complexity of problems and remarks that one of the most striking features of evidence is that the sheer variety of, cause of, and cures for pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour in schools is a complex problem that does not lend itself to simple solutions. The report suggests that a range of professionals need to be involved in solution focused thinking and concludes that any quest for a single dramatic remedy such as a major piece of legislation would be futile. The report also suggests that pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour is not a new phenomenon and whilst reducing it is a realistic aim, eliminating it is not.

Recommendations are made in the Elton Report that teachers should learn group management skills arguing that this kind of training would lower many teachers' high stress levels. What they call 'group management skills' includes the ability to establish positive relationships with pupils, to encourage them in good behaviour and learning

¹⁶ GTC Teacher Survey January 2003: 31% of respondents (more than 70,000 responded) listed problems with discipline as one of the most demotivating aspects of the job.

¹⁷ Discipline in Schools: Report of the Committee of Enquiry (1989) provided guidance for teachers on dealing with misbehaviour.

and to deal calmly but firmly and consistently with inappropriate or disruptive behaviour. They suggest that whilst some people appear to be natural teachers, the majority can become more effective classroom managers as a result of the right kinds of training, experience and support (p.70, para. 23). Their conclusion is:

‘Our evidence leads us to three important conclusions. First that teachers’ group management skills are probably the single most important factor in achieving good standards of classroom behaviour. Second, that those skills can be taught and learned. Third, that practical training provision in this area is inadequate’.

The report is significant because it highlights the need for *improved* training in classroom management. It continues to make suggestions for improvement and commended action on the part of training establishments and LEAs which included applying the principles of good classroom management, more specific initial training, more specific in-service training and better induction programmes for new teachers. The Elton Report (1989) arguably, states the most comprehensive research on pupil behaviour in recent years and makes extremely pertinent recommendations about the management of pupils’ disruptive and challenging behaviour. Lee (2005) reports that, sixteen years on, the Elton Report’s pleas for reform of the curriculum to engage all young people and for better buildings which instill a sense of pride are echoed by Sir Alan Steer, chairman of a task force of teachers who are looking at whether there should be a national code of behaviour in schools, new powers for head-teachers and improved teacher training.

The way in which ITT is structured, with its heavy emphasis on school-based elements, means that time is short within HEIs to provide information and debate on the principles and practices of behaviour management. This vital aspect of initial teacher training requires detailed treatment if the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of strategies and approaches are to be adequately assessed and practical application of the theory made. It could be argued that, with the exhaustive requirement to meet the new standards in ITT, the adoption of permeation¹⁸ (of content) has ensured a lightweight and possibly inconsequential university-based

¹⁸ Permeation is the name given to a method of including certain areas of study within defined subjects.

experience for trainee teachers. The approach has been criticized by Mittler (1992) who states that the extent and quality of permeation will vary from tutor to tutor and subject to subject and that by its actual nature permeation is invisible and therefore difficult to monitor. This may be partly offset, however, by what NQTs may consider to be more worthwhile school-based involvement.

McNally *et al.* (1994) suggest that classroom practice stands out as being the most significant element of professional training to trainee teachers because of its vividness and its emotional associations. They suggest that trainees can develop strong emotional attachments to the teachers and pupils they work with; not surprisingly the events they experience in schools inevitably stand out as vivid memories which transcend the more mundane aspects of their university-based professional training. In-school experience is therefore likely to be highlighted in any post-evaluation of their course. Without doubt anecdotes about behaviour management are likely to be high on their retrospective agenda. It is important, therefore, that schools provide opportunities for the discussion of practical, classroom oriented interventions with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour which inexperienced teachers may gain from.

Jordan (1995) argues against school-based training for a variety of reasons, not least that if the standards are found to be poor in schools, those same teachers will be responsible for the training of the next generation of teachers. In her opinion school-based training gives trainees skills without understanding. Bumard and Yaxley (2000) consider that initial teacher training has marginalized the behavioural aspects of teaching because of the trend for the last ten years in focusing on *what* teachers are teaching rather than the combination of *how* and what they are teaching.

Chazan (1994) found that many trainee and more experienced teachers in mainstream education have negative perceptions of and limited tolerance for pupils' challenging behaviour, and states that whilst behaviour management has to take its place in an order of priorities, the need to have a greater knowledge of behavioural weaknesses, difficulties and strengths and a far greater understanding of the link between behaviour and learning is preferable to the isolation of particular short-term chart-focused

responses. Like so many other single factor solutions to multi-faceted phenomena, the general endorsement of professional development means nothing without an accompanying understanding of the characteristics of *effective* as compared with *ineffective* training and professional development efforts, with regard to enhancing the knowledge, understanding and skills of the teachers involved. So how are knowledge, understanding and skills, relating to the management of pupils' behaviour, addressed within the secondary PGCE course?

1.12 The Trainee Teacher

A number of student teachers will more than likely encounter problems in the interactive reality of teaching. It is not uncommon that the most rigorously prepared teachers find that meticulous planning still falls short of what is required by classroom reality (Capel, 2001). Somehow the knowledge base of subject matter and teaching skills does not guarantee that pupils will be compliant, enthusiastic and cooperative. How is it that the teacher 'next door' can command the pupils' attention just by looking at them, but some teachers do not know how to hide their feelings of uncertainty when a pupil utters derogatory remarks or when some pupils seem to invent a thousand reasons for stalling, disrupting and not participating in the lessons?

Maynard and Furlong (1993) suggest that student teachers pass through different stages in their development as teachers, identifying five stages of development: early idealism (before they start), survival (as they start their school experience), recognizing difficulties (after they have survived the initial adjustment to the reality of teaching and become sensitive to the different demands placed on them), hitting the plateau (wanting to stick to what works, reluctant to try new ideas), and finally, moving on (feeling confident to experiment with their teaching). Capel (2001) researched the concerns of trainee teachers at different times during a one year PGCE course. Questionnaires were issued to student teachers on three occasions: at the beginning of the course in September; in January at the beginning of the second term of the course; and at the end of their course in July. At the first administration of the questionnaire the item causing most concern was an anxiety regarding the maintenance of an appropriate degree of class control. In the second and third

administrations of the questionnaire the item causing most concern was an impact anxiety regarding meeting the needs of different kinds of students. These findings substantiate the stages of development identified by Maynard and Furlong (1993) as well as research that has found that discipline is a concern for student teachers early in their experiences of learning to teach (Hart,1987; Dew-Hughes and Brayton, 1997). Data from phase 1b in this research would thoroughly support the notion of the management of pupil behaviour being a *significant* issue for newly qualified teachers.

Whilst it is crucially important that skills required for behaviour management are addressed on ITT courses and trainee teachers are provided with underpinning theory to support the development of these skills, *individual needs* of student teachers should also be addressed (Mittler, 2000). It is appreciated that the PGCE year is already overcrowded but consideration should be given as to how structures can be developed on PGCE courses that further encourage and support student teachers in addressing their own individual needs regarding the management of pupil behaviour, based on them identifying their strengths and areas for development. This could include providing situations and more explicit encouragement for student teachers to share their experiences and help each other, to develop the range of opportunities provided, to enable student teachers to experience as many different scenarios as possible and to promote further the development of reflective abilities (Dew-Hughes and Brayton,1997; Robertson,1999). One such opportunity is the induction period for NQTs.

1.13 The Induction Period

The induction period is designed to make sure that all NQTs are supported throughout the first year of teaching after they have been awarded QTS, and that their future professional and career development is built upon a firm foundation. These arrangements are based on two main aspects:

- an individual programme of professional development and monitoring
- assessment against National Induction Standards

Six Induction Standards are listed under headings regarding professional values and practice, knowledge and understanding and teaching. In order to complete the induction period satisfactorily, a newly qualified teacher must demonstrate competency against all of the six standards. Under the 'teaching' section, one of standards deals *specifically* with the management of pupils' behaviour and states that NQTs should 'secure a standard of behaviour that enables pupils to learn, and act to pre-empt and deal with inappropriate behaviour in the context of the behaviour policy of the school' (TTA, 2005. Induction Standard 'f').

NQTs arrive in their first post with a Career Entry Profile (CEP) which is to help them make the transition from initial teacher training to becoming established teachers. The main purpose of the CEP is to devise a focused and individualized programme of professional development, which will improve the NQTs' practice in areas identified for development during the induction period, thereby easing the gap between initial teacher training and the realities of their first post.

Labaree (2001) explores the roots of the gap between the reality and perception of learning to teach by first spelling out some of the characteristics of teaching that make it such a difficult form of professional practice. Amongst the factors he highlights is the fact that pupils must be willing to learn what the teacher is teaching and pupils are only present in the classroom because they are compelled to be there. In addition he suggests that teaching, unlike most other professions, requires teachers to actually manage an emotional relationship with pupils although, as he points out, there is no guidebook as to how to accomplish this. 'Like other practitioners in the professions of human improvement, teachers have to work things out on their own, without being able to fall back on standards of acceptable professional practice such as those that guide lawyers, doctors and accountants' (p.229). This, of course, is true for experienced teachers as well as the novice. In fact teaching, unlike other professions, is one in which novices are expected to perform the *same duties* as the more advanced professional.

The nature of the transition between student teaching and the induction period has often been characterized by researchers as involving some degree of 'reframing'. In

essence the induction period involves not simply an extension or modification of beliefs and practice established at the end of initial teacher training. Rather it also involves developing new perspectives concerning what the role of the teacher is really about, and what the job really entails (Russell and Munby, 1991). Without doubt, in the induction period new problems will be faced, amongst which will be the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Whilst this will probably have confronted teachers during their initial training, it is new in a sense because of the different experience of being a full-time member of staff as opposed to a student teacher on teaching practice.

Analysis of the focus groups in phase 1b of this thesis would substantiate the notion of the difference between teaching practice and experience during the early stages of induction. '90% of the time there is someone there (during teaching practice). Certainly a help but control wise it doesn't matter because you just look at your mentor to sort it out' (focus group 4). 'I think we should have been left on our own more, sink or swim mentality. You never felt they were your kids' (focus group 4). 'I feel I was kept away from real problems (on teaching practice) as the teacher always stepped in. I now really feel thrown in at the deep end' (focus group 5). 'We were never really given the 'bad' classes (on teaching practice). We were never left alone to see how we would cope' (focus group 6).

Dew-Hughes and Brayton (1997) suggest that NQTs may feel the tension or the poor connection between what they learned about the management of pupils' behaviour and what they discover is required in practice. It has been recognized that the transition from trainee to newly qualified teacher can be difficult. It has been called a dramatic and traumatic change and even a culture or reality shock (Capel, 1998). Davison (1997) recognises that the elation felt when student teachers qualify may be tempered by the realization that they now have to 'do it for real'. 'The prospect of starting a new school can create a mixture of excitement, eager anticipation and slight trepidation' (p.7). Napper-Owen (1996) also suggests that the first year of teaching is often the most difficult as new teachers make the transition from the preparation programme to actual teaching. They need not only to have satisfied all the requirements of QTS but also have the confidence to start work as an NQT.

Dew-Hughes and Brayton's survey (1997) found that the needs of pupils who display challenging behaviour was a predominant concern amongst NQTs. This type of behaviour was believed by the group to be the outward sign of a pupils' inability to cope with particular circumstances. In such situations NQTs felt that their own ability to cope was being challenged and that the resulting tension could lead to confrontation, thus escalating the undesirable behaviour. Teachers reported a discrepancy between their expectations of pupils who misbehaved and the reality of their first post. Most NQTs who responded to the survey believed they needed more help and further training. Dew-Hughes and Brayton (1997) state that there are subject specialists in mainstream secondary schools who find that a considerable part of their professional practice involves pupils whom they do not feel skilled enough to teach. There clearly is a need to help student teachers and NQTs to consider how they can promote positive interaction with their pupils.

1.14 Teacher – Pupil Interaction

Teacher-pupil relationships are at the core of teaching and the essence of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. There is no doubt that if positive interactions exist between pupils and teachers then this will contribute to the teaching and learning process and the likelihood of having to deal with pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour will be much less of an issue. In my experience, pupils in mainstream schools rarely present disruptive and challenging behaviour in *every* classroom. Additionally, it could be argued that such interactions are placed in a subordinate position alongside curricular and resource implications. Laslett (1993) highlights the fact that special schools and units are often criticised for the extent to which they fail to resemble mainstream schools, rather than be given recognition for the achievements they make in forging cooperative relationships based on respect between staff and pupils. This may well herald a key issue at the heart of school disaffection and behaviour problems, namely that it is the neglect of pupil's individual need for supportive relationships with teaching staff that often hinders these pupils' access to the curriculum.

Positive teacher-pupil interactions are not simply forged through teachers 'being nice', but rather by treating pupils as significant, important, worthy of time in order to express their point of view and also a commitment to understanding that they will from time to time feel extremely strongly about a situation. Kinder *et al.* (1996) found that the relationship with teachers was the second most important causal factor (after the curriculum) identified by the pupils themselves in seeking to explain their disruptive behaviour, and that parents were also aware of this relationship (Kinder and Wilkin, 1998).

Rudeness, disrespect, unfairness, victimisation, humiliation, lack of trust, sarcasm etc are a range of attitudes and characteristics that disaffected pupils perceive to be present in some teachers (Cooper *et al.*, 1994; O'Keefe, 1994; Kinder *et al.*, 1996; Blyth and Milner, 1999). A resounding grievance stated by Kinder *et al.* (1999) is the lack of respect that some teachers give to pupils. I can support this claim wholeheartedly evidenced by many conversations, during my professional practice, with disaffected pupils who constantly highlight this as a major issue of concern.

Any one of a significant number of incidents during a school day inside or outside school can serve as a starting point for the understanding of disaffection. Feelings of disaffection, experiences of control are part of all our lives and therefore an understanding of disaffection and disruption depends on the degree of awareness of our own feelings. We have to be willing to empathise with others and see the world from their point of view; a range of human reactions and emotions is open to us all. Everyday, in thousands of schools, pupils are interrogated about their actions. Some will have an answer, some will not, some will tell the truth, others will not. Such questions and answers would seem to be integral to the culture of our schools and may borrow their shape and form from the criminal justice system where life may be centred for days on a search for motives. Even in these circumstances the answers may not be satisfactory. 'There is no single explanation of any crime, or indeed of any act, momentous or trivial...' (Gardiner, 1985, p.29).

The systemic breakdown between pupils and the curriculum and teacher-pupil relationships represent the two major factors that contribute to disaffection in schools

(Kinder *et al.*, 1999). The need to address these two central components of education remains an extreme challenge, but a vital one in order to go some way to address disaffection in school and the resultant negative pupil-teacher interaction which often ensues. The way in which we can improve behaviour is concerned with how we develop the skills of interaction, for teachers and pupils.

Several research studies have provided information about teacher-pupil interaction in the classroom. Cooper and McIntyre (1996) report that factors connected with pupils' moods, attitudes and interests are the most prominent kinds of circumstantial factors to which teachers attend. Some of the outcomes sought by teachers tended to relate to the affective rather than the cognitive realm, in that they indicated a need for creating a classroom atmosphere that considered pupils' feelings. This, not surprisingly, motivated pupils to engage actively in their learning and to co-operate with others. These findings are consistent with Bruner's (1987) model of learning as a transactional process. Given an appropriate, shared social context, children appear to be more competent as intelligent social actors than they are as individuals.

However, other research on teacher-pupil interaction has produced different results. Alexander (1992), for example, suggests that teachers are unaware of the ways in which interaction may influence the learning process. In his study teachers certainly interacted with their pupils but the majority of the interactions were routine in nature. One to one interactions (verbal and non-verbal) were apparently brief and infrequent. The importance of non-verbal teacher-pupil interaction is highlighted by Cohen and Manion (1981). Firstly, non-verbal messages are seen as reflections of actual thoughts or feelings. Secondly, it is pointed out that a pupil's ability to learn depends on there being a shared system of non-verbal communication. Facial expressions and eye contact are considered to be the most important non-verbal communications (Nelson-Jones, 1993).

Interactions can be emotional, physical, cognitive or any combination of these factors. Teachers can, to some extent, be unaware of the complex details of interaction that are constantly unfolding in front of them. Wittgenstein (1973) suggests that the most important interactions are often hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. As a

consequence we may often fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and powerful.

Nelson-Jones (1993) suggest that intentionally or unintentionally teachers may send messages that create distance. For example, a teacher may physically edge away from a pupil who wishes to discuss personal concerns or a teacher can be physically near a pupil without being psychologically available. Rogers (1980) comments that when empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence are applied in teaching, an ease of interaction is facilitated. Rogers (1980) believes that too little consideration is given to 'empathetic' interpersonal understanding, arguably a critical element for the understanding and management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Non-verbal communication, subtle interpersonal messages and the dynamic complexity of teacher-pupil interaction can all be revealed in teachers' empathetic behaviour and non-verbal communication. When teachers possess this kind of interpersonal understanding, leading to an ability to understand a pupil's reactions from 'inside', then the likelihood of positive teacher-pupil interaction is significantly increased. Clearly, learning is facilitated when pupils are *understood* rather than evaluated or judged.

Arguably, insight into the factors determining teacher behaviour is essential if teacher educators wish to help student teachers develop or adjust their classroom behaviour. Part of this teacher behaviour is conscious and reflective, in particular when they have time to consider it consciously and carefully (Eraut, 1995). Unfortunately one of the characteristics of teaching is that more often than not a teacher is confronted with situations that demand immediate responses. During a school day teachers have to make many complex and quick decisions. Yinger (1985) assumes that many of these decisions are *not* made on a conscious basis, but that less conscious factors such as routines and spontaneous reactions determine a great deal of a teacher's behaviour. If these decisions are to be analysed there needs to be a move towards the notion of the analytical, self-critical and reflective professional.

1.15 Reflective practice in the management of pupils' behaviour

In the revised standards for Qualified Teacher Status (DfES, 2002), standard S1.7 (Commitment to Professional Development) states that 'to teach effectively, teachers need to have the capacity and commitment to analyse and reflect on their own practice'. Standard S2.7 (Promoting Good Behaviour) also states quite clearly in the evidence relating to the standard that evidence of trainees' knowledge may also come from 'their discussions with tutors and peers, and their analysis of classroom management and organizational issues that arise during their own and observed teaching'. The suggestion of suitable evidence continues to say that 'this analysis and other reflections on their own teaching might contribute to written assignments that provide further evidence of student teachers' knowledge'.

Reflection, as Calderhead (1989) has established, is a term used in a variety of ways. Following Lucas (1991) reflection is described as a systematic enquiry into one's own practice to improve that practice and to deepen one's understanding of it. According to Dewey (1933, p. 212) reflective thinking is important not only as a tool for teaching, but also as an aim of education, since 'it enables us to know what we are about when we act. It converts action that is merely appetitive, blind and impulsive into intelligent action'.¹⁹

The acknowledgement that the active practice of teaching may be too busy to be truly reflective does not mean that teaching is condemned to Dewey's blind impulsivity or routine habit. Teachers often feel that they are able to act with pupils in the classroom with more or with less thoughtfulness. Good teachers act and think at the same time and often do things with immediate insight. We often catch ourselves about to say or do something but then hold back before we commit ourselves. At other times the situation that we are in seems to tell us how we should act and respond to a situation.

¹⁹ It is of interest that recent exclusion legislation (DfES, October 2004) states that exclusion should not be imposed in 'the heat of the moment' (part 2, section 17, page 15) and recommends that time should be taken to reflect on the evidence.

Arguably, reflection is perhaps a more central means of learning for experienced teachers than it is for student teachers. According to MacIntyre (1993) there are at least three reasons for this. Firstly, so much of experienced teachers' practice is intuitive; they may find difficulty in changing their practice in a controlled or deliberate way. For student teachers, however, almost every step needs conscious deliberation and planning; their competence, such as it may be, is achieved through conscious control; to some extent they hardly need to reflect to become aware of what they have been trying to do and know. Secondly, according to MacIntyre experienced teachers are *able* to learn much more through reflection on their experience. Like Schon's (1983) expert practitioners they have repertoires from past experiences to draw on to illuminate current problems; they have rich reserves to draw on for thinking creatively through reflection in and on their experience. For student teachers who need to develop ways of construing situations and possibilities for effective action within these situations there will inevitably be a dependence on sources outside their teaching experience (e.g. from tutors, reading and research and previous experience of their own schooling).

Thirdly, at a time in their career when they need to consider ideas from other sources, student teachers are more likely to have access to these sources at the beginning of their careers than they may have at other times in the future. Within the specific area of behaviour management the concept of the teacher as a reflective practitioner is in part a response to the sense that a technical theory into practice debate does not seem sensitive to the realization that teacher knowledge and understanding must play an active and dynamic role in the ever changing challenges of the school and classroom (Van Manen, 1991). It could be argued that as much teacher preparation remains stuck in the traditional view of practice, the concept of the teacher as a reflective practitioner and the knowledge in action model suffers from practical flaws as far as the reality of the classroom is concerned.

In the management of pupils' behaviour, reflection on one's own practice for the beginning teacher has two main functions.

Firstly, it may enhance beginning teachers' immediate understanding of their own problems and needs in order to give helpful suggestions of where they may look for help from additional sources. Secondly, and this is more long term, it is guided practice in the skills of reflection on which they will become increasingly dependent as experienced practitioners. Dewey (1933) suggests that reflection precedes intelligent action and is the act of active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of that which supports it, and the consequences towards which it leads.

Reflective thinking from Dewey's point of view generally addresses practical problems, allowing for doubt and perplexity before possible solutions are reached. Schon (1983, 1987) introduced the dimension of time frames in which reflection takes place and linked reflection to action. Schon (1983) suggests that reflection is a purposeful, systematic inquiry into practice and emphasizes that professionals should learn to frame and reframe problems they face, test out various interpretations and modify their results. He argues that one of the main problems of professional education in general is that it focuses on standard scientific theories and how to apply them to straightforward cases. In reality, he suggests, real problems cannot be solved in this way. Skilful professional practice relies less on factual knowledge and rigid decision making models than on the capacity to reflect, interactively framing the problem as well as trying to work out possible solutions to improved practice. Schon (1983) considers that a reflective practitioner must blend textbook expertise and field knowledge to first define the important issues and the contexts in which these issues should be framed.

Reflection has come to be widely recognized as a crucial element in a teacher's professional growth (Calderhead and Gates, 1993). Terms such as the 'reflective practitioner', 'teacher as researcher' and 'reflective teaching' are popular in discussions of classroom practice and professional development. It is inferred that as teachers reflect they will automatically become better practitioners. The enthusiasm for reflective practice may be partially accounted for by the current attractiveness of many of the principles that have come to be associated with it: enhancing teachers' ability to analyse, discuss, evaluate and change their own practice; heightening teachers'

awareness of the contexts in which they work; highlighting moral and ethical issues and empowering teachers to take on more responsibility for their own professional growth (Winkler, 2001). The rhetoric of teachers as reflective practitioners, educators with a mission, able to take control over their own futures, has obvious appeal. What reflective practice actually consists of however is less clear.

Reflection in teacher education arguably involves attitudes, perceptions, judgments and beliefs as well as cognitive skills. The process of learning to teach and in particular the process of learning to manage pupils' behaviour, focused as they are on the analysis and development of experience, may well be in marked contrast to the academic learning to which student teachers may have been more accustomed. In the early stages of teacher training teachers need to develop a 'language' for talking about behaviour and at this stage simply being able to discuss it in observable terms would be a significant achievement. Thereafter, the art of reflection may develop into making explicit underlying beliefs and assumptions and using research evidence and academic theories by which to appraise day to day practice. This task is not easy, however, and there is a danger of expecting too much too soon.

Action and reflection are not neat duplicates of our theory and practice. The different assumptions and tacit knowledge we use to reflect on our experiences place significant constraints on how and what we can learn from them (Winkler, 2001). Vygotsky (1962) suggests that the different levels of discourse through which we elaborate our practical and theoretical understanding of our daily practice leads to fundamental differences in the quality of our thinking about the work we do. On an epistemological level practical knowledge is a particular kind of knowledge. It is formed and extended through everyday concepts which are acquired through everyday activities. In the case of teachers, the structure and content of their insights about behaviour management are acquired spontaneously in action and as their function is to help solve immediate and often potentially explosive situations their insights often remain unarticulated, unconscious and intuitive.

Dewey (1932) distinguishes reflection from intuition. He claims that intuitions are psychological and are indications of formed habit rather than thoughtful judgment. He

does, however, concede that intuitions may be the result of prior reflectivity and that they can in practice be useful. These intuitions, however, may have limitations. Firstly, they may have been faulty from the outset and secondly they could become too habitual and not subject to the re-evaluation and revision necessary for continual development and situational adaptation. Goodman (1984) takes a different stance on intuition. He sees it not as distinct from but as part of reflection. He describes three ways of thinking: routine, rational and intuitive, and proposes that reflective thinking occurs with the integration of rational and intuitive thought processes. The teacher may have 'flashes of inspiration and creative insights, but it requires careful planning and rational decision making to put novel ideas into practice' (p.20). Shulman (1988, p.33) suggests:

'While tacit knowledge may be characteristic of many things that teachers do, our obligation as teacher educators must be to make the tacit explicit. Teachers will become better educators when they can begin to have explicit answers to the questions: How do I know what I do? How do I know the reasons for what I do? Why do I ask my students to perform or think in particular ways?'

The ability to answer these questions is the essence of becoming a skilled teacher through a combination of reflection on practical experience and theoretical understanding. The tacit assumptions, values and intuitions of teachers, particularly trainee and NQTs, need to be surfaced and analysed.

Teachers who have fewer problems than others with behaviour management often cannot explain why, probably because their knowledge is acquired amidst the unpredictable tangle of daily classroom interactions. According to Vygotsky (1962) the most significant feature of everyday knowledge is that it is *situational* knowledge. It is usually not realized in or generated by systematic abstraction in thought. For most teachers learning occurs in their day to day work and is limited to the specific context of the classroom where there is usually no time to draw attention to the salient and 'generalisable' features of each situation that they have to deal with (Tickle,1994). However, by giving teachers opportunities to share their stories *after* the event through reflection-*on*-action, (Schon,1983), they have access to their experience in a contextual way that allows them to be competent and knowledgeable about learning.

According to Day (1999) by giving teachers a 'voice' to share their personal practical knowledge, researchers hope to place teachers at the centre of the development agenda, and provide them with an opportunity to actively and systematically become involved in the production of knowledge about their own teaching.

However, integral to the process of reflection on both a practical and theoretical level is that it has to be accompanied by confrontation if development is to occur. Without doubt, when teachers are discussing the management of pupils' behaviour they need to be given the opportunity to confront the assumptions they make about their work before they can move beyond a descriptive self-reflection of how things are and make decisions about how they might do things differently in the future. In other words the confrontation of the 'known' with the 'unknown' is theorized as a form of 'conceptual conflict' which should ultimately lead to cognitive change (Van Manen, 1991).

In behaviour management what is learnt through practice does not always challenge the theories that are used for reflection purposes. Theoretical knowledge is usually acquired outside of practice in formal learning contexts through formal instruction. The advantages of this type of knowledge is that an active engagement with theoretical concepts can provide teachers with an alternative mental 'space' within which they can reflect on their experience from a new qualitative perspective. The real challenge in discussions on behaviour management is articulating ideas and insights which lead to *practical solutions*. Teachers need to construct meaningful and powerful links between different experiences and use these links to create a broader network of knowledge and understanding about the management of pupils' behaviour.

1.16 Student Teachers' Personal Theories

Zeichner and Grant (1981) consider that despite the underlying conception of teaching or the philosophy of the course, teacher education programmes are a 'low impact-enterprise'. Many different possible reasons are offered as to an explanation of why such programmes have significantly little effect in encouraging student teachers to challenge their assumptions or to examine critically their professional practice. Zeichner and Liston (1987) unsurprisingly, suggest that much depends on the

student's childhood heritage as a learner and the quality of relationships experienced in educational contexts. After many years in classrooms as pupils and students they will have a number of ideas about what teachers do. However these ideas are derived from a student's, not a teacher's perspective and as a consequence are likely to be inaccurate. Additionally, students will obviously vary in their orientation towards growth and inquiry. Crucially, such misconceptions and/or reticence may distort or block any new information presented in teacher education programs. Consequently, the potential influence of student preconceptions on the reflective activities and programmes that teacher-educators design and implement need to be considered carefully.

It is against this background that a growing interest in personal theory began to emerge. Johnson (1988) argues that teachers' pre-existing views about teaching and learning can be so pervasive that unless directly challenged any attempt to alter teaching styles will be ineffectual. The management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour will hold many prejudices stemming from childhood and teenage experiences. Greater self knowledge in this area can lead to being less judgmental, more flexible, open to others' points of view and able to appreciate the experiences of others, thus going beyond personal understandings and developing professionally. In the management of pupils' behaviour students need to be involved at a *personal level* in order to make sense of what is being explained to them.

It is important to be clear as to what is meant by 'personal theory' and why such theories are believed to be so significant. According to Tann (1993) 'theory' in this professional context refers to a person's set of beliefs, values, understandings and assumptions; in fact the ways of thinking about the teaching profession. This personal theory usually exists at an implicit level and therefore may be difficult to articulate. Encouraging students to elicit and articulate their personal theories about the management of pupils' behaviour allows them to be aware of their own interpretive frameworks and to be able to contrast theirs with both their peers and colleagues. In this way the process allows them to clarify their own thoughts and experiences, to juxtapose personal and public theory and thus to overcome the limitations of experience (Zeichner and Liston, 1987). This process could contribute significantly towards becoming a reflective practitioner.

Knowledge of reflective methods alone may not be sufficient however. There arguably should be a union of skilled methods with attitudes. Dewey (1933) spoke of the need to develop certain qualities or traits of character such as open-mindedness or sincerity, wholehearted or absorbed interests, responsibility as well as a need to think in a reflective way. He further highlights that reflection involved in practical situations only differs in that it has a specific kind of subject matter being concerned with things to be done, judgments of a situation demanding action. In making this distinction however Dewey passes over the more recent observation that reflection in action may indeed have a logic of its own. Schon (1983, p.54) suggests that phrases such as 'thinking on your feet' and 'keeping your wits about you' suggest not only that 'we can think about doing something but that we can think about something while doing it'.

Because teaching is complex and unpredictable, teachers cannot rely entirely on routine ways of coping with the myriad of episodes within a school day. Teaching therefore involves a process of acting, reflecting on the effects of one's actions and constantly adapting one's behaviour to the situation and purposes at hand (*reflection-in-action*), (Schon, 1983). This notion is strongly disputed by Eraut (1995) however, who analysed the effect of available thinking time on the mode of cognition and like Yinger (1985) noted that teachers in educational contexts rarely have time to reflect whilst they are actually engaged in action. Eraut points out that the available time influences the degree of consciousness of the teacher's decisions.

The notion of reflection-in-action is interesting. How reflective is the active moment when the teacher is engaged with pupils in his or her charge? How appropriate is the image of reflection-in-action, thinking about doing something whilst doing it? It may well be true that at times, if there is a lull in the activity of teaching, the teacher can step back and decide what needs to be done next and the strategies that will be used. However, even in these situations reflection is inevitably somewhat limited and restricted to the task in hand rather than considering the full range of possibilities of interpreting what is going on, understanding the varieties of meaning behind the various observed behaviours, considering alternative courses of action, weighing up the consequences, deciding what to do and then implementing the decision.

With regard to behaviour management, teachers often feel a sense of pressure from being constantly 'on the spot'. Some thirty or so pairs of eyes will often be registering each and every move and decision. It could be argued that this quality of engaged immediacy contributes substantially to the phenomenon of teacher fatigue and enervation. Ironically, the teaching profession perhaps cannot help but be *unreflective* in the sense that the classroom teacher must constantly act 'on the spot' and cannot postpone action in order to reflect on all the possible outcomes. However the idea of an unreflective type of pedagogy is surely a contradiction in terms (which is not to say that there are no 'unreflective' teachers).

What makes true reflection-in-action difficult is that life in classrooms is contingent, dynamic and ever-changing. Certainly within the area of behaviour management every second is situation-specific. Ongoing incidents often require instant response and action. According to Watkins (1997) teachers are regularly engaged in over 1,000 interactions a day, sometimes more, the nearest job to that being an air traffic controller! In everyday life in classrooms the thousand and one things that teachers do, say, or do and not say, all have normative significance. Not only the goals of education but also the means and methods used all have pedagogical value and consequences for learning. All teaching situations pose innumerable questions about the management of pupils' behaviour. What should teachers say or not say? Which behaviours need addressing and which may best be judicially ignored? What expectations are appropriate? How can teachers concentrate on the positive as a mechanism for altering the negative? There are no social scientific facts, no moral philosophies that can tell teachers what to do in particular circumstances. The social context of any classroom and the number of constant interactions between teacher and pupils will always be too complex for any single theory or set of principles to fit the bill. Usually the teacher will not have time to distance themselves from the moment in order to deliberate morally, critically and rationally about what they should do or say next. Normal pupil-teacher interaction does not allow immediate social distance.

Most certainly, the substance of pedagogical acting often takes place on a level of temporal immediacy that does not permit a stepping back from or out of the situation in order to consider a range of alternatives, a task better afforded by reflection-*on*-action.

Reflection-on-action (Schon,1983) places emphasis on after the event evaluation. Teachers, after a lesson or after the day is over, may reflect back on particular events, analyzing where difficulties arose, considering how they might best be addressed and deciding on future strategies their teaching and classroom management might take. They may do this in a mood of idle speculation or in a deliberate effort to prepare themselves for future cases.

As a practice, teaching becomes more repetitive and routine and as knowing in practice becomes more tacit and spontaneous the teachers may miss opportunities to think about what they are doing. They may find that they are drawn into patterns of error which they cannot correct. With regard to behaviour management I would argue that some teachers become selectively inattentive to phenomena that do not fit the categories of their knowing in action; as a result they can afflict their pupils with the consequences of their narrowness and rigidity. As Kelly (1955) points out, twenty years teaching experience can be the same year repeated twenty times over.

Whether one gives priority to theory or practice one cannot easily detach oneself from a philosophy that is already committed to an intellectualized theory-practice distinction in the first place. Van Manen (1991) suggests an interesting notion of 'pedagogical tact' as a third option. He does not suggest that tact can be a set of skills that somehow mediates between theory and practice. Rather he suggests that tact possesses its own knowledge structure which manifests itself as a certain kind of acting, an active consciousness of thoughtful human interaction. This has interesting connotations for the management of pupils' behaviour as the notion of tact is insensitive to traditional theory-practice distinctions.

Additionally we know intuitively that tact must always remain receptive to social contexts. To be tactful is almost a moral concern. For a teacher to act tactfully in a classroom with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour, they need to sense the pedagogical significance of a situation and know what to do about it. Tactful action in these circumstances, however, can often be instantaneous. The perceptiveness needed, the insight needed and the feeling for the right action are not necessarily

sequential steps. Somehow perceptiveness, feeling and insight are instantly realised. As Van Manen (1991) suggests, tact occupies the place that theory leaves vacant.

In the management of pupils' behaviour, this notion of tact is a kind of confidence in action (Molander,1992; Johannessen,1992). It is not reflectively reasoned thought translated into action; it is I would argue, a knowledge all of its own. Polanyi (1958) talks of the well-known example of the tacit form of personal knowledge, an active awareness that we rely on whilst involved in an activity. It is understood that it is difficult to articulate tacit knowing because it is encompassed in skills that are situated inside practices, ways of doing things. This discussion has clearly located practical knowledge as not primarily in the intellect or the head but rather in the existential situations in which teachers find themselves. Student teachers have to acquire this 'tact' alongside a multiplicity of other skills and techniques. Confidence in action (Molander,1992; Johannessen,1992) is not some kind of affective action which makes the management of pupils' behaviour easier, rather this confidence becomes the active knowledge itself, the tact of knowing what to do or what not to do and what to say or what not to say.

Finally, what might the outcomes be of reflection on behaviour management? The results of the acts of reflection engaged in by student teachers and NQTs may be new comprehensions about behaviour management in which they may gain new insight. In addition they may gain knowledge, understanding and 'tact' about the process of reflection itself. In addition, the new comprehensions should always be tentative and subject to continual revision. Schon (1983) considers that situations do not present themselves as givens, but are constructed from events that are puzzling, troubled and uncertain. In the management of pupils' behaviour it is this recognition of emotional discomfort that defines the process of reflectivity. A teacher who experiences repeated disruption from a pupil and becomes angry may ask the pupil to leave the classroom. By displacing feelings of frustration and concern onto the pupil, new perspectives as to what may lie *behind* the pupil's disruptive behaviour, why the event occurred and alternatives for responding differently, will remain. Schon (1987) challenges teachers to 'move into the centre of the learning situation, into the centre of their own doubts' (p.83). Professional reflectivity allows distress to inform a new direction. As a

consequence reflection should be future oriented. 'We cannot undo the past: we can affect the future' (Dewey, 1932, p.170).

This knowledge could serve as a guide for action for teacher educators, who deal with the complex task of helping trainee and newly qualified teachers learn principles, practice and 'tact' concerning the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. In phase two of my research I encouraged NQTs to engage in the social process of construing and appropriating new or revised interpretations of their experiences. This enhanced emotional awareness enabled them to think critically about their practice and use this as a guide to future action and interaction.

1.17 An Interactionist perspective on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour

Interactionism is located firmly within the real world of teaching and its issues relate to teachers' day to day concerns such as effective teaching, classroom control and pupil deviance (Woods, 1983). Interaction has been defined as reciprocal communication in which each person reacts to and communicates with the other (Hargreaves, 1975). Mead (1934) views interaction from a sociological perspective and considers that the conscious mind, self-awareness and self-regulation are central, viewing human thought as being basically social. Woods (1983) argues that when teachers and pupils are interacting they are constantly interpreting the acts of themselves and others responding to them. Behaviour, therefore, is not only a response to a stimulus from another person but actions are constructed through shared symbols in acts of reciprocity.

Interactionist sociology argues that society is not a thing external to individuals which influences their beliefs and behaviour. Rather it is how individuals make sense of it, that is *interpret* it. McClelland (2000) suggests that Interactionists focus upon the way we create or construct the many aspects of our world by way of individuals continually acting and reacting to each other. The complex and ever changing nature of our society is reflected in the complexity of these interactions.

1.18 Social Interactionism

Through a process of interaction and communication, teachers and pupils respond to each other and adjust their understandings and behaviour as they negotiate a shared sense of order and reality with others (Wheldall and Glynn,1989). Central to this process is the notion that pupil and teacher behaviour may change in the light of the social circumstances in which they find themselves. Each individual's sense of identity is constantly being constructed and reconstructed as he/she moves through differing events and circumstances and encounters different situations and different people.

Both teachers and pupils are concerned with themselves and each has a unique sense of self and a free will in developing an understanding with others. A teacher's sense of 'self' is of particular importance because of the way it can influence their perspectives. Perspectives in this sense refer to the frameworks through which teachers make sense of their everyday practice. Their view of reality is through a screen, or an interpretational code which they employ to understand the world (Woods,1983). Thus the term perspective is used to refer to how people think, feel and act in a situation.

Perspectives arise when people face choices. In many crucial situations in the classroom an individual teacher's perspective may allow them no choice, dictating that they can only do one thing. When an individual teacher's choices are not constrained, they may be in a better position to develop a perspective and become more flexible. If a particular kind of situation recurs frequently (as it often does in the management of pupil's behaviour) then the individual teacher concerned may use their 'perspective' as an established part of the way they deal with the situations that they find themselves in.

1.19 Four Fundamental Principles

A social interactionist perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour rests on four fundamental principles (adapted from Felson and Tedeschi, 1993). Firstly, it interprets disruptive and challenging behaviour as *instrumental* behaviour, as a means to achieving certain values or goals. For example, disruptive behaviour can often be

displayed as a means to influence others, to establish and maintain valued social identity, or to achieve attention or retribution (the theory's emphasis on motives distinguishes it from a *symbolic interactionist* approach).

Secondly, it would be critical of the view that disruptive and challenging behaviour is 'forced out' by inner forces such as aggressive energy, instincts, hormones or frustration. Instead it would be viewed as a normal outcome of conflict in human relations. When interests diverge, disruptive and challenging behaviour is one strategy that pupils use, in order to achieve compliance.

Thirdly, it would treat situational and interpersonal factors as critical in instigating a problem. This often leads to third parties becoming involved and exacerbating the situation. In the school environment the outcomes are not pre-determined but are a function of the interchange that occurs between pupil and pupil or pupil and teacher as the incidents escalate.

Finally, a social interactionist perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour emphasises the people involved, whose actions, values and expectations are important in the likelihood of decision alternatives. Thus, beliefs about injustice, the assignment of blame and the explanations that pupils and teachers give to excuse or justify their behaviour are central. Everyday in schools there are occasions when perceived damage to social identities can lead to resentment.

1.20 Quality of Interaction

Bies and Moag (1986) propose that people are concerned about the quality of treatment they receive from others in social interactions. They refer to the individual's sensitivity to respectful treatment and honesty as aspects of interaction justice. Tyler and Lind (1990) also emphasise that judgments of justice more often than not involve the perception that others failed to show respect. The issue of 'respect' is extremely pertinent to teacher-pupil interaction and the resultant management of pupil behaviour. Teachers nowadays have to *earn* respect from their pupils through a firm, fair and consistent approach to their management of pupils' behaviour.

Attributions of blame, lack of respect and injustice frequently lead to expressions of anger. In an interaction between pupil and teacher or pupil and pupil they are often accusatory and may be inadequately expressed. More often than not pupils with a potential to regularly display disruptive and challenging behaviour do not have the social skills to get out of a difficult situation. The likelihood of successfully attaining a goal in a social situation depends upon the dynamic combination of interpersonal skills (impression management) together with the more straightforward technical skills (Goffman,1959). Understanding the nature of a social situation is essential to a competent social performance in it; if pupils are unable to perceive what behaviour ought to be used in a particular situation, they are unlikely to achieve whatever goals they may have been pursuing.

Schools consist of human beings engaging in action. The action consists of the multitudinous activities that the individuals perform in their life as they encounter one another and as they deal with the succession of situations confronting them. The individuals may act singly, they may act collectively and they may act on behalf of groups of others (Woods, 1983). Fundamentally, human groups in school exist in action. The activities of teachers and pupils occur predominantly in response to one another or in relation to one another. Unfortunately however, teacher-pupil interaction within a school context may be taken for granted and treated as having little if any significance in its own right. Often factors such as rules, attitudes, hidden complexes and psychological processes are used to account for pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour without any heed to considering the interaction between teacher and pupil, which may well have been the catalyst (Hargreaves *et al.*,1975). Arguably there is often one jump from such causative factors to the behaviour they are supposed to produce. As teachers take account of their pupils' ongoing acts they have to stop, reorganize or adjust their own intentions, feelings and attitudes; similarly they have to judge the fitness of the norms, values and group prescriptions for the situation being formed by the acts of others.

In every situation involving communication with others, we all assume roles. There are the roles that we play and the stage that we act out these roles. There is also an audience. Goffman (1959) sees this as how we all interact with one another; social

interaction is then a 'performance'. Goffman (1959) focuses on this performance of the individual in front of others:

'He may wish them to think highly of them, or to obtain no clear cut impression; he may wish to ensure sufficient harmony so that the interaction can be sustained, or get rid of, confuse, mislead, antagonize, or insult them. Regardless of the particular objective he has in mind and of his motive for having this objective, it will be in his interests to control the conduct of others, especially their responsive treatment of him' (p.15).

Goffman (1959) presents the argument that in all interaction a basic underlying theme is the desire of each participant to guide and control the responses made by the others present. Sometimes the individual will act in a thoroughly calculating manner, expressing himself in a given way solely in order to give the kind of impression to others that is likely to evoke from a specific response he is concerned to obtain: perhaps vague acceptance or approval that is likely to emanate from those impressed by the expression. This notion has much affinity with a pupil seeking attention from their peers or the teacher.

In educational research the perspective of social interactionism recognizes the existence of structural conditions. Within these conditions people interpret the meaning of the process and practices as they appear to them in situations that confront them and they construct new forms of action as a result of that interpretation. In the context of schooling the individual is at the forefront, interacting, negotiating and having influence on the organizations and groups of which she or he is a part (Radnor, 2001).

1.21 Summary

A critical review of the relevant literature has increased my understanding of previous work related to my research focus. This literature review has set my research in context by critically discussing and referencing work that has already been undertaken, drawing out key points and highlighting areas where I may provide fresh insight. It is also intended to lead the reader into subsequent sections of my research.

It is important that a mindset is created at the beginning of this study and therefore it was logical to begin the literature review with different writer's *perceptions* of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Overall, from an educative stance this type of behaviour is seen to have a negative affect on the teaching and learning process. In addition, Zarkowska and Clements (1994) suggest that disruptive and challenging behaviour is contrary to the social norm and causes significant stress to those connected with the individual. This suggestion of a lack of social responsibility led to a discussion on deviance *specifically* from an educational viewpoint.

Thomas and Loxley (2001) introduce the term 'social interaction' in their discussion of the deviance defining process, along with Blumer (1969), who places primary importance on the interactions themselves, seen as they are as a process and formation of the meanings that underlie behaviour. Labelling theory (Becker, 1963) is discussed from a criminological perspective but the similarity with what is happening in schools is very poignant. The reaction of senior managers and teachers to rule breaking is a key process that determines outcome. Clearly, this will involve individual perceptions, attitudes and judgments and lies at the heart of social interaction.

From a social interactionist perspective (Felson and Tedeschi, 1993) each individual derives a sense of identity from his/her interaction with others. The management of pupils' behaviour in schools can often be explained and understood by looking closely at the interactions that take place within schools between the 'actors' (i.e. the teachers and pupils). The *quality* of interaction between teachers and pupils lies at the heart of behaviour management; therefore the notion of social interactionism forms the philosophical underpinning to my study.

Throughout the literature review the notion of teacher-pupil interaction takes prominence. Kinder *et al.* (1996) state that the relationship with teachers is the second most important causal factor (after the curriculum) identified by the pupils themselves in seeking to explain their disruptive behaviour. Several writers focus on this notion (Wittgenstein, 1973; Rogers, 1980; Bruner, 1987; Alexandra, 1992; Nelson-Jones, 1993; Eraut, 1995; Cooper and McIntyre, 1996; O'Brien, 1998; MacGrath, 2000).

An educational perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour addresses the issue of poor teacher-pupil interaction as a palpable form of interference in the teaching and learning process. This notion led to a discussion on teachers' professional knowledge and competence in the management of pupils' behaviour and a perspective on the merits of teachers reflecting on their *own* behaviour. Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (1955), was introduced at this stage in the literature review as a psychology in which the world is 'perceived' by a person in terms of whatever meaning that person applies to it. The notion of 'constructive alternativism' (Kelly, 1955) i.e. the ability of each individual applying alternative meanings to any events in the past, present or future has much applicability to the management of pupils' behaviour and has had substantial impact on my research questions and design.

There is evidence to suggest (Holt, 1965; Pollard, 1982; Salmon, 1995; Thomas and Loxley, 2001; Gray, 2002) that what some teachers may perceive as challenging behaviour could, from another viewpoint, be interpreted as a legitimate protest about a pupils' dissatisfaction with the teaching and learning styles that they are faced with. These different perceptions will naturally influence how a teacher addresses pupils' behaviour and will more than likely have an impact on the teacher – pupil relationship. The notion of teachers viewing disruptive and challenging behaviour from different perspectives, and the consequent effect that these perspectives may have on their *management* of pupils' behaviour became the catalyst for my research questions.

Towards the end of the literature review there is an emphasis on the contribution of reflective practice to the management of pupils' behaviour. The competency framework, involved in the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), has been discussed which revealed that attitudes, judgments and perceptions, along with the nature of teacher-pupil relationships, are not easily defined. In addition, they appear to be left out of account within a competency framework, which is in danger of being too prescriptive. Standards relating to the management of pupils' behaviour have been highlighted but there is a danger of the standards in the specific area of behaviour management being diluted somewhat due to the extremely demanding task of forty-two standards having to be met in a relatively short time span.

Teachers' personal theories about the quality of interaction that exists between themselves and their pupils are a significant consideration in the management of pupils' behaviour. According to Tann (1993) 'theory' in this professional context refers to a person's set of beliefs, values, understandings and assumptions. This personal theory usually exists at an implicit level and therefore may be difficult to articulate. Van Manen (1991) considers that teachers need to be given the opportunity to confront the assumptions they make about their work before they can move beyond a descriptive self-reflection of how things are and make decisions about how they might do things differently in the future. This notion became the essence of my research and now takes me forward into the fieldwork.

Chapter 2 : Pilot Study

2.1 Baseline Observations

The rationale for the pilot study was to gain an understanding of the most prevalent behaviours being exhibited in secondary mainstream classrooms by pupils and teachers. In order to investigate this I devised a systematic structured observation schedule. To an extent by using this quantitative approach I was adopting a somewhat detached stance due to my quantifying behaviour. As such this structured observation formed only part of my data collection approach because its function was to tell me *how often* things happened rather than *why* they happened. Additionally, however, there was also a qualitative element. Apart from identifying certain behaviours it was perhaps inevitable that, in the words of Gill and Johnson (1997, p.13) I 'shared some of the teacher's experiences by not merely observing what was happening but also feeling it'. Without doubt I sensed an 'atmosphere' in classrooms at the beginning of each observation with regard to my anticipations of what behaviours may unfold.

Five secondary schools were involved at this stage in my research design. I spent two days in each school observing an average of 31 classes (15 minutes in each lesson) resulting in observations in 150 classrooms over ten days. Using a coding scheme in each of the lessons, I measured whether or not a particular behaviour occurred, leading to an overall indication of a *frequency* of behaviours. The pre-determined categories were inspired by reference to the Elton Report (1989), and my own professional knowledge and experience.

Within the coding scheme I used *interval coding* which was triggered by time rather than events. The observation schedule was divided into five, two minute intervals with a one minute break in between (refer to figure 2 p.79).

My role in the structured observations was twofold:

- A researcher external to the institutions concerned with the purpose of gathering data for analysis and interpretation.

- A teacher trainer delivering In-Service Education and Training (INSET) to the institutions (three to four weeks after the observations) on the management of pupils' behaviour

In all five schools I, along with a colleague, delivered a whole day's INSET on the management of pupils' behaviour, integrating the results of the observations into the training, planning support materials and activities to highlight pertinent issues. This act of reciprocity seemed to be the best way forward for all concerned. The observations certainly enhanced the INSET, as they highlighted a current perspective in relation to each individual school and allowed a specific 'tailoring' of information which, according to the evaluations, was well received and appreciated. From a research point of view it equipped me with empirical evidence to form a foundation for my research.

I was fully aware that as an educator working within an educational context I was observing people like myself in a familiar work location. I was conscious of my own experience in similar settings and how people behave in them. I had a cultural understanding of the environment which meant I could read the situation I was in with a greater degree of accuracy and in a shorter space of time than in a culturally unfamiliar setting. This in itself, however, could have had a negative effect on the quality of the observation data. I realized that I had not to be lulled into being less conscientious and making assumptions about what was going on based on my overall knowledge of the subject; it was imperative therefore that I concentrated specifically on each of the observations under study.

2.2 Ethical Considerations

I was, naturally, going to be forming impressions, ideas, judgments of a kind and conclusions about people and/or the schools in which I conducted my research. I was aware, at the very early stages of my preparations to carry out my research, of the importance of giving serious thought to the ethical aspects of what I was proposing to do. Wells (1994, p.284) defines ethics in terms of 'a code of behaviour appropriate to academics and the conduct of research'. The conduct of my research in this phase was guided by a code of ethics provided by Oxford Brookes University's Code of

Practice for Research involving Human Participants (2003). This document provided me with a statement of principles and procedures that should be followed.

In the pilot study for instance there may well have been concern about the uses to which I was going to put my findings. There was also the issue that as an educator in an educational setting I needed to be aware that I may have been perceived by the teachers in the settings as there to 'check them out' rather than being a researcher/INSET provider intent on just 'finding out'. I was mindful of others' ambiguous perceptions of my role and that I needed to deal with this in as sensitive a way as possible. My dual role as teacher trainer / researcher meant that a reciprocal arrangement was in place in which I was giving as well as taking. Informed consent was imperative. This is defined by Diener and Crandall (1978) as the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts which would be likely to influence their decisions. It was important that there was a clear opportunity for individuals to elect not to take part in the classroom observation schedule. Those who consented were promised that any information collected for research purposes would be kept strictly confidential and anonymity was ensured with regard to the collection, storage and publication of research material. It was also stated that issues raised for INSET purposes would be de-personalised at all times. All staff received a letter outlining these issues succinctly (refer to appendix B2).

2.3 Pilot Study Results

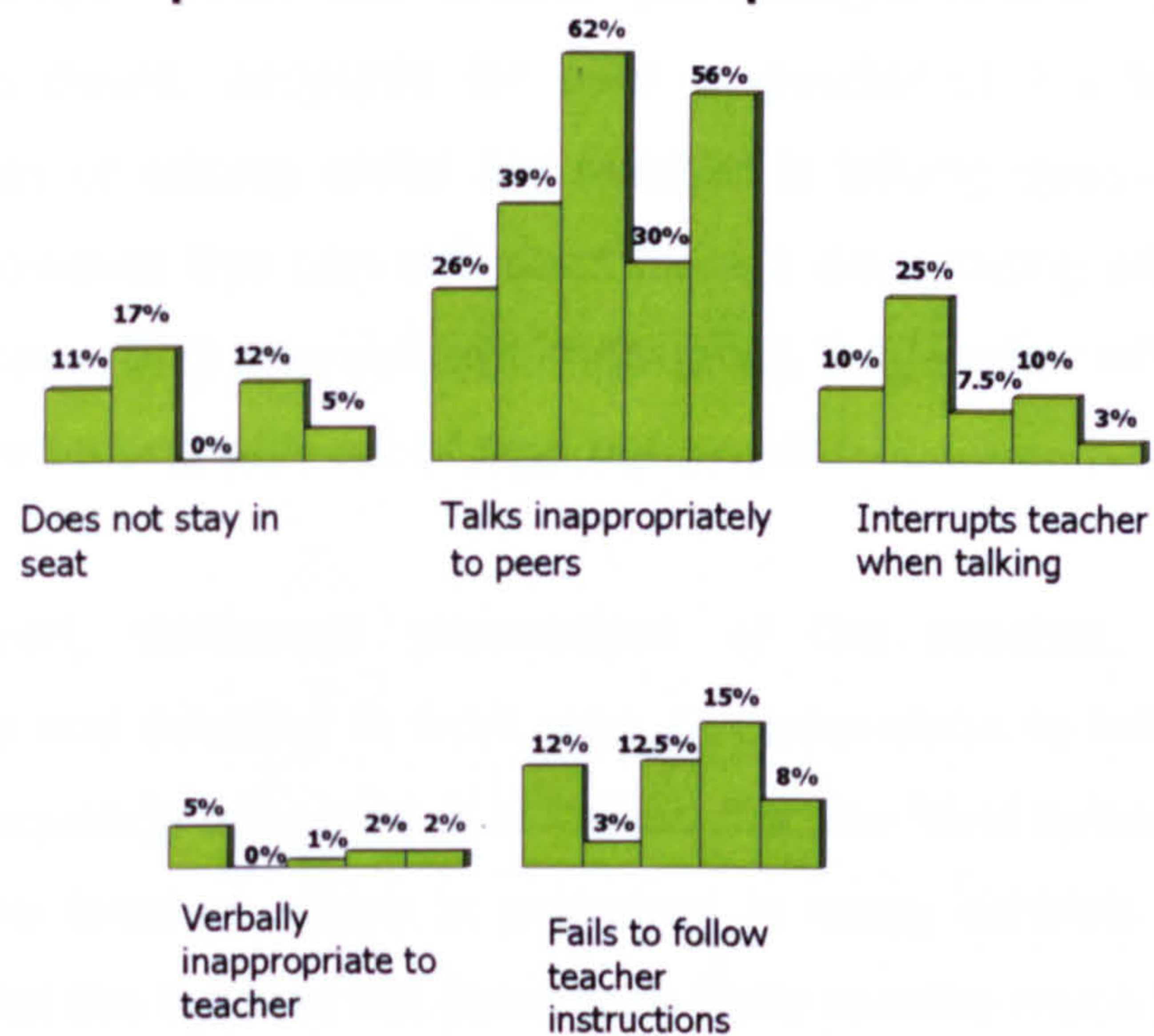
Once all the observations were completed the results were compiled enabling me to identify the most prevalent behaviours being exhibited. The top ten most frequently recorded pupil behaviours in the pilot study are compared with the top ten types of behaviour listed in the Elton Report (1989) in figure 3.

Figure 3: Comparison of behaviours observed in the baseline study and those observed in the Elton Report

Top ten behaviours observed in the pilot study (2003)	Top ten behaviours listed in the Elton Report (1989)
Talking inappropriately to peers	Talking out of turn
Shouting out	Calculated idleness or work avoidance
Interrupts teacher whilst talking	Hindering other pupils
Fails to follow teacher instructions	Not being punctual
Does not stay in seat	Making unnecessary (non-verbal) noises
Provokes peer conflict	Persistently infringing classroom rules
Misuse of equipment	Getting out of seat without permission
Deliberately provokes teacher	Verbal abuse towards other pupils
Verbally inappropriate to teacher	General rowdiness
Refuses to work	Cheeky or impudent remarks or responses

It can be seen that the findings in this baseline study relating to pupils' behaviour are very similar to Elton's (1989) and recently substantiated by Ofsted (2005, p.4) 'The most common form of poor behaviour is persistent, low-level disruption of lessons that wears down staff and interrupts learning. Extreme acts of violence are very rare and are carried out by a very small proportion of pupils'. What is unclear, however, is currently whether low level disruption is appearing more or less frequently. In terms of my research data, it is certainly occurring frequently enough to hinder the teaching and learning process. The results of the observations of pupil behaviour in all five schools can be seen in figure 4 p. 81.

Pupil Behaviour-comparison



Pupil Behaviour-comparison

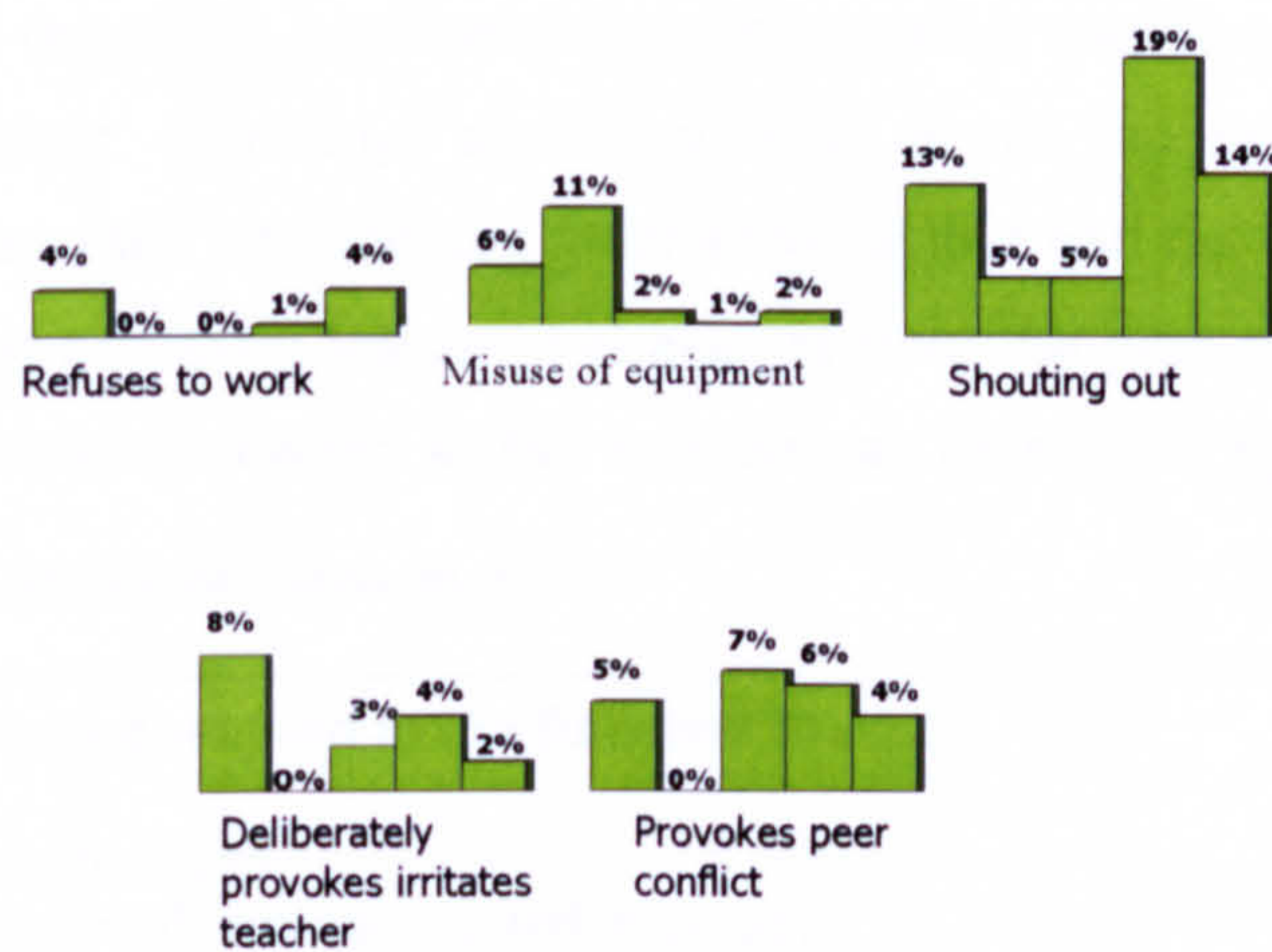


Figure 4: Pupil Behaviour - comparison of five schools

It can be seen from figure 4 that the most prevalent pupil behaviour across all five schools was *talking inappropriately to peers*. In school 3 it constituted 62% of the behaviours observed. Even the *lowest* percentage recorded, regarding talking inappropriately to peers, accounts for over a *quarter* of the behaviour observed. Talking out of turn or talking whilst the teacher is talking doesn't perhaps sound a heinous crime. However this can and does have a devastating effect on the teaching and learning process. Shouting out and interrupting the teacher whilst talking was also frequently observed along with out of seat behaviour.

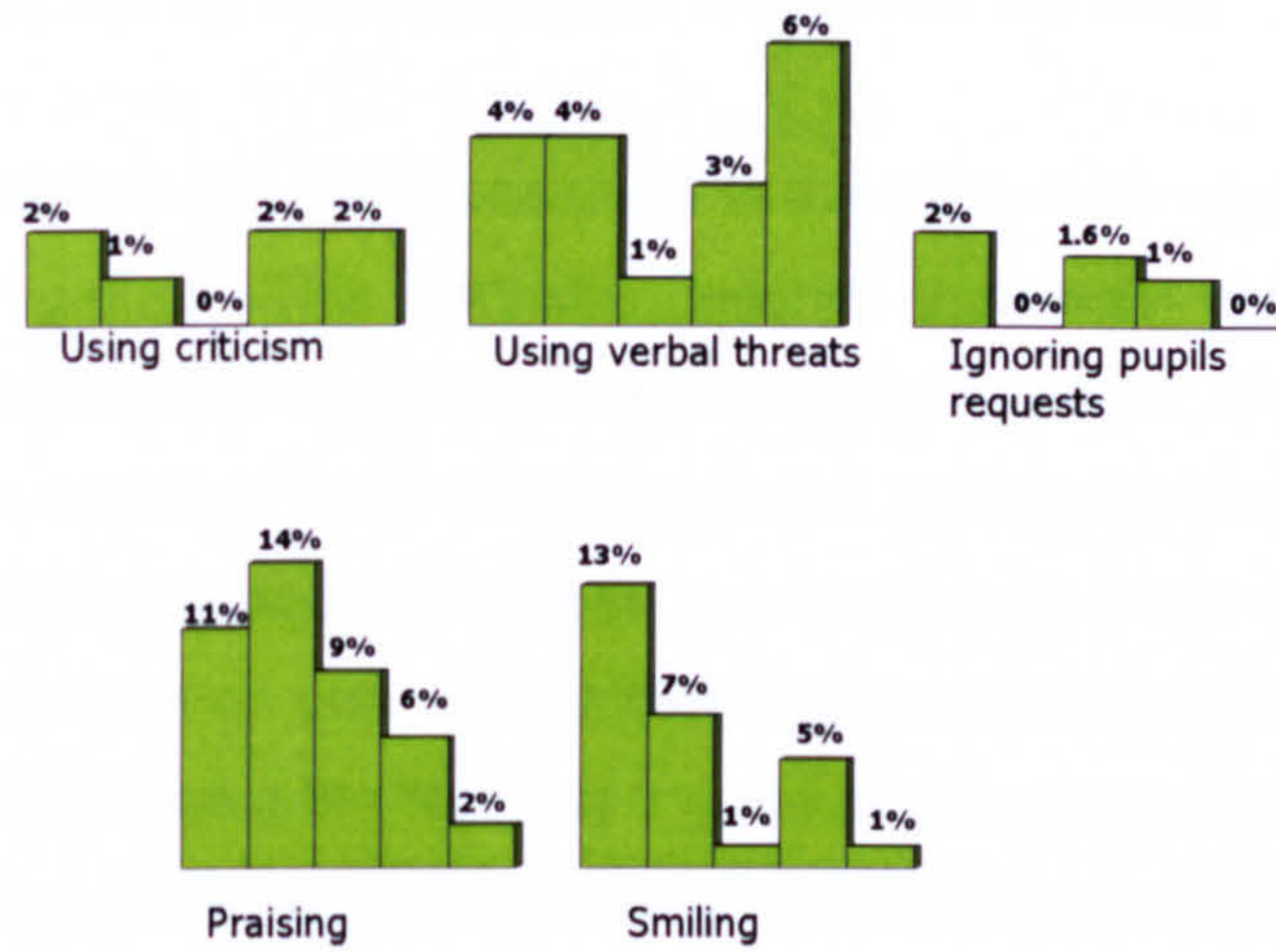
Examples of overt, deliberate provocation of the teacher, along with verbal inappropriateness and refusing to work was, in comparison to talking out of turn and shouting out, infrequently observed. It is indeed the 'low level behaviour', usually not at all personal to the teacher, which is prevalent in many schools and classrooms. A related issue is that the teacher will more than likely receive much less support for low level behaviour than something which is overtly personal and/or threatening. Arguably, extreme examples of inappropriate behaviour to the teacher often are very short lived. Some of the more 'low level' examples such as talking out of turn or pupils constantly getting out of their seats can be extremely debilitating however due to their alarming regularity and persistence.

In addition to data regarding *pupil* behaviour, information was also collated with regard to *teacher* behaviour. Arguably, any discussion about the management of *pupil* behaviour must also take into account *teacher* behaviour and the relationship between the two. The most prevalent teacher behaviours from the pilot study are recorded in figure 5 and comparison between all five schools can be seen in figure 6 p.83.

Figure 5: Recorded Teacher Behaviour

- | |
|--|
| <p>Teacher Behaviour observed in the Baseline Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talking to the class• Discussing work individually and in groups• Praising• Smiling• Using verbal threats• Raising voice in anger or frustration• Using sarcasm• Using criticism• Ignoring pupils' requests• Being silent |
|--|

Teacher Behaviour-comparison



Teacher Behaviour-comparison

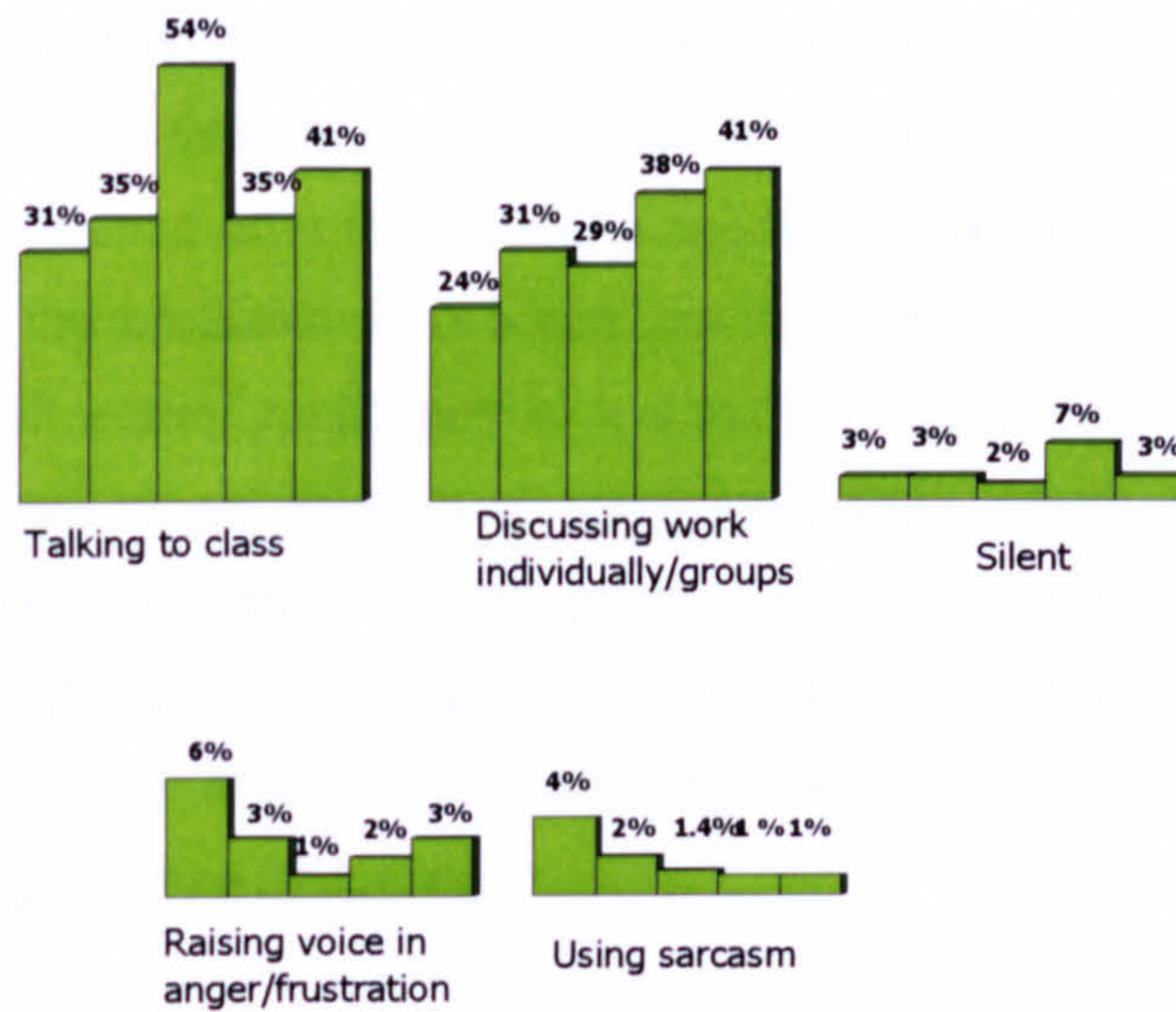


Figure 6: Teacher Behaviour Comparison

With regard to the most prevalent *teacher* behaviours it is clear from the bar charts that teachers spend a lot of time *talking to the class*. This issue has several implications for classroom management, teaching styles and methods and curriculum content; for example, are we expecting pupils to listen for too long?

Another common teacher behaviour observed in the pilot study was *discussing work individually and in groups*. This particular teacher behaviour usually triggered a specific pupil behaviour; that of *talking inappropriately to peers*. It certainly became apparent that when teachers were discussing work individually and in groups they needed to be more adept at keeping a close eye on the rest of the class at the same time in order to keep them on task. This is clearly a frequently used teaching method with many strengths, not least the fact that it gives pupils more responsibility for their own learning. In order to be successful, however, it has to be meticulously planned, well executed and extremely carefully monitored; otherwise it can exacerbate the likelihood of low level disruptive behaviour.

Established writers on behaviour management (O'Brien,1998; Rogers,1998; MacGrath,2000; Cowley, 2003) emphasise that behaviour management is intrinsically about teacher-pupil relationships. If there is a good relationship between the teacher and pupil then it is likely that there will be few problems which cannot be resolved swiftly and amicably, based on a firm, fair and consistent approach by the teacher. It would appear, and my professional practice would support this view unequivocally, that however difficult some pupils are to teach, in every school there are a few teachers who manage to get through to them more than others and consequently experience less antagonism and less disruption to lessons (MacGrath, 2000). Indeed the pilot study highlighted a number of teachers in all the schools who managed to create a proactive, orderly and non-confrontational environment in their classrooms; whilst some were significantly struggling.

It can be seen from the bar charts that in all schools *praising pupils* figures quite low in terms of overall percentage of teacher behaviour. The difference between school 2 (14%) and school 5 (2%) is particularly noteworthy. In school 2, I sensed an energetic, proactive and supportive atmosphere. School 5, in contrast, was just the opposite, it

was experiencing turbulent times, staff turnover was high and morale was low. Significantly, *smiling* in school 5 is not surprisingly a very low percentage (smiling is an effective tool in the management of pupil behaviour: it suggests an air of control and calm and can have a positive effect on low level disruption). This is put into perspective perhaps by the fact that in the same school teachers' verbal threats to pupils was the highest recorded across all the schools.

2.4 Discussion

On this note it is perhaps significant that I am unable to compare teacher behaviour today with observations in the Elton Report (1989), as I did with pupil behaviour. The Elton Report remains one of the most comprehensive dossiers on discipline in schools to this day as it certainly raised the profile of indiscipline in schools, making 138 recommendations. Arguably however, it is now becoming somewhat dated as a glaring omission in the report is any discussion or consideration of how *teacher* behaviour can help or hinder acceptable *pupil* behaviour; arguably the whole concept of *teacher-pupil interaction* and the resultant management of pupils' behaviour.

There is much emphasis in the Elton Report on the behaviours exhibited by *pupils* that *teachers* find difficulty in dealing with, yet no consideration of examples of *teacher* behaviour that *pupils* find difficulty in dealing with. Examples of such teacher behaviour in my structured observations would include using verbal threats, shouting at pupils, using sarcasm, ignoring pupils and not taking up enough opportunities to praise *appropriate* behaviour. It is more than likely however that many teachers are *unaware* of the extent of their negative behaviour and may perhaps need reminding of the importance of a proactive rather than a reactive approach. It would appear that teachers are psychologically driven to look for behaviour which *shouldn't* be happening, arguably bringing attention to and reinforcing inappropriate behaviour. Techniques of concentrating on the positive as a mechanism for altering the negative are, I propose, a pertinent issue with regard to initial and in-service teacher training.

Children are continuing to enter mainstream schools with an increasing range of difficulties and challenging behaviour (Olsen and Cooper,2001). This clearly places

demands on teachers to develop new skills and strategies to respond to a range of behaviour. Additionally it is important that an underlying theme is the understanding that the way in which we can improve behaviour is very much about how we develop the skills of interaction, for teachers and pupils. Interactions between teachers and pupils can be either positive and constructive or negative and damaging. They are intertwined with each other and the lines between them are far from clearly defined. The literature review highlights the vital importance of positive teacher-pupil interaction in the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour (Laslett,1993; Cooper *et al.*, 1994; Kinder and Wilkin,1998; Blyth and Milner,1999).

Just how much time teachers take to *reflect* on their interaction with pupils, either during their lesson (in-action) or afterwards (on-action) is a pertinent issue. In recent years the idea of reflective practice has been particularly prevalent, significantly due to the writings of Schon (1983,1987) who suggests that reflective thinkers are not necessarily cautious, they simply prefer to consider more alternatives. Likewise, some practitioners are more likely than others to consider a greater number of alternative strategies in their role performance. Some teachers for example may consider that they have a solution to an issue concerning their management of pupil behaviour. They put it into practice and may not trouble to reflect upon it thereafter in the sense of whether it was a success or not. In contrast, other teachers may examine alternatives and act accordingly, regarding their decisions and consequent actions as experience from which they can continue learning.

2.5 Evaluation of the pilot study

All the pupil and teacher behaviours recorded in the structured observations, to a greater or lesser extent, affected the teaching and learning process. Overall, the experience of conducting these structured observations gave me a substantial, current perspective of teacher-pupil interaction in a sample of mainstream secondary schools. My results are substantiated by an Ofsted report in 2005 which states that their evidence from inspections confirms that the most common form of poor behaviour in schools continues to be that identified in the Elton report (1989); low-level disruption in

lessons. While teachers usually deal with such behaviour effectively, the cumulative effect can be extremely stressful and debilitating for both teachers and pupils.

Observing so many different teachers and pupils with their various styles and personalities was a salutary example of my interpretive research perspective: that in educational institutions everyday life revolves around people interpreting and making decisions about how to act based on their own experience and their interpretation of the behaviour of others, teacher-pupil interaction being a pertinent example. There were many examples of teachers and pupils responding to each other and adjusting their behaviour as they negotiated a shared sense of reality; on several occasions the outcome was unfortunately not conducive to pro-active teacher-pupil interaction. Arguably, pre- and in-service development strategies that do not invite reflection on teachers' behaviour as well as pupils' behaviour may be seen as non-threatening but may not lead to any reappraisal of theory and practice.

The pilot study had the instrumental purpose of bringing about an understanding of current issues regarding pupil and teacher interaction, providing empirical evidence of the types and frequency of behaviours presently being exhibited in five mainstream secondary schools. It was pertinent at this stage to question how the management of pupils' behaviour is addressed on secondary PGCE courses: my first supplementary research question.

Chapter 3

National Survey: (phase 1a)

3.1 Survey via e-mail

A key issue from the literature review highlights the part teachers play in the circumstances that create pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour (Schostak, 1983; Mongon and Hart, 1989; Kinder and Wilkin, 1998; and Thomas and Loxley, 2001). Additionally, in a previous research study (Grundy, 2000) a lack of understanding and skill was identified that can exist in mainstream secondary schools regarding the management of pupils' behaviour and a structured system of education, training and support for practising teachers was recommended. The baseline study in this research provided a current perspective regarding teacher-pupil interaction and the resultant management of pupils' behaviour in a sample of mainstream secondary schools. This informed perspective led me to consider ITT issues and therefore my first supplementary research question was as follows:

- *What is the current training provision regarding the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour on secondary PGCE courses?*

In order to address this question 75 universities and institutes of higher education in England and Wales, offering the secondary PGCE course, were surveyed and asked to outline their current training provision regarding the management of pupils' behaviour. The mode of data collection for the survey was a questionnaire sent via e-mail.

The design of my questionnaire was crucial. Careful design, clear layout, a lucid explanation to its purpose and pilot testing were ways in which the response rate, validity and reliability were maximized. Clearly a good response was going to be dependent on the recipient being motivated to answer the questionnaire and send it back. At the start of my questionnaire clear and concise instructions were given as to why the survey was being carried out. Seventy-five institutions were individually contacted in order to make the process more personal. For ease of response the

survey was included as part of the email message rather than as an attached file. Requests were sent out at the beginning of a working week as it was considered that Fridays and days surrounding public holidays may not have encouraged a good response rate.

Regarding the format of the questionnaire it was anticipated that there may be a wide variation between PGCE courses offered by different HEIs. However, to achieve a more consistent response the recipients were asked to structure their reply in line with the following areas:

- the structure of the behaviour management input
- examples of specific issues addressed
- time allocation
- finally, if the three bullet points above did not allow the recipients to respond easily, they were asked to give an overall *outline* of their provision regarding the management of pupils' behaviour

The intention of the survey was to find out people's *interpretation* of the facts. It was understood however that tutors and team leaders would have a mixed response to the request for information.

Initially, a pilot test was carried out. The purpose of the pilot test was to refine the questionnaire in order to *maximize* response. In addition it facilitated an assessment of the questionnaire's validity and the likely reliability of the data that would be collected. Preliminary analysis using the pilot test data was undertaken to ensure that data collected would enable the investigative questions to be answered.

Two pilot tests were held:.

- Firstly, twelve out of the proposed seventy-five universities were piloted
- Two weeks after administering the first pilot a follow up email was sent to the pilot institutions who had not responded.

- One week later a second pilot was sent out to another twelve institutions and again after two weeks a follow up email was sent to those who had not responded.
- After the first two pilot tests the remaining fifty one institutions were emailed
- Similar follow up procedures applied after two weeks

3.2 Ethical Considerations

Two important ethical considerations were relevant at this stage. Firstly, it was important to communicate clearly the purpose of the investigation to the participants in the universities and institutes of higher education. It was also important to promise to maintain participants' confidentiality and anonymity (refer to appendix C). Procedures for protecting the confidentiality of participants were followed, including the coding of data with numbers instead of names to protect identities. Names were removed on receipt of the emails, then prior to deleting the emails, copies were made with numbers on to protect the identity of the participants. Regarding the small number of participants who requested a summary of the research findings, their names and addresses were held in a confidential, locked file.

3.3 Results and Commentary

Out of the seventy-five universities and HEIs in England and Wales offering the PGCE secondary course thirty-nine responses were received (a 52% response).

In the first email the following questions were asked (refer to appendix C for copy of email):

1. How is the issue of behaviour management incorporated into your course?
2. What kind of issues are addressed?
3. How much time is allocated to these issues?

During the pilot stage of my survey and taking into account a significant number of 'first' responses from the remaining fifty-one institutions, a variety of models of

provision were identified regarding behaviour management input on the PGCE courses:

1. Specific university based lectures on behaviour management with titles such as classroom climate and classroom craft etc.
2. A permeation model i.e. indicating that behaviour management input was incorporated within a variety of subject study areas
3. Lecture inputs on behaviour management 'bought in' from specialist consultants
4. A combination of 1, 2 and 3.

This information was incorporated in the follow up email (refer to appendix D) to those institutions who did not respond in the first instance. It was considered that furnishing institutions with some interim results might encourage them to respond. The institutions who had not replied in the first instance were asked to indicate whether their provision identified with any of the above responses or if they had another model to add. It was also stressed that further clarification would be much appreciated and assurance of anonymity was reiterated. This strategy contributed to the good overall response rate.

Several *key issues* arose from the responses:

- A significant disparity regarding overall ethos about behaviour management provision
- Very few responses making reference to the acquiring of 'specialist' providers on behaviour management
- An overwhelming reliance on the 'permeation' model
- Particular emphasis on the 'partnership schools' being responsible for behaviour management input
- A substantial difference between the providers regarding the content of and time allocated to behaviour management issues

3.4 Ethos regarding behaviour management input

The revised standards for Qualified Teacher Status and revised requirements for initial teacher training took effect from September 2002 (TTA, 2002). These new standards require trainees to differentiate for the range of pupils in their classes and to 'manage pupil behaviour constructively', arguably a somewhat fragmentary and elusive concept. Taking into account that the responses would inevitably indicate a 'snapshot' of provision, there were some interesting comments which suggested a different degree of focus and emphasis:

- *'Behaviour Management remains THE issue for new trainees – our students constantly request input and discussion time on this subject'*
- *'In a previous post I was astonished to be told that provision for behaviour management was dealt with by the schools – it was if the lecturers were afraid to engage in the issue at all'*
- *'We have a holistic approach to teaching – behaviour management is not separated from classroom management, lesson planning, resourcing, teaching strategies, professional behaviour etc. We stress the planning and preparation of lessons that engage and motivate – the teachers start from an expectation of compliance'*
- *'Behaviour Management is addressed THROUGHOUT the course. At first through directed observation then planned intervention. This is supported by role play scenarios and real life videoed situations deconstructed. We also use the KS3 strategy materials'*
- *'We do not think that concentrating on challenging behaviour is appropriate – we work from the position that the vast majority of school students are in the school to learn – it is therefore incorporated into the whole course'*
- *'For students this is a big issue, especially in the first term. We deal with it until students feel comfortable and able to organize classrooms'*
- *'Some assignments cover it but it just gets squeezed out because the job list gets bigger and bigger'*
- *'There are very few parts of our course that do not deal with behaviour management to some degree'*

- *'All subject tutors address behaviour management issues'*
- *'It is not given priority as if it can be 'cracked' in isolation from good lesson planning etc'.*

It is somewhat inevitable that standards which refer to 'managing pupils' behaviour constructively' (QTS standard 3.3.9) and 'promoting positive values, attitudes and behaviour that NQTs expect from their pupils' (QTS standard 1.3) are likely to create a mixed response from providers as they are a little too procedural and compliant in design to be of great value. When the standards are phrased more specifically however such as 'NQTs know a *range of strategies* to promote good behaviour and establish a purposeful learning environment' (QTS standard 2.7) they are more helpful and therefore, arguably, somewhat more conducive to an increased consistency of approach from providers.

3.5 Specialist providers

Four of the returns mentioned 'specialist' provision with regard to bringing in outside specialists to lead sessions on behaviour management. In all cases this was in addition to other providers such as the partnership schools or subject leaders:

- *'School-based seminars are supplemented by a team of behaviour consultants towards the end of the course'*
- *'A day is devoted to a workshop on 'assertive discipline' given by an expert trainer'*
- *'Mass lecture inputs from a behaviour management consultant plus subject teams buy in specialist inputs from the SEN team regarding behavioural issues'*
- *'One lecture run by 'bad kids' specialist'*

A major concern here is the lack of acknowledgement of the need for *specialist* providers in this area. The standards relating to behaviour management are in danger of being translated directly into assessment criteria and commandeering ITT and INSET curriculums. This perspective is, arguably, not appropriate to handle the

complexity of behaviour management issues. If the management of pupil behaviour is seen to be a skill subsumed within the race for acquisition of standards stressing notions of compliance, responsibility and procedural knowledge, it is going to be left wanting with regard to the underpinning issues of judgments, attitudes and perceptions, all of which require a deeper and more thorough specialist understanding.

3.6 Permeation model

The most common response relating to type of provision for behaviour management was the permeation model. The permeation approach involves the integration of behaviour management concepts into all components of the course; they are subsumed within each element of training and become the responsibility of all tutors within an ITT team:

- *'It is automatically a part of main method teaching'*
- *'It is a major part of subject work'*
- *'Behaviour management runs throughout the entire course'*
- *'It is delivered in subject sessions as an integrated aspect'*
- *'It is delivered in subject sessions e.g. health and safety implications in science'*
- *'Behaviour management is fully integrated within the course'*
- *'It varies with each tutor but everyone will get some input'*
- *'It is difficult to quantify – some subjects do more than others'*

Whilst this approach may go some way to enabling all students to obtain at least some information on behaviour management there are considerable difficulties in the implementation of a permeation model. Firstly, in relation to input on the management of behaviour, the difficulties will concern the variable quality of understanding and consequent provision from one tutor to the next. Being unclear as to which strategy to choose, students may either fail to address difficult behaviours, resort to punitive measures or choose strategies that do not address the underlying causal factors of the original behaviour.

Secondly, the acceptance by course teams of the intrinsic need to make behaviour management a continued point of emphasis is of vital importance and thirdly the monitoring and evaluation of the actual *content* is an important issue, as permeation by its very nature can be difficult to quantify. Permeation models alone, relating to behaviour management, are indeed in danger of being so dissipated as to be ineffective. There needs to be *dedicated* sessions where issues of both personal and professional ideology are raised and examined as well as the issues and effective strategies that promote social and educational inclusion for all those with behavioural difficulties. These principles and practices should *then* permeate ITT programmes, having a twofold impact on both content and context.

3.7 Partnership Schools

The majority of replies made substantial reference to their partnership schools being significantly responsible for behaviour management training:

- *'Partnership schools play a big role'*
- *'Students learn a great deal about behaviour management on teaching practice'*
- *'School mentors deal with school based individual issues'*
- *'Supplementary courses in behaviour management are offered in partnership schools'*
- *'We work with partnership schools to use appropriate strategies as agreed by the whole school to deal with difficult students'*
- *'Most of the course is located in schools'*
- *'Naturally a great deal happens in schools'*

The role of the partnership school is obviously extremely influential in grounding a variety of theoretical understandings in professional practice. Clearly any model of behaviour management training must be predicated on meeting the needs of individual students and much of this is likely to be dependant on the quality of the education they receive in schools. School-based experience is crucial to the effective preparation of all teachers, but its ultimate effectiveness can be impaired by a number of factors. The

length of time a student spends in school is not necessarily related to the quality of training received. Nor, too, can a student be assured that the school in which they acquire the bulk of their initial training will necessarily provide an example of good practice. If the standards are found to be poor in schools, those same teachers will be responsible for the next generation of teachers. School experience can be in danger of giving students skills without underpinning understanding.

3.8 Specific input and timing

Only a third of the total replies gave specific examples of what was covered:

- *'We focus on practical issues, how to use systems of sanctions and what factors inform the choice of approach'*
- *'Rewards and Sanctions'*
- *'Bill Rogers approach'*
- *'Pupil groupings, arrangement of room, establish clear expectations, importance of clear instructions, use of voice, record keeping, consistency'*
- *'Bullying'*
- *'Assertive Discipline'*
- *'Assertive behaviour, body language, the importance of planning and organization for discipline'*
- *'The language of choice'*
- *'Proactive v. reactive, taking and earning status, encouraging turn taking and other social skills, rewards and sanctions, diffusing situations'*
- *'Non-verbal communication, use of praise, beginning and end of lessons'*

Time allowed for specific input (examples mentioned above) ranged from one lecture lasting one and a half hours to ten hours' worth of lectures on behaviour management with extensive written guidance and directed reading. A small number of respondents also referred to accompanying assignments on the topic.

3.9 Evaluation of the Survey

The experience of conducting the National survey was very satisfying. I consider that the good response rate was helped by the sending of the second email with a slightly different tone (i.e. indicating some information already received from other institutions). Overall the survey indicated that there is a significant *variety of emphasis* on behaviour management issues across institutions. All responses acknowledged there was input on behaviour management to some degree but it was clear that some providers allotted more time than others and went into differing amounts of detail and emphasis.

I acknowledge that the survey inevitably gives a broad outline of provision as the questions did not ask for detail; they were purposely phrased to encourage a brief response, rather than none at all, which may have occurred if the questions had been too intense and required a significant response time. A cautionary note must be voiced at this stage. The questions asked in the survey were inevitably difficult to answer, especially as the majority of responses indicated that behaviour management was addressed 'throughout the course'. It is also acknowledged that without actually becoming immersed in a course it is difficult to appreciate what is actually involved. The quoted responses have, therefore, not been over-simplified through some sort of quantitative analytical approach; clearly this would have been inaccurate and unhelpful.

The survey provided me with an *institutional perspective* on the *content* of the behaviour management input on the PGCE course. In order to gain a *student perspective* of the PGCE course and address my second supplementary research question:

- *What perceptions do Newly Qualified Teachers have of their PGCE courses regarding input on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?*

I carried out focus group interviews with NQTs in their first term of teaching in a variety of institutions.

Chapter 4

Focus Group Discussions: (phase 1b)

4.1 Analysis

The main purpose of the focus groups in my research was to facilitate NQTs' reflections on their PGCE courses with regard to their training in the management of pupils' behaviour. Additionally I drew upon the NQTs' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way that would not be feasible using other methods, for example observation, one to one interviewing, or questionnaire surveys. These attitudes, feelings and beliefs were partially independent of a group in its social setting, but were revealed specifically via the social gathering and the interaction which being in a focus group entails. Compared to individual interviews, which aim to obtain individual attitudes, beliefs and feelings, the focus groups elicited a multiplicity of views and emotional processes within a group context.

Kitzinger (1994, 1995) argues that interaction is the crucial feature of focus groups because the interaction among participants highlights their view of the world, the language they use about an issue and their values and beliefs about a situation. In my focus groups I endeavoured to find out the NQTs' perceptions of the behaviour management input on their PGCE courses. As multiple understandings and meanings were revealed by participants, multiple explanations of their behaviour and attitudes were more readily articulated.

Merton and Kendall's (1946) influential article on the focused interview set the parameters for the development of focus groups. This was in terms of ensuring that participants have a specific experience of or opinion about the topic under investigation; that an explicit interview guide is used (refer to appendix E2); and that the subjective experiences of the research participants are explored in relation to the pre-determined research questions. I adhered closely to this advice.

As with all research methods, however, I was aware of the limitations. I realized, for example, that I had less control over the data produced than in either quantitative

studies or one-to-one interviewing. I had to allow the participants to talk to each other, ask questions and express doubts and opinions whilst having very little control over the interaction other than generally keeping participants focused on the topic. Additionally, individuals did not necessarily express their own definitive, individual view. They were speaking in a specific context, within a specific culture so it was difficult to identify individual messages.

Overall the NQTs in the focus group benefited from the experience of sharing their concerns with others. Within the groups there were explorations of solutions to particular problems as a unit rather than individuals (Kitzinger, 1995). As my research participants were actively involved in something which they may have felt would make a difference and the research was of an applied nature, *empowerment* was a realistic expectation. My theoretical approach to interpretivism, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, presents a vision of people in society as active agents participating in a changing world of interaction within structural conditions. Such a stance recognises myself as an active constructor of meaning in coming to my definition of the situation under study. In two stages of the research process I was to view this definition from a dual role perspective; a trainer/researcher in the pilot research and a mentor/researcher in phase 2 of the research.

My approach to data analysis and interpretation was based on the notion of helping to order the data so that it was possible for me to consider them clearly. It is intended that a consistent, thoughtful ordering, encouraging rigour without rigidity, would lead me to be able to give an account of my interpretation as a result of laying out the data in a way that stimulated careful analysis.

Compared with individual interviews, the clear advantage of focus groups is that they make it possible for researchers to observe 'the interactive processes occurring amongst participants' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p.836). Indeed I found that often these processes included spontaneous responses from members of the groups that eased their involvement and participation in the discussions. Moreover the interaction between the NQTs in each of the focus groups decreased the amount of interaction between myself and the individual members. Arguably, this gave more weight to the

NQTs' opinions, decreasing any influence I might subconsciously have had on the process. The six focus group discussions comprised of 25 NQTs in total, representing 16 universities and HEIs.

4.2 Ethical Considerations

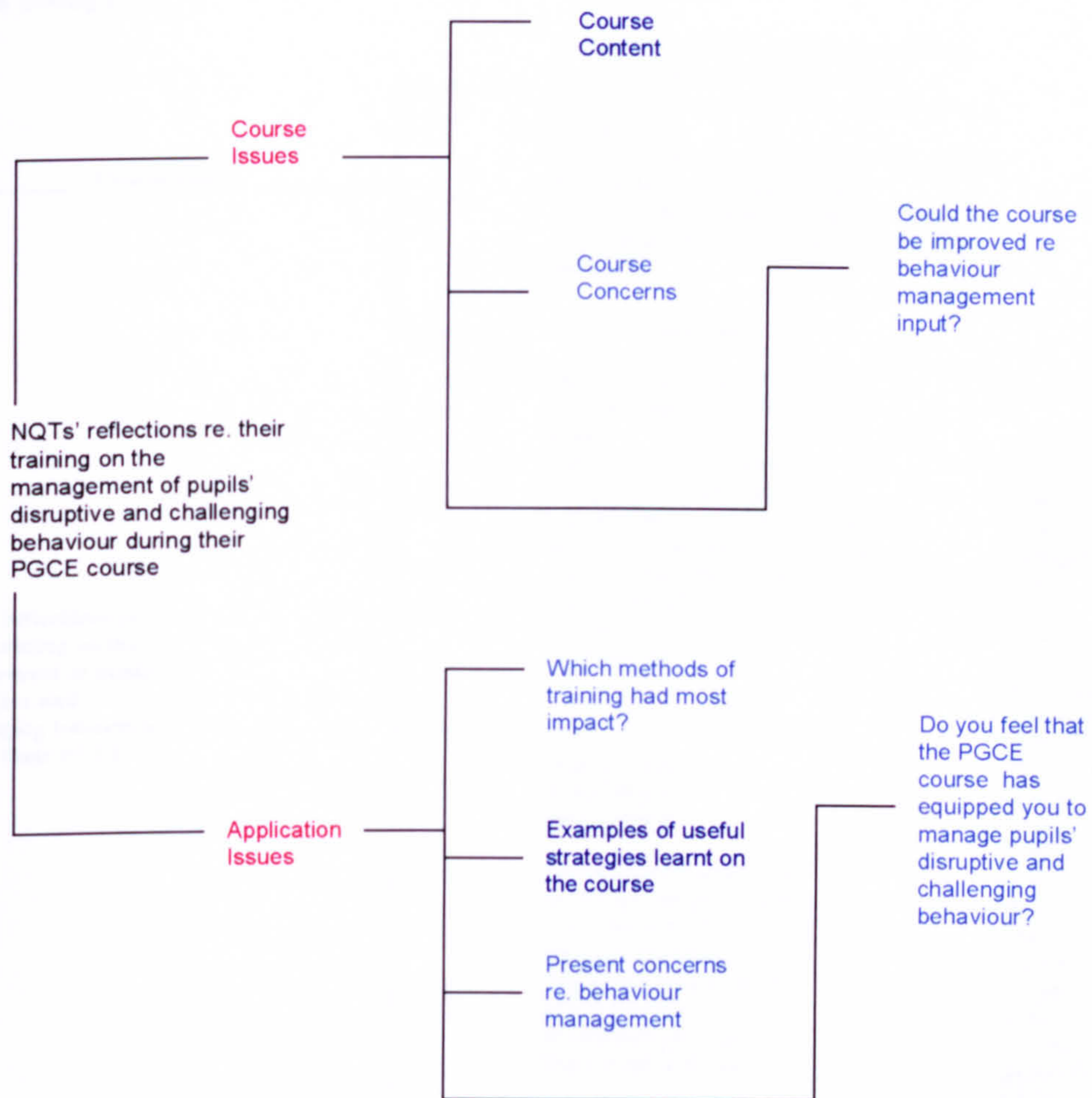
Initially, I requested a meeting with the Headteacher in each of the schools concerned in order to seek permission to hold the focus groups. This provided an opportunity to inform the Headteacher about the purposes of my research and state the usual guarantees regarding confidentiality and anonymity. Once I had permission from the Headteacher to contact the NQTs I wrote to them individually (see appendix E1) in order to address the principle of informed consent. It was clearly imperative that the NQTs were given relevant information on which to base their decisions as to whether or not to take part. They were also informed that they would be given an opportunity to verify statements or comments when the research was in a draft format. Additionally, in an act of reciprocity I offered to provide INSET for the NQTs on the management of pupils' behaviour (whether or not they chose to take part). This was taken up in all of the schools concerned.

4.3 Framework for Analysis

In order to proceed with organisation and examination of the data gathered from the focus group discussions a framework for analysis was created. This was based on 'Network Analysis', defined by Bliss *et al.* (1983) and Cohen and Manion (1994) as a system involving a selection of themes and categories which classify qualitative data. My research utilises the technique by taking key themes raised in the focus group discussions and displaying them in a network 'map', thus providing a visual representation of key issues. After examining transcripts from the discussions a main classificatory division came to light: course-based issues and application issues. Whilst these two themes organised the data initially, in order to proceed further it was necessary to identify sub-themes relating to the two main themes. Figure 7 identifies the main themes and sub-themes by a colour coding system and uses these to structure responses.

Each of the utterances in the focus group discussions was examined to see if they were relevant to course issues or application issues. The former is further subdivided into course content, course concerns and how the course might be improved. The latter category, application issues, is divided into most effective methods of training, examples of useful strategies learnt on the course, present concerns regarding behaviour management and whether the students felt equipped to deal with pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour at the end of their PGCE course. Thus the following network of complementary schemata has been established on the basis of analysis of the six focus group discussions (refer to figure 7 p.101).

**Figure 7:
Framework for
Analysis**



Individual network analysis for each of the interviews is now displayed, together with sample quotations from the interviews and a brief commentary (refer to figures 8-13 pp. 102-107).

Main themes

Sub-themes

Figure 8: Network Map - Focus Group1

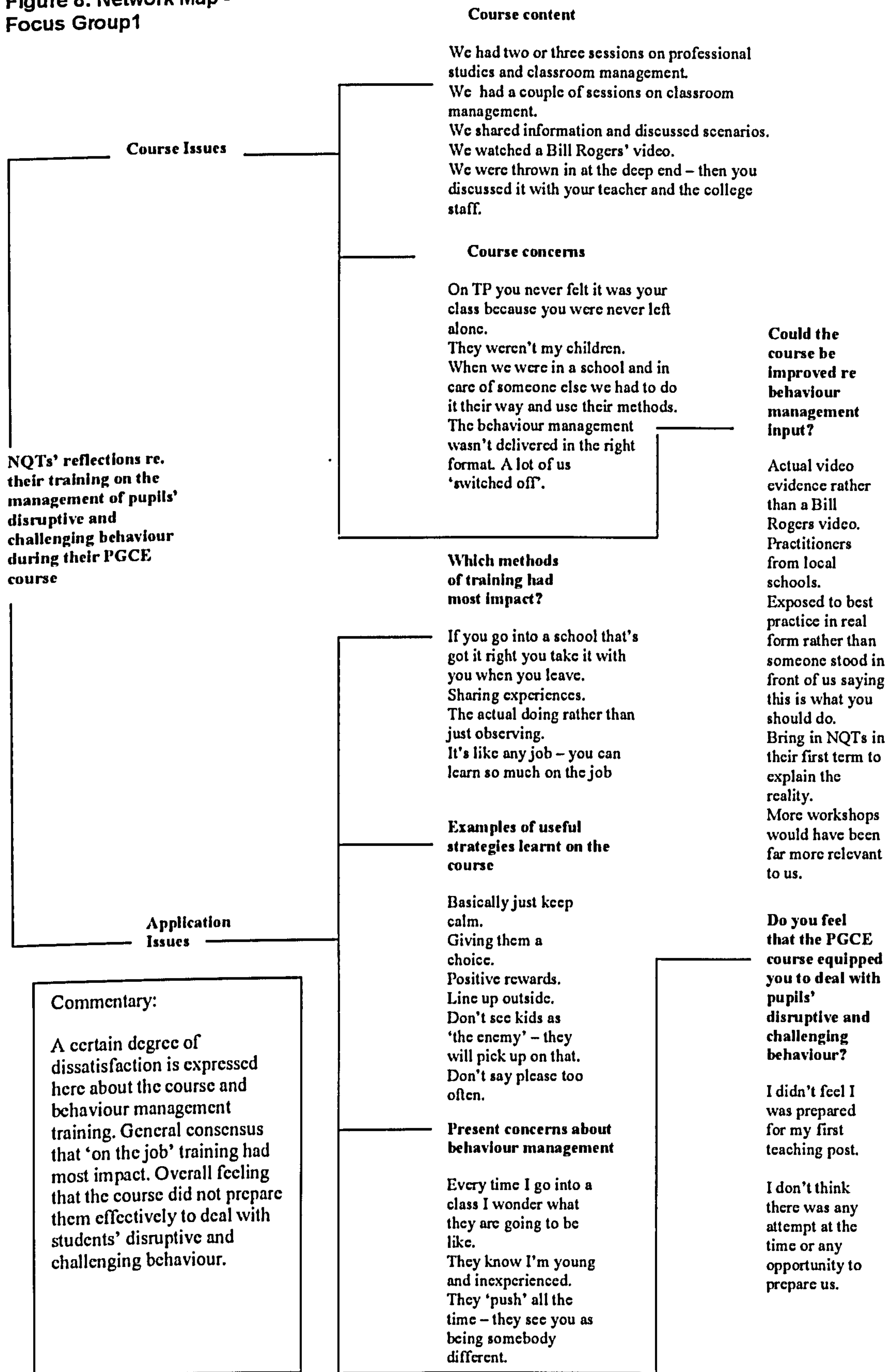


Figure 9: Network Map – Focus Group 2

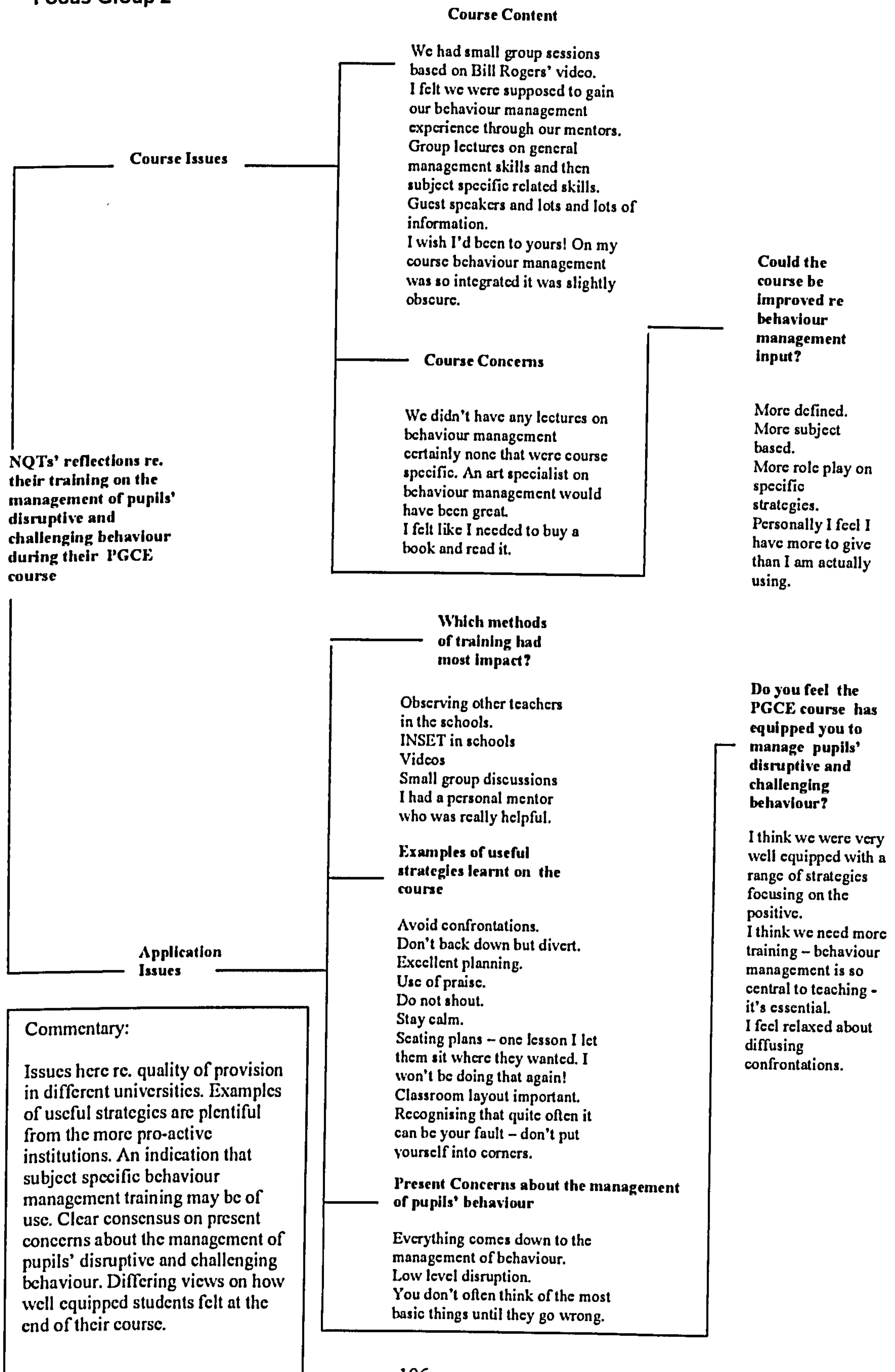


Figure 10: Network Map - Focus Group 3

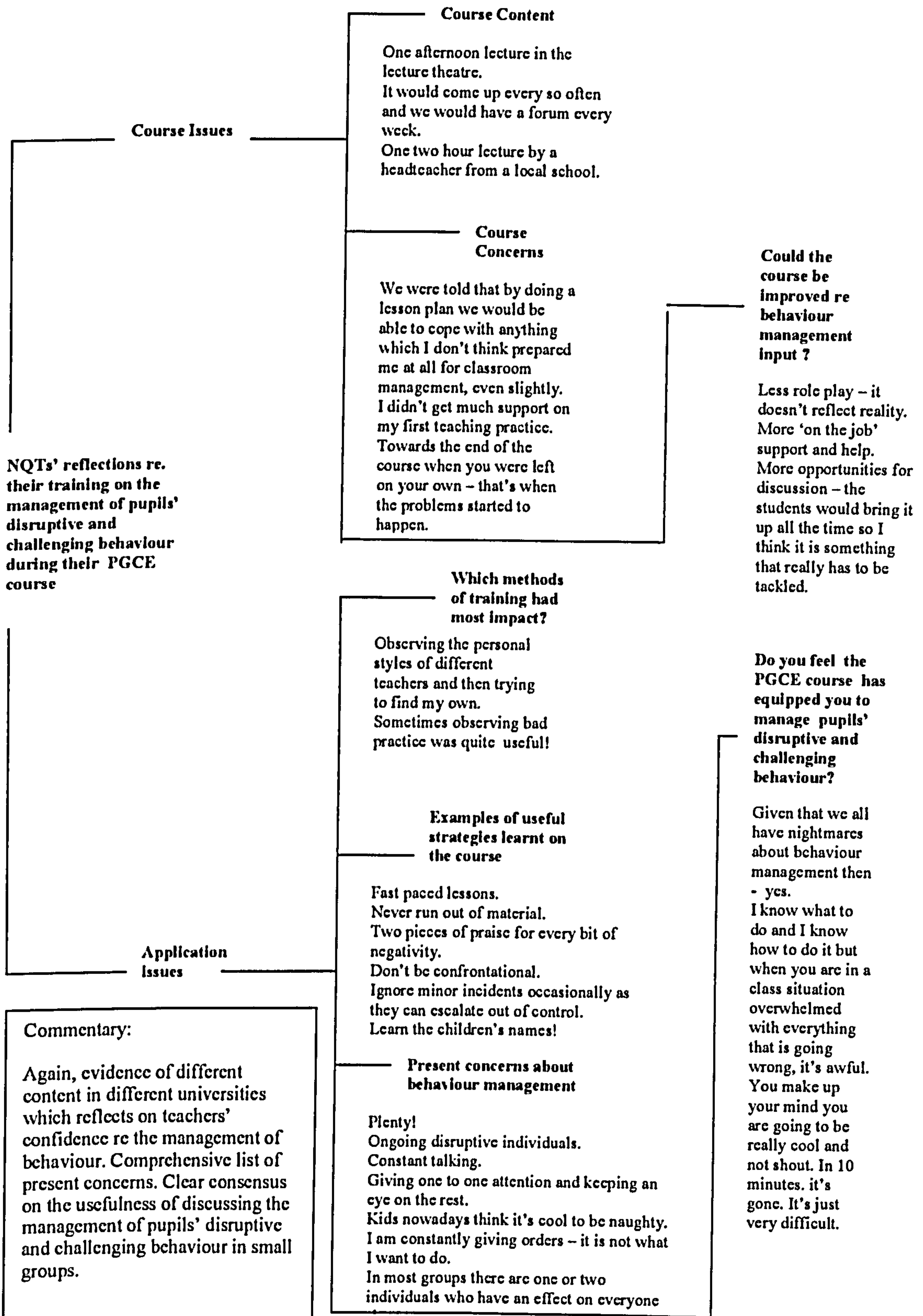


Figure 11: Network Map – Focus Group 4

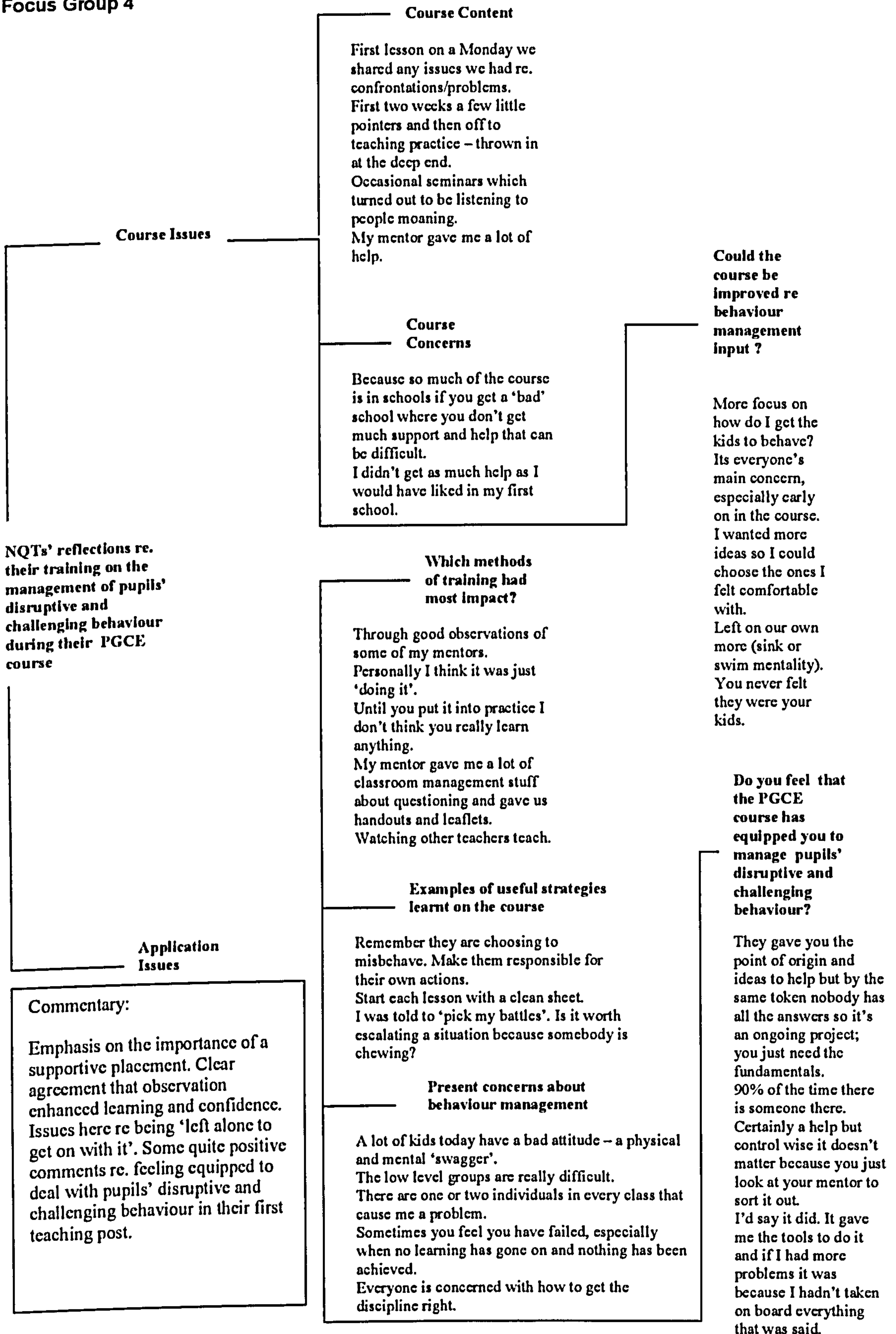


Figure 12: Network Map – Focus Group 5

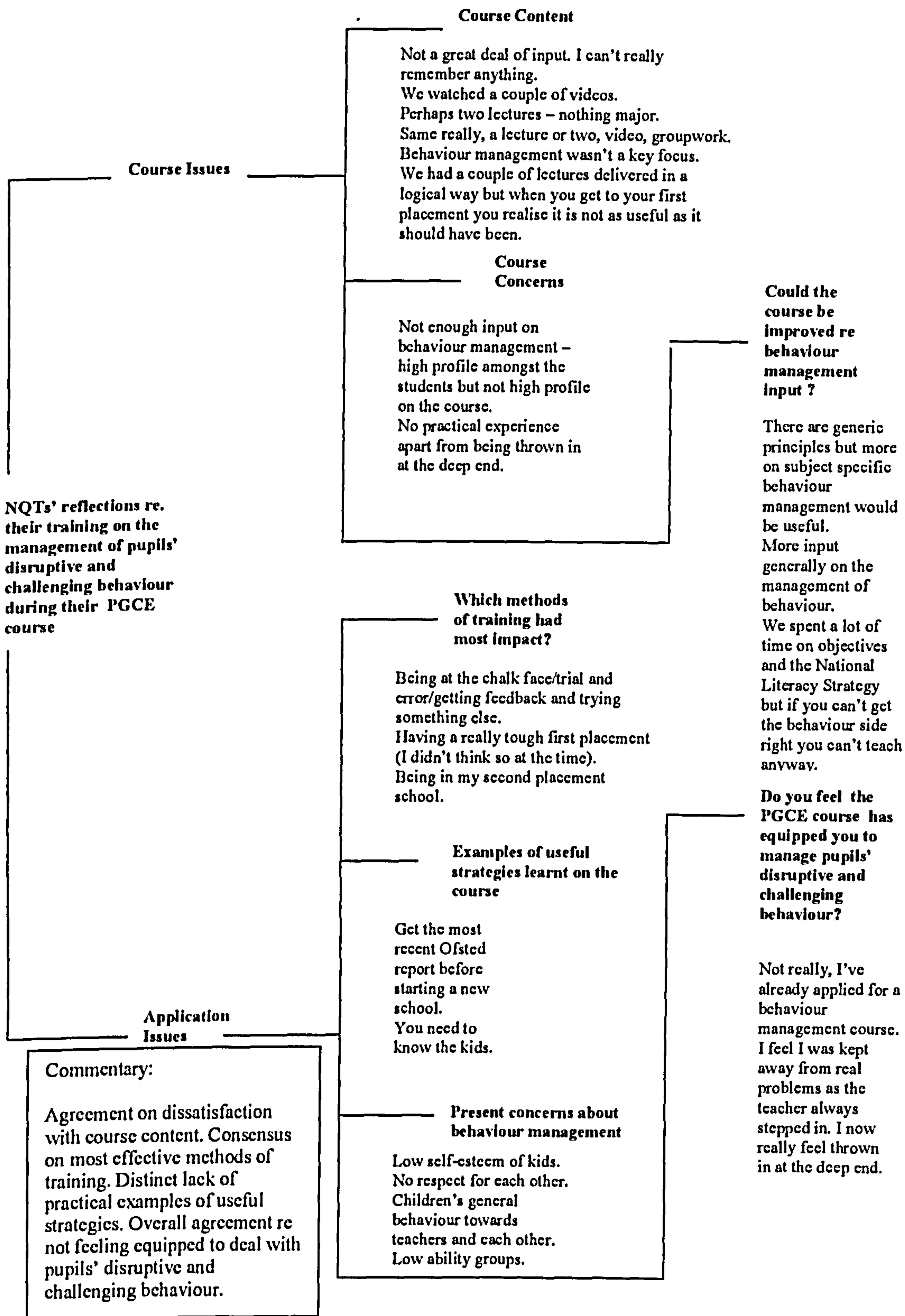
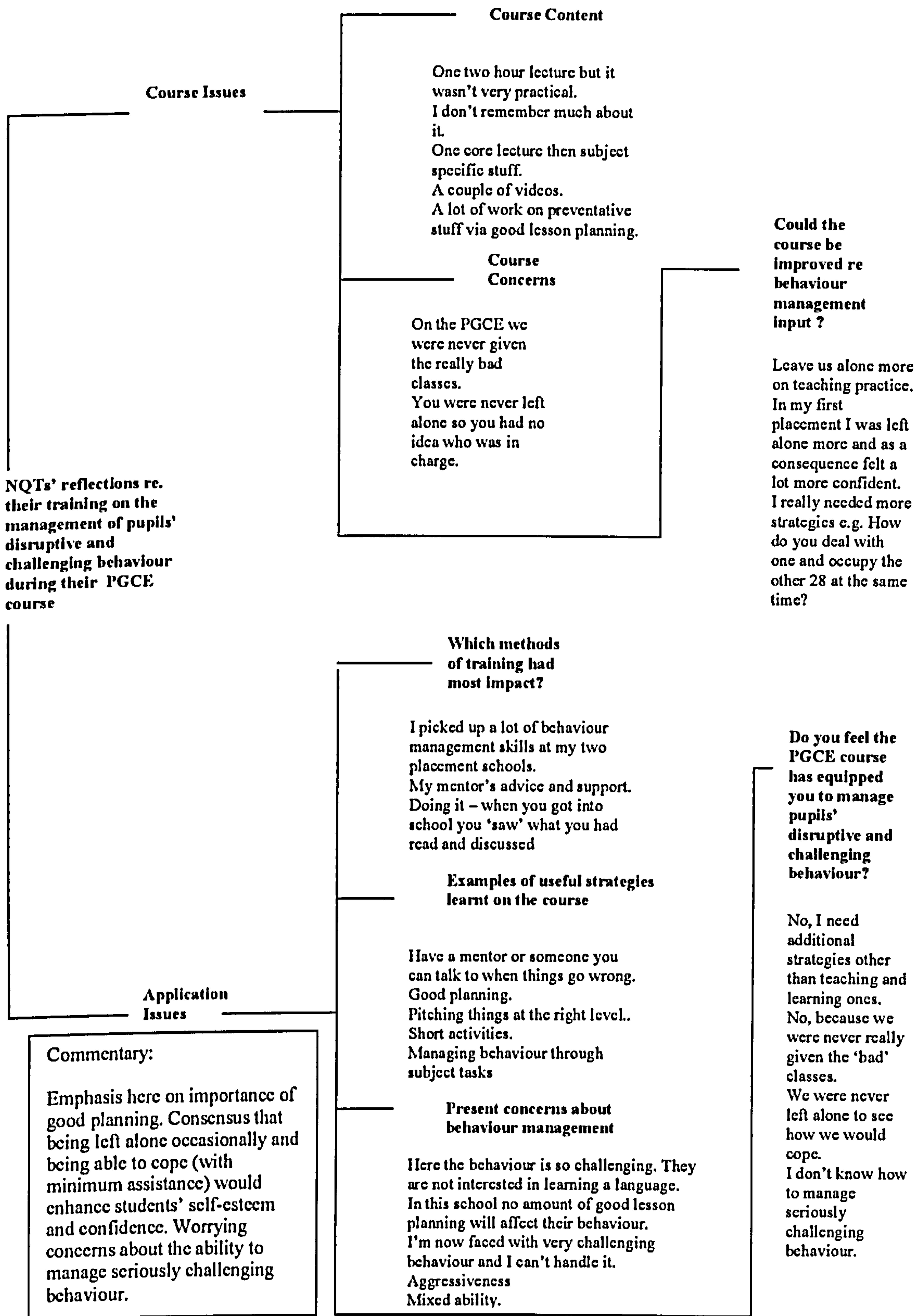


Figure 13: Network Map – Focus Group 6



Having gone through various stages of ordering, constructing categories, reading for content and generating the network maps there was a final stage of analysis left. In this final analysis stage the data were subject to a refining process. By that I mean that the sample quotations under the specific categories were read for different subtleties of meaning. This is where the interpretive process took over from the descriptive. The selected quotations were used to create a concluding discussion regarding the exploration of relationships, patterns and connections between the NQTs' reflections. The following discussion gives an interpretive summary that was generated by the data.

4.4 Discussion

Adequate classroom discipline is arguably one of the most essential aspects of education as well as an absolute pre-requisite to achieving a learning environment which safeguards pupils' psychological, social and physical well-being. In each of the focus group discussions this concept was paramount:

- *'Behaviour management is so central to teaching – it's essential'*
- *'Everything comes down to the management of behaviour' (Focus Group 2)*
- *'We all have nightmares about behaviour management'*
- *'The students bring it up all the time so I think it's something that really has to be tackled' (Focus Group 3)*
- *'It's everyone's main concern, especially early on in the course'*
- *'Everyone is concerned with how to get the discipline right'*
- *'How do I get the kids to behave? It's everyone's main concern' (Focus Group 4)*
- *'The management of behaviour is high profile amongst the students but not high profile on the course'(Focus Group 5)*

The Induction Standards state very clearly that an NQT must 'Secure a standard of behaviour that enables pupils to learn, and act to pre-empt and deal with inappropriate

behaviour in the context of the behaviour policy of the school' (TTA, 2002, p.17). As previously discussed in the literature chapter, trainee teachers of today participate in the extremely demanding task of meeting 42 standards in order to obtain their QTS. Nine of these standards relate to the management of pupil behaviour; I would strongly argue that this issue needs a depth of consideration and analysis that is inevitably time-consuming and not necessarily achieved through practice alone. However, there was an overall consensus from the students in the focus groups that a lot of knowledge and skill regarding the management of behaviour was perceived to be gained from placement schools i.e. training 'on the job'. The danger with this concept is that the subject of behaviour management may be left to a serendipity style of approach which lacks background understanding; not the best approach I would argue for a topic which has such a pivotal role within the teaching profession. The management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour is a *craft* and therefore like any other craft it needs to be *taught alongside* practical experience opportunities and feedback.

Although the NQTs in the focus groups acknowledged that practical experience is important, by far the majority felt that the course was lacking with regard to *specific* input on the management of pupils' behaviour. In addition, opportunities to *reflect* on this aspect of their training were rare. This is unfortunate as reflection engages individuals in crucial aspects of understanding which lead to powerful opportunities to transform experience into expertise. Teachers' experiences and the practical knowledge they derive from them are not sufficient on their own to develop teacher expertise. Theoretical and practical reflection produces qualitatively different insights about the management of pupils' behaviour which can provide teachers with conceptual tools to establish new links between what they know and what they do.

It was not uncommon to hear that in spite of excellent preparation, great frustration could be encountered. The NQTs found that all their excellent planning still often fell short of what was required by classroom reality, and somehow the knowledge base of subject matter, teaching skills, educational theories and curriculum programmes did not live up to the demands of pedagogical life in the classroom. The majority of the NQTs seemed to feel the tension or the 'poor fit' between what they learned about

behaviour management and what they discovered was required in actual practice. They all were primarily concerned with their actual physical survival in class. Indeed there would seem to be a move from unrealistic optimism or idealism at the start of their training course towards a sudden realism when faced with actual practice. A question must be posed at this stage: do training courses take sufficient account of student teachers' initial images about behaviour management in order to challenge misconceptions and develop their expertise? This, in effect, would be a constructivist approach to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, which may help to address the move from unrealistic optimism towards realism.

Much emphasis was made of the NQTs' school-based experience which, of course, is crucial to the effective preparation of all teachers. Its ultimate effectiveness can, however, be impaired by a number of factors. The length of time a student now spends 'on the job' is in danger of being equated to the quality of the training received. In addition it cannot be assumed that the school in which a student receives the majority of their training will necessarily provide an example of effective practice with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour. As in any teaching situation 'effectiveness' depends as much on the independent actions and responsibilities of the learner as on the behaviour of the teacher. What is clear is that teaching involves a diverse number of social interactions which have to be managed successfully if pupils are to be provided with consistent learning opportunities. Helping student teachers and NQTs deal with these social interactions, along with many other issues, is no small task.

There was certainly a consensus that being a full-time member of staff in school was entirely different than being a student teacher on teaching practice. Much discussion focused around the frustration of being supervised virtually all the time whilst on teaching practice, resulting in a lack of confidence at the beginning of their induction year with regard to suddenly 'being in charge' :

- *'On teaching practice you never felt it was your class because you were never left alone'*
- *'When we were in a school and in care of someone else we had to do it their way and use their methods' (Focus Group 1)*
- *'Towards the end of the course when you were left on your own, that's when the problems started to happen' (Focus Group 3)*
- *'We should be left on our own more (sink or swim mentality)'*
- *'90% of the time there is someone there. Certainly a help but control wise it doesn't matter because you just look at your mentor to sort it out' (Focus Group 4).*
- *'I felt I was kept away from real problems as the teacher always stepped in. I now really feel thrown in at the deep end' (Focus Group 5).*
- *'We were never left alone to see how we would cope'*
- *'In my first placement I was left alone more and as a consequence I felt a lot more confident'*
- *'You were never left alone so you had no idea who was in charge' (Focus Group 6)*

Interestingly enough all of the NQTs who took part in the focus groups considered that they had learnt most about the management of pupil behaviour whilst in the classroom; 'being thrown in at the deep end'. The importance of teaching practice cannot, of course, be denied but it could be argued that there is a danger here of leaving much to chance. The quality of mentors and overall support in individual schools must vary. Mentors /supervisors will obviously vary in their style and ability to support their students. They may well have been chosen for their subject expertise rather than for their understanding of the management of pupils' behaviour:

- *'If you go into a school that's got it right you take it with you when you leave'*
- *(Focus Group 1).*
- *'I didn't get much support on my first teaching practice' (Focus Group 3).*
- *'Because so much of the course is in schools if you get a bad school where you don't get much support and help that can be difficult' (Focus Group 4).*

- *'I picked up a lot of behaviour management skills at my two placement schools' (Focus Group 6).*

Discussions around actual course content suggested that there was a variety of input within different institutions:

- *'We had two or three sessions on classroom management'*
- *'We shared information and discussed scenarios'*
- *We watched a Bill Rogers' video '(Focus Group 1)*
- *'Guest speakers and lots and lots of information' (which prompted the following response from another group member) 'I wish I'd been to yours. On my course behaviour management was so integrated it was slightly obscure' (Focus Group 2)*
- *'One two hour lecture by a head from a local school''*
- *'We had a forum every week' (Focus Group 3).*
- *'First two weeks a few little pointers then off to teaching practice – thrown in at the deep end'*
- *'My mentor gave me a lot of help' (Focus Group 4).*
- *'Not a great deal.... I can't really remember anything'*
- *'Behaviour management wasn't a key focus' (Focus Group 5).*
- *'A couple of videos'*
- *'A lot of work on preventative stuff via good lesson planning' (Focus Group 6).*

Suggestions for improvement were again varied but centred around bringing in practitioners from local schools, especially NQTs in their first term to explain the reality; more workshops; more subject specific training; more role play; less role play; more 'on the job' support and help; more opportunities for discussion and being left alone more on teaching practice. There was a great emphasis from the NQTs on wanting to know what to do when etc. There was a certain naivety about 'just needing strategies' without any understanding that difficult behaviour is not something to be extinguished without consideration for its function or motive. There was no indication whatsoever that any of the training received by the NQTs in the focus groups had looked beyond simply managing it or correcting it and explored its purpose and

outcomes. (This however is not restricted to beginning teachers. My professional practice provides frequent examples of this notion from experienced teachers).

Neither was there any recognition from the NQTs that they had explored their own value systems and beliefs concerning students' disruptive and challenging behaviour and how their own behaviour may contribute to each situation. My research in phase 2 places the attitudes, feelings and perceptions of NQTs in a central position and identifies personal theories with regard to their interaction with pupils.

To summarise, a minority of students felt that their course had prepared them well to manage pupils' behaviour. However, it was perceived that the management of pupils' behaviour was of high concern and the majority felt that their training had not reflected its importance. The following issues were identified:

- a perceived lack of preparation
- a concern with never feeling in control of a class due to being monitored for the majority/all of the time
- a need for more specific strategies and opportunities for discussion/reflection
- a need for subject specific behaviour management input
- an observation that placement schools differ in the amount of help and support given / more 'on the job' support and help
- a concern that behaviour management was so integrated it was slightly obscure
- a feeling that the transfer from theory to practice was more difficult than they had anticipated when faced with the reality of a classroom
- a need for continuing training in this area throughout their induction year

4.5 Evaluation of the focus group discussions

Research based on the results of focus group interviews was interpreted with care. It could be argued that some people do not think carefully enough about the questions put before them or give answers which they think the facilitator is expecting. However

in this particular case the people discussing the issues were giving opinions about a subject which they considered to be of pivotal importance to their professional work and based upon their personal experience.

These focus groups explored the attitudes and perceptions of a group of NQTs in their first term of teaching, from a wide variety of backgrounds, regarding their initial teacher training in the management of pupils' behaviour. Analysis revealed the vulnerability and fragility of some of their personal responses and the value of addressing these responses in a supportive and proactive way. NQTs starting their induction year will have different levels of knowledge, understanding and experience about the management of pupils' behaviour which will result in differing causes of concern. Further, the interaction between an individual student or NQT and the school experience makes a unique set of circumstances.

Analysis and interpretation of these focus group interviews portrayed a complex and mixed picture. There is little doubt, of course, that the demands made on teacher training institutions within a relatively short space of time make successful initial teacher training a major challenge for all those involved. These interviews have highlighted both areas of success and areas of disappointment and, indeed, instances of confused and inconsistent messages.

It is clearly of vital importance that students and NQTs have regular opportunities to address their concerns. A particularly memorable aspect of this stage of the research process was the quality of the discussions. In my role as facilitator I rarely had to 'fill in the gaps' of a discussion that had lost its emphasis or direction. The management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour was clearly an issue for the NQTs in the focus group discussions. What also was of interest was the difference experiences of the NQTs as students with regard to their input on behaviour management; thus substantiating the institutional perspective of an inconsistent and variable delivery with regard to this very important aspect of professional practice.

Interim Summary: The way forward

What do I know?

My research thus far has highlighted the following issues:

- in educational institutions everyday life revolves around pupils interpreting and making decisions about how to act based on their own experience and their interpretation of the behaviour of others, teacher-pupil interaction being a pertinent example
- there is a significant variety of emphasis on behaviour management issues within PGCE courses across institutions. All responses acknowledged a certain input but clearly some providers spent more time than others and went into differing amounts of detail and emphasis
- there is a tension relating to the 'mismatch' between what student teachers learn about the management of pupils' behaviour and what they discover is required in actual practice

What do I need to know?

At the end of phase one of my research I was left with the following questions:

- How can NQTs gain insight into how they construe (interpret and analyse) discipline, control and support?
- How *flexible* are their constructs when reflecting on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?

The development of a personal model of teaching should, arguably, be an integral part of teacher education. Student teachers, as learners, need to become aware of their frame of reference from the outset and continue to explore their developing assumptions which may underlie their teaching behaviour (Pope and Denicolo, 2001). At this stage in my research it was necessary to research *actual practice* and discover

how the issues that I had uncovered in phase one of my research manifested themselves at the 'chalk face'.

How will I find out what I need to know?

In order to continue my investigation I adopted the role of a mentor / researcher to a group of newly qualified teachers throughout their induction year, investigating ways in which they could gain insight into their personal frames of reference regarding their interaction with pupils and the contribution of this insight to their management of pupils' behaviour. A series of linked case studies (four NQTs in the same institution) describe the NQTs' personal frames of reference in some depth.

Given the fact that I wanted to research a phenomenon firmly rooted in social reality, that this phenomenon could only be studied or understood in context and the research would involve the research participants in reviewing and evaluating their practice, I considered a number of linked case studies would be the relevant methodology for phase 2 of my research.

Much of my time was spent on refining the methodological tools to suit the exigencies of the situation and on collecting, analyzing and presenting data on an ongoing cyclical basis. It was my intention that the NQTs in my case study would enhance their ability to meet the demands of managing pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, a model of professional development aimed at developing what Giroux calls 'transformative intellectuals' (1990, p.196) who engage in a continuing process of critical reflection on their practice with a view to improving it.

Chapter 5

Linked Case Studies: (phase 2)

Various writers have focused their attention on the case study (Stenhouse, 1985; Sturman, 1984; Cohen and Manion, 1994; Yin, 1994; Stake, 1995). Most concur with the view that case study is an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution or community. Case study can be seen to satisfy the three tenets of the qualitative method: describing, understanding and explaining. The quintessential characteristic of case studies is that they strive towards a holistic understanding of cultural systems of action (Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg, 1991). Cultural systems of action refer to sets of interrelated activities engaged in by the actors in a social situation.

Stake (1995) has carried out many case studies and written extensively about them. His approach rests firmly within the interpretive paradigm. This is clearly identified in a footnote of his, commenting on the difficulty of defining case study:

'Conflicting precedents exist for any label. It is important for us to recognize that others will not use the methods or words that we do. ...The case is an integrated system. The parts do not have to be working well, the purposes may be irrational, but it is a system. Thus people and programs clearly are prospective cases. Events and processes fit into the definition less well' (p. 2).

Yin (1994) suggests that the researcher using case study methodology must possess or acquire the following skills: the ability to ask good questions and interpret the responses; be a good listener; be adaptive and flexible so as to react to various situations; have a firm grasp of issues being studied and be unbiased by preconceived notions. Yin (1989a) also notes that case studies are the preferred strategy for studies dealing with how or why questions. He considers they are best used when the investigator has no control over the events and when the study focuses on a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context.

A frequent criticism of case study methodology is that its dependence on a single case renders it incapable of providing a generalized conclusion. Yin (1993) presents Giddens's (1984) view that considers case methodology 'microscopic' because it lacks a sufficient number of cases. Hamel et al. (1993) and Yin (1984, 1989a, 1989b, 1993, 1994) forcefully argue that the relative size of the sample, whether 2, 10 or 100 cases are used, does not transform a multiple case into a macroscopic study. The goal of the study should establish the parameters and then should be applied to all research. In this way, presumably even a single case could be considered acceptable, provided it met the established objective.

Yin (1994) encouraged researchers to make every effort to produce an analysis of the highest quality. In order to accomplish this he presents four principles which I have adhered to in this study:

- Show that the analysis relied on all the relevant evidence
- Include all major rival interpretations in the analysis
- Address the most significant aspects of the case study
- Use the researcher's prior, expert knowledge to further the analysis

My research at this stage was based on the premise that people are to be engaged with, not acted upon and they are capable of managing themselves in their own roles rather than being made the objects of the research. When experience and expertise, which we have generated by our own actions, jumps up and bites us in an unexpected way, we may experience what Argyris and Schon (1978) have called a 'dilemma of effectiveness'. This happens when our 'theories' (which we might or might not have articulated to ourselves and others) fail because they have failed to effectively predict or influence the behaviour of other people. It was my intention that within the case study methodology there would be powerful learning for all parties by the experience and consideration of these 'dilemmas of effectiveness'. Equally it was also possible for those involved not to take advantage of these learning opportunities and to revert to old routines (Cherry, 1999). It was anticipated that this notion would have particular salience within my research as the NQTs experienced the highs and lows of managing pupils' behaviour.

Argyris (1990) offers some guidance and techniques to assist with articulating implicit theories and revealing defensive routines. Senge (1990) identifies as a 'learning discipline' the skills involved in bringing to the surface and testing 'mental models' (a concept which incorporates tacit assumptions, beliefs and implicit theories). In my research I intended to approach this issue by tapping into the thinking of the psychologist George Kelly. Kelly's 'Personal Construct Theory' reflects a philosophical stance that human beings are continuously engaged in the process of constructing and reconstructing their reality and that 'no-one needs to be a victim of his biography' (Kelly, 1955, p.15).

Kelly's stance, as a therapist and educator, was to encourage his clients and learners to articulate their views and regard them as hypotheses potentially open to invalidation. Pope and Denicolo (2001, p.62-63) highlight a parallel between Kelly (1955) who saw the personal experiments of individuals as being a continuous process of forming a hypothesis (construct), testing it and reflecting on the outcome with a possible reformulation of the construct system and Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) who see action research as critical education science with an ongoing process of problem identification, plans, reflection and redefinition. Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory is discussed in detail in chapter 6.

Reflection is basic to all phases of action learning and the action research cycles. The techniques of reflection in my research provided not only a way of creating meaning, but of testing that meaning. 'What if?' questions were asked in order to generate future scenarios with the purpose of suggesting appropriate action, predicting possible outcomes and evaluating those outcomes. In its most developed form reflection becomes a *meta-process* (Cherry, 1999) in which an individual reflects about their own reflection process, deliberately and consciously using reflection (the creation and development of meaning) to understand the way they create and develop meaning (the way they reflect). At this stage the person becomes self-reflective, literally applying the action learning cycle to themselves; noticing aspects of their internal and external behaviour and evaluating the impact of those behaviours on self and others asking: Why did I do this? What's driving my behaviour? and What do I plan to change?

Although not all change is improvement, clearly all improvement concerns change. Fullan (1991) considers that the basic question is how to get good at change – that is how to increase the capacity of individuals to know when to reject certain change possibilities and to know when to pursue and implement others. Each of these possible responses, according to Pope and Denicolo (2001), that is to resist, engage in or accommodate to it, are improved if they are based on an evaluative stance. Such an evaluation requires as a prerequisite that current views and perceptions are made explicit in order that comparisons can be made with proposed adaptations and developments. Jones (1994, p.302) highlights the difficulties which may occur if we are unaware of the ‘personal goggles’ we view the world through. He discusses the potential problem when this interpretive process, based on implicit theories and beliefs, remains unconscious, not least that these implicit theories may form barriers to change. However, Jones (1994) points out that once identified, currently held views can be addressed in a constructive and critical way.

In my research, change, when it occurred, was a very personal experience framed in the centre of educational practice. As the NQTs’ personal theories were unearthed they were addressed through critical thought processes which resulted in positive change. It was necessary, therefore, in these circumstances to recognize and attend to the individual concerns of each of the NQTs. They needed to understand any changes they made and work out their own meaning through clarification which occurred through interpretation of their own practice. In the management of pupils’ behaviour teachers have to have an air of optimism, a notion Kelly (1955) addresses in that we need not find ourselves painted into a corner; however we need the motivation and commitment to get out of it if we find ourselves in one! Not only do teachers have to believe in their *pupils’* capacity to change, they also need confidence in their own ability to change. As Fullan (1991, p. xiii) notes:

‘If a healthy respect for and mastery of the change process does not become a priority, even well-intentioned change initiatives will continue to create havoc among those who are on the firing line. Careful attention to a small number of key details during the change process can result in the experience of success, new commitments, and the excitement and self-satisfaction of accomplishing something that is important’.

Throughout my research I aimed, through a conversational framework, to identify the perceptions, attitudes and judgments of the NQTs in relation to their management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, place these in a central position and facilitate reflection and possible change. As stated previously, the case studies in my research provided multiple sources of data through a number of contacts with the NQTs during their induction year. For a timetable of contact refer to figure 14.

Figure 14: Timetable of Contact for NQTs during their induction year

Term 1: Autumn 2003	Introductions, Information Sheet, Consent Group meeting, Self- Characterisation Sketches Individual meetings – Repertory Grid Individual observations and discussions Individual discussions Telephone Contact Attendance at professional review meetings
Term 2: Spring 2004	Individual discussions Individual observations and discussions Telephone contact Attendance at professional review meetings
Term 3: Summer 2004	Individual discussions Individual observations and discussions Individual meetings – Repertory Grid Self-Characterisation Sketches Telephone Contact Attendance at professional review meetings Final Group Meeting

Adaptation, modification, openness to change and collaborative evaluation was necessary to move the research forward. The linked case studies allowed me to address my final research questions:

- *How can NQTs gain insight into how they construe (interpret and analyse) discipline, control and support?*
- *How flexible are their constructs when reflecting on their management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour ?*

By placing my research within the framework of linked case studies I intended to:

- facilitate a degree of understanding of and a sensitivity to the multiple interpretations and meanings of the particular contexts of the NQTs (an important methodological consideration).
- generate an understanding of knowledge which would enable myself and the NQTs to take effective action
- consider the value of reflection on practice to NQTs as learners

All three of the above intentions involved interpretation and the construction of meaning. It was the intention that my research would have substantial practical value to those involved. However, I acknowledge that impacting on a particular situation is one thing, producing more broadly applicable knowledge that can be replicated was inevitably a particular challenge.

Dick (1992) suggests two ways that helped address this challenge. One is by the use of cyclical or iterative processes which continually encouraged me to test my ideas in action; and the second is the use of what Dick (1992) calls the *dialectic*, working with multiple information sources which are preferably independent of each other. This really is a variation of triangulation, involving data from different sources to increase the rigour of the research process.

5.1 Research Rigour

The basic strategy to ensure rigour in qualitative research is a systematic and self-conscious research design, data collection, interpretation and communication (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Beyond this, my personal goals for this research are twofold: firstly, that it should create an account of method and data that can stand independently, so that another trained researcher could analyse the data in the same way and come to essentially the same conclusions; and secondly, that I produce a plausible and coherent explanation of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

What principles of researcher behaviour guided my practice as an interpretive researcher as I went to find out about the thoughts and feelings of the NQTs? As a researcher I am influenced by my informal, personal and tacit theory about the

management of pupils' behaviour. I consider that the recognition of this enhances the whole process of engaging in interpretive research. I saw this as a positive aspect as I was the research instrument ultimately in control of my research design. Maxwell (1996, p. 28) remarks that 'separating your research from other aspects of your life cuts you off from a major source of insights, hypotheses and validity checks'. Reflexivity is related to subjectivity and my effects on the process and on the participants. It was difficult at times to untangle these influences but I worked towards becoming aware of them and understanding them. A clearer understanding of my own views on the management of pupils' behaviour has led in the end to my keeping a critical distance from the data.

It was my responsibility to engage in transactions with the NQTs in their own natural setting. As we were all part of the education system we shared a common culture which helped in initiating a rapport in the first instance. It was important to me that I communicated to the NQTs as soon as possible that they would be listened to without prejudice. From a trustworthy basis it was important that the NQTs should say what they really felt and, secondly, I wanted to be able to revisit them from time to time to develop the research and feedback findings for discussion and clarification. The nature of these interactions operated on two levels: practical and cognitive.

On a practical level, I needed to be flexible enough to rethink my strategies to meet the needs of the NQTs. On the cognitive level, as well as the knowledge gained from my on-going professional practice, research into the literature, presented in chapter one, identified a social interactionist perspective pertinent to the management of pupils' behaviour. This perspective provided the theoretical framework that drove my thinking and helped to make sense of the incoming data. I was, at all times, constantly interrelating what I was seeing and hearing in the field with the concepts relevant to my investigation. Having Personal Construct Theory to *frame* my analysis (which is explained in detail in chapter 6), also identified key concepts that helped to sensitise me to what was happening in the field so I was able to conceptualise what I was seeing and hearing. These concepts provided a framework in which I could start to formulate ideas about what was happening from both a mentor's and a researcher's

perspective (my dual role in this stage of the research) as I had no hypothesis to refute or verify.

5.2 Sampling

I used systematic, non-probability¹ sampling in my research. The purpose was not to establish a random or representative sample drawn from a population but rather to identify a specific number of people who were in circumstances relevant to the social phenomenon being studied. The NQTs were selected because they would enable an exploration of a particular aspect of behaviour relevant to my research.

5.3 Ensuring the reliability of an analysis

The raw data were collected in a relatively unstructured form e.g. tape recordings and transcripts of conversations. The main way in which I ensured the retest reliability of my analyses was in the maintenance of meticulous records of interviews and observations and by documenting the process of analysis in detail. The reliability of the analysis was enhanced by organizing an additional assessment of the taped transcripts by another experienced researcher and then comparing agreements.

5.4 Safeguarding Validity

Alongside issues of reliability, attention was given to the validity of my findings. Triangulation was used in order to actively seek evidence from a wide range of different independent sources and often by different means (for example by comparing oral testimony with written records). Validation strategies involved feeding back the findings to the participants to see if they regarded the findings as a reasonable account of their experiences. Interviews were utilised so that their reactions to the evolving analysis became part of the emerging research data. Allowing for the fact that purely objective observation is not possible in social science, how can the reader judge the credibility of my account? I am aware that questions may be asked such as:

¹ Non – probability samples: In probability sampling, it is possible to specify the probability that any person (or other unit on which the research is based) will be included in the sample. Any sampling plan where it is not possible to do this is called 'non-probability sampling (Cohen and Manion,1993).

How well does the analysis explain why people behave in the way that they do? How comprehensible would this explanation be to a thoughtful participant in the setting? and How well does the explanation it advances cohere with what is already known? It is also important that my account allows another person to learn the 'rules' and language sufficiently well to be able to function in the research setting. I understood the importance of separating evidence from second hand sources and hearsay from the evidence derived from direct observation of behaviour in situ. I had adequate time to become thoroughly familiar with the milieu under scrutiny and the NQTs soon became used to my being around them.

I consider that I witnessed a wide enough range of activities in the study site to be able to draw conclusions about typical and atypical forms of behaviour – for example observations and interviews were undertaken at a variety of times and compared with observations from additional observers. I have aimed throughout the study to enable the reader to distinguish the data, the analytic framework used and the interpretation. One of the problems I encountered in presenting my qualitative analysis objectively was the sheer volume of data available and the greater difficulty in summarizing it. At times I have combined a qualitative analysis with some quantitative summary of the results. The quantification was used merely to condense the results to make them easily intelligible.

Overall, throughout the research I have been mindful of advice from Altrichter (1993) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000) who propose a number of criteria to ensure rigor and validity (brackets added):

- A theoretical underpinning which provides context and informs the study (Chapters 1 and 6)
- A logical research approach (Introduction)
- The collection and analysis of data from a wide variety of sources and perspectives and an explanatory account of how data is collected and organized (Chapters 2,3,4,7 and 8)

- An understanding that the process is not about finding solutions so much as deepening understanding and identifying areas for further improvement (an interpretive premise)
- The realization that case study is concerned with the development of professional competence (more available through an interpretive approach as arguably it is only through an exploration of values, both through reflection and in action, that the NQTs will become able to empower themselves through their practice for the ultimate benefit of their learners)
- The illumination of the researcher's relationship with the participants and the objectives of the research i.e. reflexivity (Chapter 5)
- Recommendations that the research may make for professional practice (Chapters 9 and 10)

5.5 Ethical Considerations

A key ethical issue in phase two of my research was that it had the potential to *highlight* difficulties and concerns, which could have exacerbated the NQTs' feelings of insecurity and frustration through having to focus on and reflect upon specific incidents or issues. The induction period involves not simply an extension or modification of beliefs and practice established at the end of initial teacher training. Rather it also involves developing new perspectives concerning what the role of the teacher is really about and what the job actually entails. Without doubt in the induction period new problems will be faced; amongst which will more than likely be the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. This inevitably will cause a certain amount of stress and anxiety.

In order to address this notion, in phase two of my research, I took on a dual role as a mentor / researcher. I aimed to encourage a reciprocal relationship in my study in which myself and the NQTs learnt from one another. Some NQTs had more difficulties than others with regard to their management of pupils' behaviour, consequently the need to be mindful of teacher self-confidence and self-esteem was of intrinsic importance in my research. I had to be attentive to their *individual* personalities, desires, needs and knowledge. It was my intention that the support and

encouragement given through my mentoring role would counteract any anxiety induced through my research.

At this phase in the research, in my role as mentor/researcher, I faced a number of potential dilemmas resulting from the contrasting (and occasionally conflicting) aspects of the two roles. My dilemmas were not unique, however, as other researchers have encountered similar problems (Elliot, 1991; Lovat, 1992; Coffey, 1999; Mills, 2000; Delamont 2002; Pressick-Kilborn and Sainsbury 2002). Lovat (1992) for example concentrates specifically on ethical issues and outlines the principles of autonomy, justice, non-maleficence and beneficence as foundational to ethical behaviour. The principle of autonomy requires that consent be obtained, justice appertains to confidentiality while non-maleficence and beneficence require care and attention.

As a researcher transacting in the field, my research was qualitatively dependent on the relationships I developed between myself and the NQTs. Radnor (2001) states clearly that the principle of ethics in action focuses centrally on the need for the researcher to show respect for the participants. As a consequence:

- Confidentiality and anonymity were respected
- Interpersonal interaction occurred in an unobtrusive and unthreatening manner
- The participants were observed and interviewed in their own settings
- There was collaboration in building mutual trust and understanding
- The potential benefits to all parties was communicated
- The right to withdraw from the study at any time was stated clearly

Achieving good will and cooperation was especially important at this phase in the research process as the process was to take a full academic year. Simons (1984) states that however harmonious relationships in a school appear to be, trust does not automatically exist between professionals. I wanted to ensure the research participants that there was the potential for them to benefit professionally from taking part whilst stating clearly that they could withdraw at any time without reason. The NQTs were given a participant information sheet written in simple, non-technical terms

along with a consent form confirming that they had read the information sheet and agreed to take part in the study (refer to appendices G and H).

All the information obtained in phase two of my research was considered privileged information and under no circumstances was it disclosed in a fashion which would identify any individual or organization. The data in phase two was coded with numbers instead of names to protect the identity of the research participants.

Finally, what has not been discussed in any detail at this point is my dual role within the research process and the following discussion aims to do this. In doing so it also attempts to further demonstrate notions of qualitative research rigour.

5.6 Conceptualising my dual role as mentor / researcher

This discussion describes the practicalities of my dual role, highlights the challenges that were faced and identifies ways in which the roles were juxtaposed. What were the key aspects of my role? What dilemmas did I face? How did my subjectivity constrain and strengthen the research? During my research there were inevitably judgments and tensions which arose in the immediacy of events. Some were anticipated but others had not been addressed and had to be responded to as they arose; these are highlighted in the following discussion.

My dual role involved shared problem solving in professional work which is closely tied to Schon's (1983) terms: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. In order to transform this theoretical concept into practice my role as mentor/researcher enabled me to share the NQTs' learning experiences and they to share in mine. For the sake of the proactive relationship between myself and the NQTs I needed to conduct the whole data gathering process in such a way that the idea of participating in my research project was more rather than less favourably viewed. Had I simply requested the NQTs' time for research purposes alone I would not have felt as comfortable. Suggesting that *both* parties could benefit from the experience enhanced the introductory process and provided a firm foundation for progress and development. Learning was enabled through a process of discovery rather than instruction, which

recurrently led to extended periods of reflection in which the NQTs began to analyse problems from new angles and saw opportunities where they used to see only barriers. In turn I learned to look for the 'essentials' of work practice as well as the tacit knowledge and lived experience that practitioners find difficult to articulate but that make the actual work practice accountable to them.

5.7 Key aspects of my mentoring role

My role as mentor focused on facilitating the NQTs' professional development and maximizing the opportunities through which their day to day practice could be enhanced. As a mentor I wished to contribute to the NQTs' ability to manage pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. I also wanted to focus on the pursuit of good educational practice and practical wisdom, helping the NQTs to craft a professional identity through their struggles with and explorations of teacher-pupil interaction. This created, at times, a tension between encouragement and teaching. All the NQTs spoke with clarity when given the opportunity to talk about the problems they were experiencing. What was unavoidable in all their descriptions of behaviour in which they had become personally involved was the level of emotional intensity with which the incidents were invested.

For much of the time my mentoring role provided moral support, often the most immediate personal and emotional need of teachers new to the classroom (Elliot and Calderhead, 1993). This centered on protecting the NQTs from isolation by suggesting ways in which to balance the unfamiliar demands and expectations of pupils, parents and the school at large. I found it generally easy to be supportive; more difficult however was the task of being constructively critical whilst maintaining and enhancing each NQT's self-esteem. The self-esteem of teachers is fundamental to having the confidence to manage pupil behaviour. It also has major implications for creating a professional development culture that is supportive and understanding; this is crucial to the development of a learning organization and highlights the importance of providing expert support and guidance, which encourages reflection and development.

It was imperative to develop an empathetic dialogue with the NQTs. I considered that it was important for me to sometimes advise and guide the NQTs and yet at other times step back from the action and evaluate it critically. There were specific times when I had to accept that any comment regarding what I perceived to be confused or inaccurate conceptual understanding could have led to certain occasions becoming de facto coaching sessions (e.g. the repertory grid interviews²). Any interventions such as this would have led to contamination of the data, since the NQTs' responses could have been influenced by my perspective and the data would have become potentially less authentic.

On several occasions I had to restrict my research, because even though I wanted to ask research oriented questions I knew it was not the type of interaction I should be having. All the NQTs gave consent to the audio taping of debriefs, interviews and discussions. However, on more than one occasion I felt ethically obliged to stop the audio recording due to moments of despair and despondency exhibited by the NQTs. Here was certainly a moral dilemma; to leave the tape recorder running and pursue research based questions would have been extremely insensitive and could have put my positive relationships with the NQTs at risk. This inevitably, however, allowed the actual point of practice to pass; as a result recollections about it would never again be as vivid or valid. Empathetic participation was clearly imperative but my research increasingly became a balance between the dynamics of participation and withdrawal.

Throughout my mentoring role I was keenly aware that the NQTs were learners as well as teachers. It was therefore important to ensure that my mentoring role provided not only support but also *development* that extended into experimentation and consolidation.

5.8 Key aspects of my researcher role

My role as a researcher was intent on gathering data and therefore I positively encouraged the NQTs to contribute to and speak for themselves in response to my

² Repertory grid interviews evolved from Kelly's personal construct theory (1955). 'The repertory grid can be a powerful instrument to tap into an individual's view of self and his/her world' (Pope and Denicolo, 2001, p. 67).

research questions. My insider knowledge of the culture of the school, along with its administrative structure and functioning, was an important consideration when liaising with senior management, observing classes and sharing aspects of the NQTs' experiences. In addition my knowledge of the research site enabled me to understand the subtle links between situations and events and to better understand the implications of following particular lines of enquiry. Knowing whom to contact regarding additional advice and support for the NQTs and co-operation with senior staff on the timetabling for the observations, interviews and professional review meetings enhanced the smooth running of the research process.

Researching within one's own field is according to Pine (1992, p. 657) 'essentially problematic'. Griffiths (1985) argues that knowledge of the contextual features and events of the research site can only enhance the process. Whilst there are benefits to a knowledge of the research site from personal experience rather than coming into a new situation as an external observer, the corresponding challenge exists in seeing the familiar site through new eyes (Coffey, 1999). Pressick-Kilborn and Sainsbury (2002) addressed this challenge by engaging a research assistant who was instrumental in providing an alternative perspective. In my case I involved a researcher/colleague in a number of classroom observations. Debriefing conversations with my colleague following these observations were useful in gaining fresh insights into teacher-pupil interaction from the perspective of a genuine outsider and created different possibilities for seeing the familiar site. This led to valuable additional insight and created further opportunities for reflection.

Throughout the academic year there was a complex tension because the research was directly associated with professional action within a given and continuing social situation. I was at times faced with the dilemma between the need to know what was occurring in order to thoroughly understand the experiences of newly qualified teachers, and the professional responsibility of acting on their behalf. Tickle (2001) was faced with a similar situation and reports that the consequences of not revealing an incident enabled the counselling of the new teacher but prevented its use in acting to change the situation. The consequences of not revealing the incident was that

remedial action was prevented both in the case of the new teacher and in others who might find themselves in similar circumstances.

On one particular occasion I asked one of the NQTs to release me from the confidentiality agreement in order to enable me to talk with the senior staff at the school. My request was refused due to the NQT feeling that there might have been aspersions cast regarding capability. However it was granted that I could talk confidentially to the Head of Department. This condition was applied so that I would at least be able to take limited action. Fortunately the sensitivity of this issue did not impair my relationship with the NQT. Within the day to day activities in my research there were inevitable micro-political and interpersonal risks and opportunities in observing the professional behaviour of others. In those risks and opportunities there was a fragile trust within which access to situations, and data, was granted and information transmitted, held and acted upon.

The very nature of my research meant that on most occasions I was working in the 'zone of uncertainty' (Kuula, 1999, Crouzier and Friedberg, 1980). During the many interviews that were held over the academic year I needed to be able to grasp the contents that the NQTs wished to describe to me. I needed to know how to listen, encourage them to talk and to be comfortable with periods of silence. When needing to elicit responses from my subjects it was a matter of a balance between neutrality and being a subjective co-experiencer.

5.9 Challenges within my dual role

At times it was imperative to be wary of focusing too emotionally on issues, reorient my thinking and regain my perspective. As time went on inevitably my relationship with the NQTs developed and I had to guard against wanting to 'solve' all the issues that they were facing. There were certainly times when I felt sadness and frustration that support for the professional development in the management of pupil behaviour wasn't a valued and endemic part of the culture of the institution. If schools operate in ways that are unresponsive to the needs of newly qualified teachers, it is unreasonable to expect these teachers to learn and develop effectively within them.

I aimed to encourage a reciprocal relationship in which myself and the NQTs learnt from one another and had a voice in the study. Each one of the NQTs progressed at different rates and all had a significant number of behaviour management issues to focus on. Consequently the need to be mindful of teacher self-confidence and self-esteem was of intrinsic importance. Throughout the period of the research in phase 2, I received repeated phone calls from the NQTs requesting advice and support. My role as a mentor/researcher was clearly viewed by them as someone they could talk to who understood their problems. As a consequence I would argue that the support and encouragement given through my mentoring role counteracted any anxiety induced by my researcher role.

However, my partial insider status and acceptance by my informants could have brought risks to my study. My subjectivity had to be managed so it did not compromise my interpretations. Reactions to my findings were balanced with the emic³ perspectives of my informants. My subjectivity manifested itself as a desire for the NQTs to realise the importance of positive teacher-pupil interaction and the contribution of this to their management of pupils' behaviour. My credibility as a researcher was contingent upon the NQTs accepting me as a partial insider with sufficient experiential knowledge to understand the institution they were working in. Prus (1996) comments that people very much appreciate contact with someone who is genuinely interested in hearing about, as opposed to trying to impress them. At this point I was mindful of Wragg (1994, p.113) who identifies that some experiments are affected because of the *'enthusiasm of the experimenters, the greater attention paid to the subjects and other effects, often referred to as the 'Hawthorne Effect'*⁴.

Most certainly the need for the monitoring of and reflection about my enthusiasm and subjectivity was important as there is no denying it influenced my initial desire to

³ Emic and etic are terms used by some in the social sciences and the behavioural sciences to refer to two different kinds of data concerning human behaviour. An 'emic' account of behaviour in terms meaningful to the actor, consciously or unconsciously is the insider view. An 'etic' account is a description of behaviour in terms familiar to the observer, the outsider view. (The terms are derived from the linguistic terms phonemic and phonetic respectively).

⁴ 'Hawthorne Effect': after the research into improving worker performance in the Hawthorne factory of the Western Electrical Company, in which output improved under each of the experimental conditions tried by investigators largely because of the positive response by workers to being shown interest.

embark upon my research. It is acknowledged that my own biography and experiential knowledge emerged as important influences. However, several forms of experiential knowledge were necessary to understand the peculiarities and complexities of the processes at work in the highly dynamic educational setting I had chosen.

The vulnerability of the NQTs was a crucial factor. The extremely difficult class which would have tested the most proficient and experienced of teachers; serious breaches of the behaviour policy which were not followed through by senior management; the despair and anxiety of the NQTs that often occurred after an experience with a confrontational class or pupil and the NQTs' experiences of their first Ofsted inspection were all examples of times when my mentor and researcher roles were clearly fused, the fusion creating a dilemma about rights, respect and commitment to the NQTs on the one hand, and on the other the need to know more in order to judge an appropriate course of professional action.

As insights increased with the accumulation of sensitive data, so did the fragility of the dilemmas of praxis. On these occasions the struggle between enclosure and disclosure was enacted. It was my intention however to ensure that openness and trust existed and that actions had no undesirable potential consequences so that research and action could go hand in hand without contention. It was important that a confidential relationship existed between my respondents and myself as this may have encouraged them to describe more profoundly their ideas and constructs.

The elicitation of constructs via the repertory grid interviews⁵ was particularly time consuming, usually lasting over an hour. This technique involved a high level of skill in order to sense the process of elicitation and to give prompts and assistance when required, whilst not becoming too directive in the approach. This potential dilemma was counteracted by having several 'dry runs' eliciting grids to develop a sensitivity to the processes occurring during an elicitation session and to time manage the process to an acceptable duration for both parties. Nevertheless, at times I would have liked to have extended some of the grid interviews but was conscious not to take advantage of the generosity and co-operation of each of the NQTs.

⁵ Repertory Grid interviews are discussed in chapter 6.

Validity of the findings in my research was enhanced by prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation.. Additionally it was always my intention to separate a descriptive analysis from interpretation. It is envisaged that the descriptive analysis will enable the reader to gain a perspective of the subjects under study by getting a sense of their actions and their context. It is also anticipated that there is evidence to support interpretation and that this will generate confidence in the bases of my interpretations.

5.10 Balancing the roles of mentor and researcher

Researching within my own practice brought the roles of mentor and researcher closer together through an evolving dialectical relationship. My role as mentor/researcher was based on principles which aimed to encourage practice-based inquiry amongst all the NQTs. It was somewhat inevitable that my focus of attention fluctuated between mentor (a facilitative role) and researcher (a more directive role). In the first instance I imagined that I could separate these roles and would communicate the 'switch' to my respondents.

As my research progressed however these roles merged so tightly together that in reality it was difficult to differentiate between them. I decided therefore to have an overarching principle to work from based on conceptualizing my researcher role as adding value to my role as mentor and from this mentoring role I would extract data to be used in my research. I would also argue that intermittently switching my direction of attention enhanced both roles. Extracting information and data for my research enhanced my mentoring role as careful revisiting of my field notes and listening to transcripts of conversations enabled me to provide thoughtful and specific feedback at subsequent meetings with the NQTs. Thus the knowledge of my mentoring role informed the role of the researcher, whilst the theoretical and investigative role as researcher informed and expanded my role as mentor.

Certainly the need to know, to understand what was happening and the need to act to affect what was happening often occurred in tense combination. I was conscious that in the same way as my personal bias could influence the reliability of the data, the

NQTs could provide information through a filter affected by their relationship to myself. By assuring the NQTs that their identities would be protected I hoped to minimize the effect of over-familiarity on the one hand and lack of familiarity on the other and that they would trust me sufficiently to forward accurate and reliable information. As a mentor/researcher I found that in the case of the NQTs' perception of me as a problem-solver or evaluator of performance learning was inhibited, whereas a relationship based on mutual trust supported the NQTs' personal and professional growth. The close working relationship I developed with each of the NQTs, aided by my research design, gave me insights into aspects of learning influenced by newly qualified teacher's beliefs.

5.11 Tools used to mediate my dual role

I am not complacent in thinking that my perspective as mentor and researcher did not involve issues of bias and that the collection and interpretation of data was unaffected by my own pre-conceived ideas and opinions acquired through my experience. However, in order to minimize the influence of bias on my research and enhance the validity and reliability of findings I adopted a number of strategies. Checks were made to ensure important questions and issues were covered and not blinded by my personal perspective. Triangulation of data involved head of department and senior management perspectives on each of the NQTs, attendance at professional review meetings and the additional viewpoint of a researcher/colleague in classroom observations. These additional perspectives were invaluable as a way of endorsing or rejecting analysis in progress.

The main challenge as a mentor/researcher was to identify and adopt a theoretical perspective that would enable direct access to the learning experiences of the NQTs. I am aware that teachers have their own views and interpretations of what happens in their classrooms; in other words they have their own views on what they perceive reality to be. In order to 'get to know' the NQT's constructions regarding the management of pupil behaviour my research taps into the thinking of the psychologist George Kelly (1955). Kelly's 'Personal Construct Theory' reflects a philosophical stance that human beings are continuously engaged in the process of constructing

and reconstructing their reality and that no one needs to be a victim of their biography. Constructive alternativism is a view that supports the recognition that if practices are to change, teachers need to examine some of their 'fundamental beliefs'. Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955) was utilized for two reasons in my research. Firstly, it was used to illuminate and evaluate the constructions of the NQTs and secondly, it was a powerful tool to enhance discussions about teacher-pupil interaction.

Occasionally the NQTs found consideration of their current personal constructs threatening, especially when they deduced that change was needed. At these times it was necessary to introduce and practice a 'language of behaviour' in order to enable the NQTs to talk about their practice and to be able to articulate the implicit assumptions, understandings and nuances about behaviour management. Discussion about the management of pupils' behaviour can often remain at a fairly superficial level. In my research the ability to use a more subject specific language had significant advantages (especially during the grid interviews) in helping the NQTs interpret their own observations and thoughts about the way they managed behaviour in their classrooms. Arguably, professional development strategies that do not invite challenge of a person's implicit theories may be seen as comfortable but may not lead to any reappraisal of current theory or practice.

5.12 Key benefits of my dual role

From a mentor's perspective it was an extremely positive experience to work alongside individuals who were developing an understanding of the art of pedagogy that allowed them to continually refine and adjust their practice. Additional benefits enabled them to draw from a foundation of experience based on underpinning knowledge about the management of pupils' behaviour.

From a researcher's perspective most celebratory would be aspects of professional development concerning the acquisition or fine tuning of a variety of skills associated with the act of systematic enquiry, translating into professional and personal empowerment for each of the NQTs. In my role as mentor/researcher I took the NQTs through a process of critical self-reflection that involved them in the continual

reconstruction of their experiences in the management of pupils' behaviour. Indeed it was a privilege to share their experiences and witness them all transcending the bounds of procedural knowledge to questioning and construing their daily practice. These were key benefits of my role and outweighed notions of conflict between the roles of mentor and researcher.

The main aim in stage two of my research was to investigate ways in which four newly qualified teachers (NQTs), in a mainstream secondary school, gained insight into their personal frames of reference regarding their interaction with pupils, and the contribution of this to their management of pupils' behaviour. There are, however, aspects of this area of classroom management that are not easily defined e.g. perceptions, attitudes and judgments about teacher-pupil interaction. As previously mentioned, the main theoretical underpinning throughout phase two of my research is Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955) and tools from this theory allowed me to focus on how the NQTs gained insight into their constructions concerning discipline, control and support and how flexible their constructs were. Chapter 6 now discusses the theoretical underpinning and research tools (Personal Construct Theory; self characterisation sketches and the repertory grid) which were used in phase 2 of my research.

Chapter 6

6.1 A Personal Construct Psychology perspective on the management of pupils' behaviour

Student teachers do not enter initial teacher training as blank slates. After many years in classrooms they have ideas about what teachers do. But these ideas are from a student not a teacher perspective and thus are likely to be inaccurate, inappropriate or incomplete. Such misconceptions could distort or block any new information presented in initial teacher training programmes (Kubler LaBoskey, 1993). As a consequence, initial teacher educators need to consider the potential influence of student preconceptions on the reflective process as students will inevitably differ with regard to growth and inquiry. The results of reflection by student teachers may be new comprehensions about the management of pupil behaviour and/or about the process of reflection itself. Yaxley (1998) found that student teachers and NQTs were not given enough opportunities to reflect on their practice and to develop strong principles and ideas on which to base their thinking about the management of pupils' behaviour. Not only did she find the development of teachers as reflective practitioners to be lacking but also recognized that reflective skills need to be taught if teachers are to have the necessary tools to develop strategies to address pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour.

There is arguably a content aspect to the notion of reflection: for example the student teachers' or NQTs' beliefs about the management of pupils' behaviour and their emotional attachment to it may have an impact on their thinking about the teaching of this area. Additionally, there must be a reason or impetus for embarking on the reflective process; there must be a purpose to it all. According to Dewey (1933) reflection begins with a 'felt difficulty'; this difficulty becoming an integral part of the problem-setting process. The tacit assumptions, values and intuitions of teachers, particularly student teachers, need to be surfaced and analysed (Kubler LaBoskey, 1993). The content of reflection with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour is both practical and theoretical. In any single act of reflection the content might be either or both. Because reflection is a process which involves individual values, perceptions,

and judgments the quality of the 'results' will vary. Whatever the quality, however, the new comprehensions should always be tentative and subject to revision.

However, integral to the process of reflection on both a practical and theoretical level is that it has to be accompanied by confrontation if development is to occur. When teachers are discussing the management of pupils' behaviour they need to be given the opportunity to confront the assumptions they make about their work before they can move beyond a descriptive self-reflection of how things are and make decisions about how they might do things differently in the future. Van Manen (1991) describes this notion as a confrontation of the 'known' with the 'unknown', theorizing this confrontation of ideas as a form of conceptual conflict which should ultimately lead to cognitive change.

The literature review (chapter one) outlined key areas of thinking with regard to reflective practice (Dewey,1964; Schon,1983; Calderhead,1989; Lucas,1991; Van Manen, 1991; MacIntyre,1993) but rarely is the case that any of these theoretical notions mention *how* to reflect in the sense of suggesting a framework for reflection. My research indicates that Personal Construct Psychology may provide a framework which would address my key research question:

- How can the thinking of the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), relating to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, better be understood and best be facilitated?

Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) is an attempt to understand how we each experience our daily lives, to understand our behaviour in what it attempts to signify and to explore how we negotiate our reality with others. As teachers we must continually be engaged in learning. In managing pupils' behaviour we must decide when to act, when to judiciously ignore, when to try and build bridges and when to try and understand what lies behind a pupil's behaviour. My research suggests that PCP processes and techniques have much to offer the reflective process concerning an increased understanding of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour, because they have the potential for promoting development from *within* rather than externally imposed through traditional lectures and training techniques.

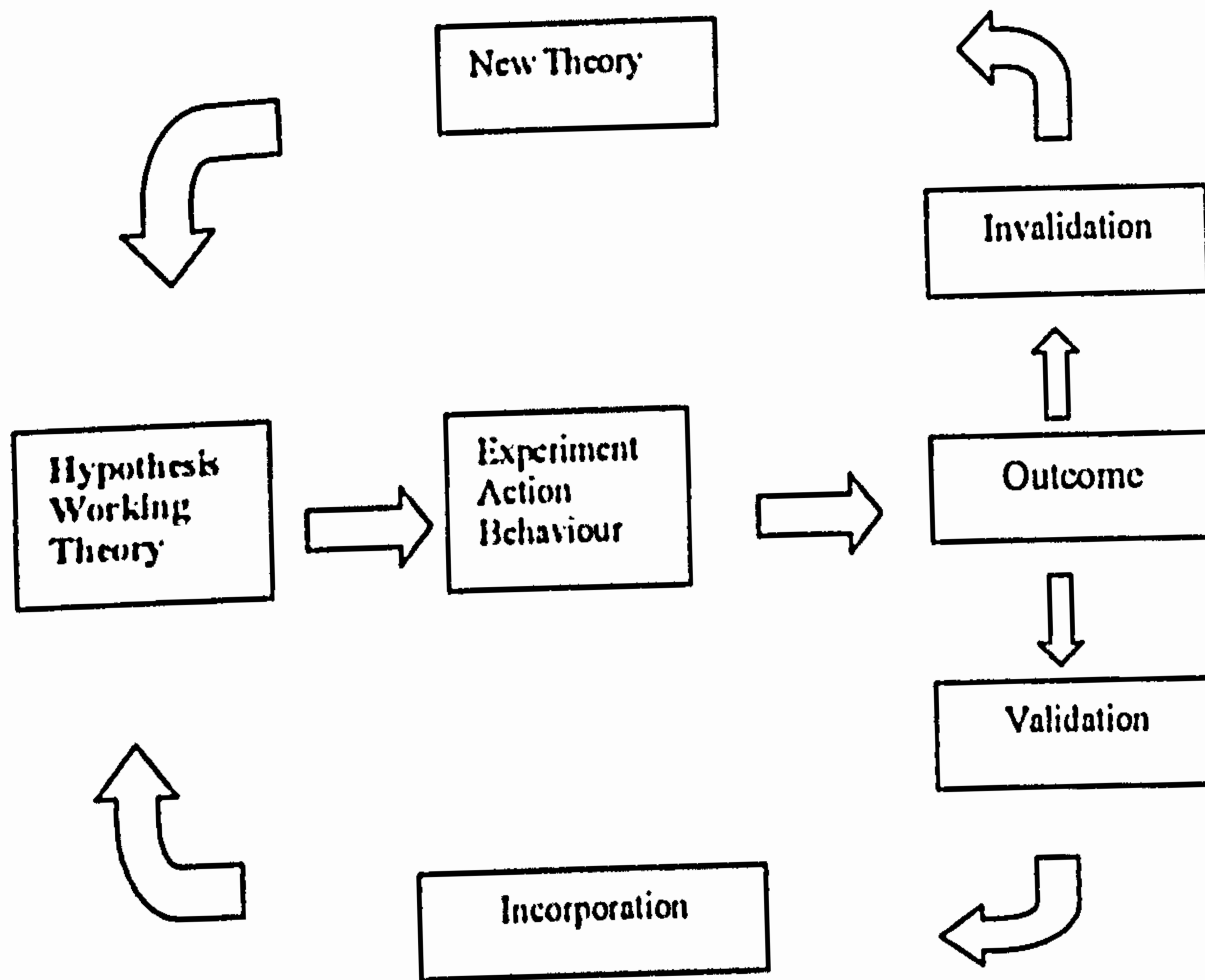
At a first glance the theories within Personal Construct Psychology appear to be somewhat uninspiring mainly because the theory is content-free. It is the user of the theory that has to see the relevance of it to the particular issue that they are considering. Overall, the psychology of personal constructs is the implementation of a philosophical assumption which suggests that the events we face on a daily basis are subject to as great a variety of constructions as we are able to provide. Bannister and Fransella (1986) suggest that all our perceptions are open to question and reconsideration and the most obvious occurrences of everyday life might be utterly transformed if we are inventive enough to construe them in alternative ways. Kelly (1955) goes as far to suggest that we are all capable of remaining immovable if we adhere to unalterable views about situations.

Mahoney (1988) maintains that psychological constructivism refers to a family of theories sharing the understanding that human knowledge and experience entail the proactive participation of the individual. Constructive alternativism (Kelly, 1955) supports the recognition that if practices are to change, teachers need to examine some of their fundamental beliefs. It is often assumed that this process is best achieved by reflection in and on practice. Kelly (1955) warns of the potential hostility to change if the process requires too much of an adaptation of the individual's system. In my role as mentor / researcher in phase two of my research I was constantly aware of the sensitivity of the reflective material which could be evoked. As a consequence I gave time and support during periods of deconstruction and reconstruction that occurred when any one of the NQTs in my research were confronted with a situation that he/she wished to view from a different perspective.

Kelly's (1955) theory proposes how people experience the world and make sense of that experience. He suggests that *constructs* are used to give meaning to a constant flow of events. By providing a framework of meaning for each individual, their construct system enables them to act in the world with a reasonable expectation of being able to predict and, to some extent, control the course of events. When a construct system and the constructs within it meet this expectation, the system is strengthened or validated; when the constructs within the system fail to yield working

predictions, the individual needs to re-construct, or look for other ways to make sense of the experiences that formed the basis of the original construct (refer to figure 15).

Figure 15: An individual's construct system (Kelly, 1955).



According to Kelly (1955) constructs are formed by each person's way of seeing relationships between things, so it is possible to re-construct experiences by relating them to one another in different ways as well as seeking new experiences within any that are currently being explored.

PCP does not deny that a person's experiences can have a powerful impact on their life but Kelly (1955) insisted it is not each event itself that has such force but the way in which a person *construes* events in their life. Kelly (1955) was a therapist in the American Dust Bowl during the Depression. Many of his clients were farmers living on the edge of poverty and depression. He cites examples of how some farmers construed their plight in terms of hopelessness and helplessness whereas others

construed the same situation in terms of rising to the challenge. It was the meaning that these people saw in the events of their lives which distinguished the troubled from the untroubled; this distinction having a direct impact on their motivation and behaviour.

The transference of this example to teachers and their management of pupils' behaviour is all too clear. Some teachers may look beyond managing it or correcting it and begin to explore the underlying emotions and their purposes or outcomes. Others may find difficulty in maintaining a dispassionate perspective and become defensive, developing negative relationships with their pupils. Some, and arguably the most difficult group (particularly from a training perspective) may become inflexible and intransigent to any suggestions of alternative approaches. In this scenario teachers can get so fixed in their *construal* of the management of pupils' behaviour that they consider that what they have are *facts* rather than one perspective among an infinite number of alternative perspectives or constructions. People are not stimulus-bound but they may well be bound by their construal of situations. As Diamond (1985, p.34) states 'if teachers can be helped to 'open their eyes' they can see how to choose and fashion their own version of reality'. In the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour the aim is not to try and discount the evidence on which teachers build their 'theory' but to gain an understanding of the construing which underlies it and if necessary to guide themselves towards an *alternative* way of construing. These *alternative* frameworks are of particular importance in the management of pupils' behaviour.

Tillema (1994) substantiates this opinion by commenting on the range of evidence which acknowledges that teachers have elaborate and substantive knowledge structures of their own. Such structures have been gradually constructed on the basis of their experiences and as such have probably become highly stabilised as a result of these experiences. My research investigates whether insight into some of these 'knowledge structures' may aid the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. However as Salmon (1995, p.25) suggests, new ways of looking at the management of pupils' behaviour can be 'potentially threatening' for if such new knowledge appears to challenge some of the established methods and fundamental

beliefs that teachers hold it is 'likely of necessity to be resisted'. Pope and Denicolo (2001,p.38) consider that if some parts of a person's construct system are *impermeable* then those parts will be resistant to change since those constructs will 'reject elements on the basis of their newness'. Resistance to change can also be the result of what Kelly (1955) refers to as 'hostility'.

With this in mind it is pertinent to examine the relational role attitudes and judgments play with regard to an individual's construct system. It is important to note that construct systems, as previously stated, are interwoven and interrelated and do not exist in isolation. Judgment interplays with the construct system in order to determine if constructs within support or confirm the input. If there is incongruity then judgment needs to be made if the information is to be integrated fully or not at all within the construct system. Both confirmation and disconfirmation are clearly learning experiences and should lead to a revision of ideas or attitudes. In the emotive area of managing pupils' behaviour, when a seeming solution does not work out or give the necessary leverage on what is going on, teachers may be dismayed. However, sometimes the experience of failure is in itself essential. It is most fundamentally the unsuccessful outcomes of putting our understanding to the test which often enhances the learning process. Disconfirmation of what we expected is often crucial to development. In Kellyan terminology, invalidation is the key to reconstruction. Constructive alternativism (how a reconstrual of a question, issue or event can often be facilitative) remained a key concept with the NQTs in phase 2 of my research.

The theory of PCP is formally stated as a fundamental postulate and eleven corollaries (Manusco and Adams-Webber, 1982). Each of the corollaries are listed below with a brief explanation and perspective on their relevance to the management of pupils' behaviour. The brief explanation of the fundamental postulate and eleven corollaries (in italics) are taken from Bannister and Fransella (1986 ch.1). Whenever possible, relevant links to the management of pupils' behaviour have been made.

Fundamental postulate: a person's processes are psychologically channelised by the ways in which they anticipate events. Kelly (1955) suggests that we react to our environment as *we see it*. Purposes and issues may well be our own but they can only

be furthered in relation to the way in which we choose to understand external reality. The notion of us reaching out towards a personal meaning is illustrated in the following corollaries:

Construction corollary: a person anticipates events by construing their replications. The disruptive behaviour that a teacher experienced yesterday will not be exactly the same as the disruptive behaviour they may experience today but the use of the construct 'disruptive behaviour' has a recognition of some sameness that we wish to affirm. Kelly (1955) stresses that replication is something that comes about by our personal interpretations. Teachers respond to all kinds of pupil behaviour but they are capable of responding very differently from one another according to how they *interpret* the behaviour. This has particular relevance to the difficulties with a *whole school consistent approach*, a phrase often bandied about within behaviour management texts. 'Inspection and research confirm the importance of consistency in approach by staff' (Ofsted, 2005). Although the importance of this notion cannot be denied there will inevitably be difficulties, as the larger the number of teaching staff, the more individual interpretations are possible.

Individuality corollary: persons differ from each other in their construction of events. Why is it that two teachers facing the same type of disruptive and challenging behaviour behave very differently? An answer, according to PCP is that these two teachers are not in the *same* situation. Each of them will see their situation through their own eyes and will differ from how they interpret the situation that they are in and will react accordingly as to how threatening they perceive the situation to be. This corollary does not argue that two teachers will never resemble each other in their construing but it does suggest that an individual teacher is unlikely to be a carbon copy of one of their colleagues. Herewith lies another issue of particular relevance to the management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils in secondary schools have to deal with a minimum of ten teachers a day and respond appropriately to each of them according to each teacher's reactions to their behaviour. A hard task, one might argue, for all pupils but perhaps even more difficult for those pupils who are unable to fill in the gaps of a poor teacher-pupil relationship.

Organisation corollary: each person characteristically evolves for their convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs. Kelly (1955) says that a person's constructs are interrelated. For some teachers the construct *appropriate behaviour* and *inappropriate behaviour* may be subsumed as a subordinate implication of the construct *good behaviour* versus *bad behaviour*. The investigation of the hierarchical quality of constructs can be extremely useful in developing a 'language for behaviour', arguably an absolute necessity to improving understanding and consistency. If we accept that our construct system will have superordinate constructs that have more implications than our subordinate constructs then travelling up and down in this way may lead to greater understanding of teachers' perceptions and beliefs about the management of pupils' behaviour.

Dichotomy corollary: a person's construction system is composed of a finite number of dichotomous constructs. Kelly (1955) argues that it is useful to see constructs as having two poles, a pole of affirmation and a negative pole. The idea of bipolarity in constructs has a particular significance in the management of pupils' behaviour as it allows a variety of relationships to be seen between them. It may enhance the possibility of detailed discussions and improved understanding about perceptions and judgments relating to their management of pupils' behaviour. It may also encourage the examination of ideas, both from perceived wisdom and those concerning personal views and assumptions.

Choice corollary: Person's choose for themselves that alternative in a dichotomised construct through which they anticipate the greater possibility for the elaboration of their system. Teachers have to make many instant decisions in a day based on the kaleidoscope of events that may confront them in a teaching situation. They have, according to PCP developed personal construct systems that will encourage them to move in directions which seem to them to make the most sense, that is directions which appear to elaborate their construct systems. This may explain why some teachers appear to have such difficulty in reflecting on their actions with a view to experimentation. This may often be a leap of faith that some teachers feel unable or unwilling to commit to, regardless of how much pre or in-service training that is on

offer. Hence the teacher with twenty years experience having repeated one year twenty times over.

Range corollary: a construct is convenient for the anticipation of a finite range of events only. Kelly (1955) used the term *focus of convenience* to indicate those aspects for which a construct was specifically developed. Thus the construct *well behaved* for some teachers may have, as its focus of convenience, following the teacher's instructions and trying hard. For others it may be asking searching questions or engaging in constructive argument. The range of convenience is all those things which teachers might eventually consider the construct applicable.

Experience corollary: a person's construction system varies as they successively construe the replication of events. We change our construct systems in relation to the accuracy of our interpretations (Bannister and Fransella, 1986). In the management of pupils' behaviour teachers may find that their predictions are sometimes proved correct, sometimes found wanting and sometimes turn out to be completely irrelevant to the turn of events. This may well be a confusing experience as each *incident* is unique to the individual who is behind it and therefore may often be seen by teachers to be a debilitating experience rather than a learning exercise, depending on their determination and resilience. The argument that our construction systems are continually changing makes PCP a particularly energetic theory.

Modulation corollary: the variation in a person's construction system is limited by the permeability of the constructs within whose range of convenience the variants lie. PCP is a psychology that essentially involves change. For example a construct such as good behaviour versus bad behaviour could almost continually extend its range of convenience depending on the circumstances of the age range, subject and environment. When teachers are faced with a difficult situation regarding pupils' behaviour they are most likely to deal in *permeable constructs*¹ in order to make sense out of the events that have arisen. If their constructs tend to be of an *impermeable* nature they may try and avoid thinking 'outside the box' and try and force the new

¹ A construct is permeable if it admits newly perceived elements to its context. It is impermeable if it rejects elements on the basis of their newness (Bannister and Fransella, 1986).

situations into their existing systems, however bad the fit. Unfortunately this can lead to intransigence culminating in a reluctance to try different strategies and techniques. Speaking from a trainer's perspective there are sadly too many teachers who are so entrenched in their ways that any chance of reflection and review with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour is unlikely to happen; therefore progress in this area is denied them.

Fragmentation corollary: a person may successively employ a variety of construction subsystems which are inferentially incompatible with each other. Unfortunately, from a pupil's perspective the way a teacher behaves one day cannot be inferred by the way they behaved the previous day. They may be more flexible some days than others for a variety of reasons. To an observer this may suggest a difficulty in anticipating a consistent response. Kelly (1955) would suggest that simply because constructions are inconsistent does not mean that there is no consistency. In behaviour management terms the teachers *superordinate* constructs regarding for example the health, safety and welfare of the pupils in their care would suggest some positive threads of a consistent approach. In behaviour management terms however a positive, consistent approach in which the teacher concentrates on the positive as a mechanism for altering the negative is arguably a superordinate construct to aspire to.

Commonality corollary: to the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, their processes are psychologically similar to those of the other person. This corollary suggests that people are similar in the sense that they construe in similar ways. Teachers in the 'same' situation may behave similarly but attach very different significance to their own behaviour and to the events that they encounter.

Sociality corollary: to the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another, they may play a role in a social process involving the other person. This arguably is a key corollary in the management of pupils' behaviour in that it insists that interpersonal interaction is in terms of each person's understanding of the other. It has much affinity with the social interactionist approach outlined by Felson and Tedeschi

(1993). A teacher may interact with a pupil and be playing a role in a social process with that pupil. This implies however that a teacher's construct system allows them to appreciate the *pupil's* construct system; a concept clearly very difficult for some teachers who seem uninterested in seeing situations from a pupil's perspective. If teachers cannot or are reluctant to try and construe a pupil's construct system then there will be no relationship and problems are more than likely to occur with regard to teacher-pupil interaction and the resultant management of pupils' behaviour.

6.2 Types of construct

The above fundamental postulate and eleven corollaries form the basis of the theory of personal constructs. Kelly (1955) also talks of *pre-emptive, constellatory and propositional constructs*. A pre-emptive construct is one which pre-empts its elements for membership in its own realm exclusively (Bannister and Fransella, 1986). Thus, pre-emptively, if a pupil is seen to be disruptive and challenging he or she is nothing *but* disruptive and challenging.

A constellatory construct concerns stereotypical thinking, again a pertinent issue in behaviour management. A train of thought in this case would be that if a pupil is seen to be disruptive and challenging then they must be rude and lack social skills. As with a pre-emptive construct this view reduces our chances of elaborating or reviewing our outlook. Finally Kelly (1955) talks of propositional constructs. This concerns a situation whereby a teacher may look upon a pupil as *disruptive* but consider that this is only *one* way of viewing the pupil and not some all consuming truth. It may be that the same pupil may be viewed as being very intelligent, kind to animals or an accomplished footballer. If teachers were prepared to use their constructs in a more propositional way then there may be a way forward in some rather tentative teacher pupil relationships.

6.3 Tight versus loose construing

Kelly (1955) defines a tight construct as one which leads to unvarying predictions and a loose construct as one which leads to varying predictions. In phase two of my

research the NQTs were encouraged to elaborate their construct systems during the repertory grid interviews in order to deal with the myriad of events that they were confronted with. It was a privilege to witness the continuous movement between their tight and loose construing that enhanced their language of behaviour and led to very proactive discussions. Since movement and change are pertinent notions in the psychology of personal constructs, Kelly (1955) saw creativity as being a cyclic phenomenon. The cycle starts with loosened construction and finishes with tightened and validated construction. When we construe tightly there are no shades of grey. When we construe loosely we are flexible and consider alternatives. Teachers who indulge in tight construing may never look at a pupil's behaviour in a different and more intuitive way since this can only stem from loosening the connection between constructs and rearranging them. The converse of this is the teacher who thinks loosely all the time; so much so that they can never tighten up on their thinking and test their ideas out. Kelly (1955) would argue that it is only through successive cycles of loosening and tightening that teachers develop themselves and their understanding of the situations that they find themselves in on a day to day basis. The notion of tight versus loose construing can also be seen as the pre-emptive – propositional continuum.

6.4 The construct of reason versus emotion

Bruner (1956) considers PCP to be too mentalistic, arguing that Kelly's (1955) description of construct systems is simply a description of 'thinking' and therefore deals with only one facet of a person. Burr and Butt (1992) consider that when we try to make sense of how we respond to events, we automatically refer to the reason-emotion construct as a guiding framework. We are accustomed to asking ourselves how we think and feel. The existence of these terms may suggest that they are two separate entities but when teachers are faced with difficult decisions, e.g. how to manage a disruptive pupil or class, it is unlikely that their thoughts and emotions take turns to appear in their consciousness. What they are likely to experience is a mixture of both at the same time. A key feature of PCP is that Kelly (1955) could find no

advantage in dividing up experience in this way and does not accept the cognition-emotion division as intrinsically valid².

What we refer to as 'emotion' in Kellyan terms is the profound disturbance that we feel when our way of construing leaves us totally impotent in coping with certain events; a pupil or group of pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour is a pertinent example of this notion. For example, meeting a new class a more experienced teacher may get the feeling of a 'difficult' group. This particular perception is likely to carry with it many interpretations of past experience, future expectations, possible strategies and potential outcomes. These constructions may well define the teacher's *attitude* towards the group. They will occur to the teacher, not as explicit verbal labels but possibly as a set of implicit guidelines, felt and sensed *emotionally*, rather than put into words.

In order to avoid the dualism of cognition and emotion, Kelly (1955) focuses attention on certain specific constructs, a number of which will be briefly explained and related to the management of pupils' behaviour. Words in italics are taken from Bannister and Fransella (1986 ch.1).

Anxiety: anxiety is awareness that the events with which one is confronted lie mostly outside the range of convenience of one's construct system. Individuals become anxious when they can only partially construe the events that are occurring in front of them. It is the unknown quantity of what might happen next that can give events their potency. At this point in time the anxiety is not felt as a separate issue; it is an all-consuming experience and one which some teachers will experience more than others.

Hostility: hostility is the continued effort to extort validation evidence in favour of a type of social prediction which has already been recognised as a failure. Some teachers unfortunately consider that they simply cannot afford to be wrong and blame pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour firmly on the pupils without any consideration of their *own* behaviour. They hold on to their constructs because the

² ... as opposed to Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1974) which *separates* emotions from concepts.

prospect of abandoning them is unthinkable as they are unlikely to have an alternative way of viewing the situation. In such a situation teachers may become hostile and try to 'bully' pupil into ways which confirm their predictions; as a result their own behaviour becomes challenging for the pupil and then the downward spiral begins, with little hope of recovery. Hostility in this sense can be seen as a self-preserving function rather than an antagonistic emotion. Teachers cease to be hostile and avoid such a downward spiral when they can be encouraged to find alternative way of viewing the situation and perhaps be more flexible, giving the benefit of the doubt, not over-reacting, not holding grudges etc. Bannister and Fransella (1986) consider that we cease to become hostile only when we can find alternative ways of interpreting ourselves and our situation. Pupils, after all, are unlikely to have the reserves and life experiences to attempt this re-interpretation; therefore, arguably, it is down to the teacher.

Threat: threat is an awareness of an imminent comprehensive change in one's core structures. Teachers naturally feel threatened when they are faced with a pupil or class who do not follow their instructions. This situation concerns the invalidation of the teacher's personal, practical and social situation with the situation having the potential to become chaotic. Threat is an extremely important construct for anyone trying to help other people (Bannister and Fransella, 1986). In the case of a teacher trying to manage an unruly class they may resort to threatening the pupils with all kinds of sanctions. The pupil/s may as a result become hostile and the situation inevitably becomes worse.

In social interaction there is a need to construct models of others in order to predict their reactions. How then do we build these models? Pupils provide teachers (and vice versa) with a continuous flow of data, both verbal and non-verbal. Given the different sources of information, how do people make inferences about others? Filtering and selection from these inputs is determined by the categories that are employed. This is the basis of Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory which was utilized in this study to explore the NQTs' perceptions of discipline, control and support and their overall perceptions about the management of pupils' behaviour.

Constructs concerning discipline, control and support were elicited and the analysis considers how these meld with ideas met in initial teacher training and whether they helped or hindered the process of managing pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Kelly (1955) lays great stress on the uniqueness of an individual's construct system and the essence of his work was to help people articulate at least part of their individual constructions. This articulation regarding the NQTs' perceptions of the management of pupils' behaviour was important for the following reasons:

- The process of this articulation helped the NQTs to clarify their thoughts and reflect on possibilities for change and progress
- The potential development of an alternative way of looking at practice had the potential to result in productive change which is intrinsic to the person rather than being imposed from without
- It is recognized that much of teacher-thinking is tacit, i.e. knowledge gained through experience and not carefully articulated. Tools from PCP, in my research, endeavoured to reveal something of this tacit knowledge
- A constructivist perspective on student teacher development has to build upon previous understandings and 'the ways in which these interact with their current observations and interpretations' (MacKinnon and Erickson, 1992)
- The understanding that in order to help people change it is necessary to identify the construction they are placing on their world, the theories they hold and the questions they are asking (the professional development of the teacher as constructivist).

In the constructivist perspective that PCP promotes, knowledge is constructed by the individual through interactions with his/her environment. How we perceive knowledge and the process of coming to know provides the foundation for educational practice. If we believe that learners passively receive information then priority in instruction would simply be on knowledge transmission. If on the other hand we believe that learners actively construct knowledge in their attempts to make sense of their environment, then learning will most likely emphasise the development of meaning and understanding.

Constructivism is a learning or meaning-making theory that offers an explanation of the nature of knowledge and how people learn. It maintains that individuals create or construct their own new understandings or knowledge through the interaction of what they already know and believe and the ideas, events and activities with which they come into contact (Cannella and Reiff, 1994; Richardson, 1997). Learning activities in constructivist settings are characterized by active engagement, inquiry, problem-solving and collaboration with others. Constructivism describes the way that, working within shared meanings and shared objective circumstances, individuals process data in the light of their experiences and mental structures to create meanings. These meanings will have many features in common with those of other people in similar circumstances, but constructivism rejects the structural/ functionalism which implies that everyone will construct identical meanings. It emphasises the role of individual agency and mind in constructing meanings that are similar and different from those of others (Knight and Saunders, 1999).

Many aspects of the NQTs' lives will have contributed to their theories about pupil behaviour but I would argue that theories concerning discipline, control and support need to be clearly formulated and discussed in order that they become explicit and influence their practice. The problem with theories in general is that they tend to remain theoretical rather than cross the great divide into actual practice. Theory is an essential part of learning to teach but trainee teachers and NQTs need to be taught how to use it. Eraut (1994) considers that if students acquire the ability to theorise they will go on developing their theorizing capacity throughout their teaching careers, they will become self-evaluative and search for, invent and implement new strategies and ideas and experiment with change. 'The change we *can* legitimately pursue is in the way we construe life events, *Construe* means not only *look at* but also *deal with...* the first step in reconstruction is to trade in some of our old questions for new ones' (Burr and Butt, 1992).

This notion has particular relevance to the management of pupils' behaviour. It is possible for a teacher's attitude to an individual pupil to be forever fixed in a particular 'mindset' which affords no chance of alternative construction and therefore no scope for progress. This is because teachers may often assume that their own construal of

the situation is correct and believe that the pupil's construal should be similar. Assuming that pupils should possess similar construction of events, means that teachers can often explain disruptive and challenging behaviour in terms of unusual and extreme personality traits, rather than different construals of the situation.

Establishing a working consensus of a situation is also assisted by a degree of commonality between the participant's construct systems. If, for example, a teacher and pupils' constructions of a situation do not match each other reasonably well, social interaction is unlikely to get very far and some form of conflict or opposition may ensue. Arguably, if teachers took the time to 'construe' their pupils and situations differently then there may well be many more opportunities to move forward. Behaviour in itself is a complex and variable phenomenon and ways need to be found of changing and developing our approaches to pupils who continually present difficult behaviours.

The key questions to consider at this stage therefore are how are personal constructs elicited and for what purpose? Everyone has their own view on what they perceive social reality to be. But if we have different constructions as individuals, how can we get to know other people's constructions? There are a variety of constructivist tools within PCP which can be used to elicit personal constructs, each with a particular 'end product' for the researcher. Much of teacher thinking is tacit (that gained through experience and not articulated). It is my intention to use a number of constructivist tools in my research which may reveal some of this tacit knowledge. 'By making the tacit articulate it can be critically appraised' (Pope and Denicolo, 2001, p.65). Constructivist tools endeavour to reveal some of this tacit knowledge and it is the intention of phase 2 of my research to make conscious some of the images and core constructs that form the make up of an NQTs' accumulating professional knowledge in relation to their management of pupils' behaviour.

The telling of stories and reflection on information gleaned from self-characterization sketches and repertory grids helped to make conscious for the NQTs the images, core constructs and experiential metaphors that are likely to form part of their knowledge and understanding of the management of pupils' behaviour. Figure 16 p.156 describes

each of these constructivist tools briefly and there then follows a more detailed description.

Figure 16: Personal Construct Theory Elicitation Tools

Personal Construct Theory Elicitation Tools	Purpose
Self-characterization sketches	Looks at the way an individual construes, rather than the extraction of constructs. Offers no simple scoring methods but can give a rich picture of the way people construe themselves and their world; a reflection on the rules that govern their interaction; a good indicator of 'core' construing. The tone and flavour of the sketch has the potential to be more illuminating than the content.
The Repertory Grid	Examines the relationships between constructs by comparing the way they apply to the same people or events (referred to as the 'elements' of the grid). Ascertainment of meaning by the implication that the constructs have for each other. Intended to focus on a particular topic. Ideographic in nature. Reflective device to raise self-awareness and to encourage understanding of another's perspective.
Laddering	Identification of peripheral constructs ³ (i.e. to the core constructs). Indicates the relative importance of constructs. Stimulated by the question – why? Devised to ascend a construct system from relatively subordinate to relatively superordinate ⁴ constructs. Pushes the level of construing onto a different plane. Can identify critical dimensions of a person's value system.
Pyramiding	Descends the ladder to identify yet more subordinate constructs. Can be useful, giving more specific information at a different level to the original. Stimulated by the question – what or how?

These tools were explored and analysed through semi-structured interviews. Further explanation of the above tools now follows:

³ Peripheral constructs are more open to change and at a different level in the overall construct system

⁴ Superordinate constructs: those that are central to a person's approach to themselves and others. These 'big' constructs subsume a greater number of 'subordinate constructs'.

6.5 Self-Characterization Sketches

The self-characterization sketch is a writing 'exercise' based on Kelly's (1955) famous principle: 'if you do not know what is wrong with someone, ask them, they may tell you'. Kelly (1955) was not interested in the objectivity of a person's views but only in the ways in which they saw themselves and their relationships with significant others. The wording of the instructions regarding the self-characterization sketches was carefully chosen to give the person 'maximum room for manoeuvre', to minimise threat and to ensure that it would not constitute 'an account of faults or virtues, but rather of the person as a whole' (Fransella, 1995, p.94).

The sketch is a simple yet subtle means of obtaining from any individual how they view themselves, their strengths, weaknesses, methods and missions (Mair, 1970). The technique requires the interviewee to write about him/herself. The interviewee provides a character sketch, usually written in the third person as if s/he were describing someone else. The interviewee is encouraged to be explicit but to regard the task as a pleasant one rather than a clinical dissection (Jancowicz, 2004). The interviewee is asked to write 'just as if he were the principal character in a play...as it might be written by a friend who knew him very intimately and very sympathetically, perhaps better than anyone ever really could know him' Kelly (1955 p.323). This is a technique that Kelly (1955) suggested in order that any threat would be reduced to a minimum and to encourage an overall assessment of each person embarking on such a sketch in as objective a way as possible. Arguably the 'safety' of using the third person helped them touch on emotionally loaded issues that they may have felt more difficult to verbalise in conventional tutorial type talk.

The aim is to find out how the interviewee structures their immediate world, how they see themselves in relation to these structures and the strategies they have developed to handle their world (Bannister and Fransella, 1971, p. 57).

6.6 The Repertory Grid : Mapping Individual Constructs

The Role Construct Repertory Test reflects Kelly's (1955) simple definition of a construct: any way in which two things are alike and different from a third. There are no right or wrong answers, just personally relevant dimensions along which things or events may be construed. Every construct however has a finite range of convenience⁵ that it can be sensibly applied to (Burr and Butt, 1992).

During phase two of my research I was concerned with the construing of NQTs. My aim was not to arrive at a tightly defined set of constructs neatly assigned to a set of labels. I was more interested in the way that the NQTs construed. Different people may use the same verbal labels to mean very different things. This, I would argue, is an issue within the management of pupil behaviour in schools; there is a variety, not only in interpretation of behaviour but in the language used to describe it. This can often be ambiguous, inadequate and unhelpful. Kelly (1955) proposes that a more satisfying way of applying meaning is by the relationship *between* constructs and their implications for each other. Burr and Butt (1992) suggest that it is often our most important constructs that we find most difficult to put into words. This cannot be done by taking people's answers to questions at face value. As previously mentioned language can often be both ambiguous and inadequate at describing our meanings. Kelly (1955) suggested that a more satisfying way of approaching meaning was by the investigation of the relationships *between* constructs and their implications for each other. It was for this purpose that the repertory grid was devised.

The use of the repertory grid can be used to enter the phenomenological⁶ world of an individual by exploring the nature and inter-relationships between various elements and constructs elicited by this method (Pope and Keen, 1981). The repertory grid examines the relationships between constructs by comparing the way they apply to the same people or events (which are referred to as the elements of the grid). Clarity

⁵ Range of convenience refers to the assumption that for any given individual at a given time a construct will only apply to a finite number of elements (people or events).

⁶ 'In its broadest meaning phenomenology is a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value; and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external, objective and physically described reality' (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.29).

regarding the topic to be investigated and the intended use of the grid information was carefully communicated to the NQTs in my research.

The purpose of the use of the grid in this research was to explore ways in which the NQTs construed the notion of discipline, control and support. Additionally it was intended that the process of grid elicitation would allow each of the NQTs to explore their views, thus raising self-awareness and their ability to reflect on their own behaviour. As the purpose of the grid elicitation was to gather information and come to some understanding about the views of the NQTs, an interactive and conversational approach was necessary.

In order to elicit the repertory grid with the NQTs I followed the advice given by Jancowicz (2004, p.24) who provides a very accessible explanation of the process of eliciting a grid in ten steps, the brackets refer to my specific research:

1. Agree a topic (notions of discipline, control and support)
2. Agree a set of *elements* (persons known to the NQT) and write these along the top of the grid sheet (refer to appendix F)
3. Explain that you wish to find out how he/she thinks about the elements and that you will do this by comparing them systematically
4. Taking three elements, numbers 1, 3 and 5 ask your respondent, *'Which two of these are the same in some way, and different from the third?'*
5. Ask your respondent why: *'What do the two have in common, as opposed to the third?'* Write down the thing the two have in common on the first row on the left hand side of the grid sheet and the converse of this, the reason the third element is different, in the same row on the right of the grid sheet making sure that you have obtained a truly bipolar expression⁷, this is the person's construct
6. Check that you understand what contrast is being expressed, negotiate a form of words that make sense to you both
7. Present the construct as a rating scale, with the phrase on the left standing for the 1 end of the scale and the phrase on the right standing for the 7 end of the scale
8. Ask your respondents to rate each of the elements on this scale

⁷ Bipolar expression: a pair of words or phrases that express a contrast.

9. Ask the respondent to rate each of the remaining elements on this construct
10. Repeat steps 4 – 8 using a different triad of elements each time.

During my conversational elicitation of the elements it is acknowledged that I refrained from suggesting what the precise items might be. However some discussion was occasionally necessary. Pope and Keen (1981) also point out that although it is important to elicit several constructs in order to explore an individual's world of meaning, too many can be self-defeating so it was important that I sensed when to suggest ending the grid interview.

Kelly's original method (1955) incorporated the dichotomous form of the grid. Using this approach a person is asked to place each element on one or other of the two poles of construct – the usual method is to apply either a tick or a cross to each element, as in figure 17.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Lively	√	x	x	√	x	√	Quiet
Good Concentration	√	x	√	x	x	√	Poor Concentration
etc.							etc

Figure 17: The Grid : dichotomous form

An alternative to this dichotomous form of grid asks respondents to assign each element to one or other pole of each construct asking them in effect to make finer discriminations. This broadens the potential of the method and as such was used in my research. The rating scale or grading method gave the research participant freedom to place any number of the elements in the various positions along a linear scale ranging from the emergent pole to the implicit pole⁸. Thus each element was assigned a rating which reflected its position on a particular construct. A seven point rating scale seemed to offer more information by a finer discrimination than the dichotomous method (refer to figure 18) and this provided a more precise measure of construct relationships.

⁸ Response to the question: 'In what way are these two alike (emergent pole) that makes them different from the third (implicit pole i.e. polar opposite of first descriptor).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Lively	1	4	7	2	5	3	Quiet
Good Concentration	1	4	2	6	5	1	Poor Concentration
etc.							etc.

Figure 18: The Grid: rating scale or grading method

Prior to the elicitation of the first grids from the NQTs I discussed the procedures involved in element elicitation, construct elicitation and the use of the rating scale.

The grid elicitation procedure was carried out face to face with each of the NQTs at the beginning and end of their induction year with a view to identifying any changes in their construing after the experience of their induction year. The grids were carried out on a one to one basis as this enhanced the opportunity to have a full conversation with each individual regarding the meaning of the constructs. This format provided valuable contextual information about theory and practice that arguably could have been lost in group work. Eraut (1994 p. 59) considers that student teachers need to be introduced to different kinds of theory 'to share with them the discussion about using theory in practice and deriving theory out of practice, and to develop their capacity to theorize about what they are doing'. Russell (1988) concurs with this view stating that the image one holds of the relationship between theory and practice can significantly enhance understanding of the personal learning process.

Once I had elicited elements and constructs from the NQTs and assigned ratings I had a series of matrices open to various forms of analyses and interpretation. The analysis of the grids in this research gave structure to the original responses which were then the basis for valuable further discussion and personal / professional development for the NQTs concerned (refer to appendix K for extracts from a transcript of a grid interview).

Feedback sessions on the repertory grid were aimed at getting the NQTs to think more deeply about their constructs; it was important therefore that I was aware of the need for ongoing support for each individual. Arguably, appraising our construing of people or events can be an emotive process and therefore empathetic support was offered

throughout the NQTs' induction period. This was provided by regular face to face discussions, email and telephone contact.

Everyone has their own view on what they perceive reality to be; with such a view there had to be a particular relationship between myself and the NQTs. My task was to make sense of a particular aspect of their profession, to understand it and to see what meaning was imbued in that situation by the people who are part of it. It was my particular intention that the process of grid elicitation would allow insight into some of the ways that the NQTs construed particular aspects of the management of pupils' behaviour. This then lead to further discussion and reflection. How *valid* are repertory grids however?

One way of thinking about the concept of validity in relation to grid methods is, according to Bannister and Fransella (1993), to liken them to the chi-square statistic. This is a format within which data can be placed and which then reveals if there is a pattern or meaning to the data. The grid is very similar. Its validity can only really be discussed in terms of whether it will effectively reveal patterns and relationships. Kelly (1955) equates validity and usefulness with increased understanding. Fransella and Bannister (1977) conclude that it seems sensible to regard 'reliability' as the name for an area of enquiry into the way in which people maintain or alter their construing and to estimate the value of the grid, not in terms of whether it has 'high' or 'low' reliability but whether or not it is an instrument which facilitates enquiry into an issue.

The fundamental postulate⁹ of personal construct theory, highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, uses the term 'anticipate'. This suggests that we seek to understand in order to involve ourselves with our world and to act upon it. Ultimately, validity can be seen to refer to the way in which a mode of understanding allows us to take effective action (Bannister and Fransella, 1993).

⁹ Reminder: the fundamental postulate of Personal Construct Theory: A person's processes are psychologically channelled by the ways in which they anticipate events.

6.7 Laddering and Pyramiding

An aspect of the grid technique involved the use of *laddering* and *pyramiding*. Kelly (1955) differentiated between *core constructs* which were very stable, more resistant to change and of crucial importance to each individual and *peripheral constructs* which might be more open to change and were at a different level in the overall construct system. Laddering is a technique for moving between these two levels. For example if I was discussing a problematic pupil with an NQT who suggested that the pupil was always late to their lesson I could ask them *why* it was important for them to be on time. They may answer that this would show commitment. I could then ask *why* it is important to show commitment and so on. I realized the importance of taking care not to ask too many *why* questions, but in general this type of question yielded a further construct at a deeper level.

The opposite process of laddering 'down' (sometimes referred to as pyramiding) was also used. Consider the overarching construct 'attention seeking'. When asked to say *what or how* this attention seeking manifests itself the individual may ladder down through such constructs as *shouting out or getting out of seat*. This would give information as to how attention seeking behaviour may be recognized. Overall the laddering and pyramiding techniques indicate the relative *importance* of constructs (something that the repertory grid cannot do on its own).

When a construct is really significant it equates to a core personal value and it influences many peripheral constructs as a consequence. Each of us has a few core constructs and it is no surprise that they are very resistant to change. An NQT's life is very hectic, their daily routine is likely to encourage them to act rather than reflect and they may be unaware of the constructs that guide their behaviour. Some of their constructs may well be redundant or counter-productive but unless they are illuminated and acknowledged they may remain extremely influential in guiding their actions.

The ability of NQTs to grasp what is happening regarding their management of pupils' behaviour, to explain and pinpoint the significance of the observed events depends on

the creation of schemata connecting their theoretical and practical knowledge and applying them in their classrooms. It is vital therefore that they are given opportunities and tools for the development of reflective thinking; and they must then be supported when they apply the knowledge acquired in their day to day practice.

This active understanding however is not necessarily reflective or even articulable in a direct conceptual manner. To make this practical knowledge available it is necessary to employ reflective thinking which incorporates a vocabulary concerning the language of behaviour:

‘The intellectual process of attempting to describe, share and develop practical knowledge so that it becomes more widely available is formidable indeed. Practical knowledge is never tidy and an appropriate language for it has yet to be developed’ (Eraut, 1994, p.56).

6.8 Evaluation of the linked case studies

At the heart of phase two of this research is the notion of people as constructors of their own action and meanings. I wanted to investigate and ascertain the NQT’s ‘perspectives’ or ‘frameworks’ and how they changed in or were influenced by the various situations that took place. It was through these perspectives or frameworks that the NQTs constructed their realities and defined the situations that they found themselves in.

It was important that my research used a methodology which allowed the NQTs to elaborate on their personal meaning of events: i.e. have as much control over their own constructions as possible, and as a consequence empower them to make changes to their own practice. I anticipated that there may be a number of alternative perspectives and it became my task to illuminate the potential richness and diversity of the meanings that the NQTs had in relation to their management of pupils’ behaviour.

PCP provided a conceptual framework within my research in which the NQTs began to analyse their own classroom practices and their reactions to those practices by their

pupils. I created a discourse, related to attitudes, perceptions and values and placed these in a central position; I also uncovered the NQTs' personal theories about the management of pupils' behaviour and help them make them explicit. Kelly (1955) reminds us that our ability to apprehend the construction of others allows us to relate to them in a meaningful way and suggests that we are at our best when we are able to understand, to some degree, the world they have constructed.

In my research, change, when it occurred, was a very personal experience framed in the centre of educational practice. As the NQTs' personal theories were unearthed they were addressed through critical thought processes which resulted in positive change. It was necessary, therefore, in these circumstances to recognize and attend to the individual concerns of each of the NQTs. They needed to understand any changes they made and work out their own meaning through clarification which occurred through interpretation of their own practice.

The study of the NQTs' reasoning during phase two of my research highlighted the need to view the management of pupils' behaviour as a complex and dynamic concept. Phase 2 of my research also highlighted the need to create learning opportunities for NQTs to evaluate critically their individual management of pupils' behaviour, to think for themselves and to develop reflective skills facilitating pedagogical decision making likely to improve their professional functioning. The NQTs' pedagogical practice expressed itself as an active understanding of how they were finding themselves as teachers with certain intentions, feelings, passions, inclinations, attitudes and preoccupations.

Elicitation tools from Personal Construct Psychology provided opportunities for developing an appropriate language for behaviour, a dialogue and collaboration of ideas and reflection on possibilities for change and progress in the management of pupils' behaviour. Chapter 7 provides a commentary on two PCP elicitation tools, namely the self-characterization sketch and the repertory grid elicited from the NQTs at the beginning of their induction year.

Chapter 7: Results and Commentary of 2003 data

My research to date has consolidated my opinion that with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour university or college courses need to be absorbed into the particular frame of reference held by student teachers. Clearly however, student teachers as learners need to become *aware* of their frames of reference as soon as possible and continue to develop their perceptions and understanding during their induction year which will underlie their teaching style. The self-characterization sketches and grid interviews in my research provided opportunities for the NQTs to reflect on how they construed the notions of discipline, control and support facilitating an in-depth exploration of their views, experiences, feelings and values within a tutorial framework.

7.1 Self-characterization Sketches

Kelly's (1955) suggestion of phrasing the task in quite a specific way indicates that something more than a superficial description is required and frees interviewees from feeling threatened into providing an overly positive or negative response. At this stage in the research process I was particularly interested in the way that the NQTs construed, rather than the extraction of constructs. The self-characterization sketch offers no simple scoring methods but it can give a rich picture of the way someone construes both themselves and their world (Burr and Butt,1992). The sketch is not scored in any way but as Kelly (1955) says, brought into focus. The self-characterization exercise rests on the human ability to construe the constructions of others, to try and put ourselves in someone else's shoes and see things through their eyes. The end product according to several writers, (Bannister and Fransella,1986; Burr and Butt, 1992; Pope and Denicolo,2001; and Jankowicz, 2004) should bear the stamp of an individual's core construing.

One wonders why the self-characterization sketch has had little appeal even to practitioners who are advocates of Personal Construct Psychology (Fransella,1995). Perhaps within the 'modernist' tradition therapists were searching in vain as to how to work on the texts produced. However, as far as guidelines to analysis are concerned,

Kelly (1955) only proposed concentrating on opening and closing phrases and paragraphs. In his view opening phrases indicate how persons see themselves at the present time, whereas closing phrases indicate how persons see themselves as going into the future. I certainly looked carefully at the opening and closing statements but I also considered 'emerging issues' and the type of vocabulary that was used.

The sketches triggered many thoughts and issues and began to illuminate several constructs that the NQTs had about themselves and their management of pupils' behaviour. The 'pictures' I obtained from the self-characterization sketches in 2003 were triangulated with the repertory grid for an increased understanding of the NQTs' underlying thoughts and concerns (refer to figure 19 p.171 for an overview).

Figure 19: Self-characterization Sketches 2003: Overview

NQT	Theme of Opening Statement	Emerging Issues	Vocabulary	Theme of Closing Statement
1	Begins with an air of confidence and enthusiasm: having sailed through her PGCE year.	Frustration, disappointment and despair with her classroom management	Significant use of emotive vocabulary: 'just beginning to raise their ugly heads', 'multitude of hormone filled characters', 'ongoing trauma of year 11'. Trying to 'get to grips' with one class. Determined they are not going to 'get to him'.	Highlights a difficult situation arising between two of her colleagues which is leaving her in a difficult situation.
2	Clearly states intentions to concentrate on classroom control. Concerned as to how strict he should be as doesn't want to alienate pupils.	A desire to be consistent and fair. Reluctant to send for support from colleagues. Doesn't feel PGCE course equipped him to deal with what he is facing on a daily basis.		Slightly more optimistic. Comments on the support he is getting from his department and manages to de-personalise issues stating that the problems he is experiencing are probably fairly typical. States he is 'not a quitter' and reflects on his day as he drives home.
3	Confident but apprehensive. Looking forward to her first day.	Considers a key issue is letting her pupils clearly know where her boundaries lie. Air of optimism soon shattered. Pupils not listening to her instructions. Wants to be in control but not a natural disciplinarian.	All her previous successes now seem 'worthless'. Thinks some of her pupils have 'serious' problems.	More optimistic ending – Thinks some of her strategies are being accepted by an increasing number of pupils.
4	Full of optimism and enthusiasm. Considers she has a wide range of experience to draw on.	Excitement, pride, nervousness, apprehension about aspects of her role	Expresses a particular desire to gain respect from her pupils. Wonders whether she will live up to her own 'expectations'.	Very confident in her main teaching area but less confident in her subsidiary subject; suggests she may need specific support in this area.

7.2 Themes in Opening Statements

All the opening statements indicate that the NQTs are investing heavily in their self-confidence as teachers. Their beliefs about themselves as a teacher and in particular their self-esteem and task perception relating to classroom management were highly relevant to them all in order to begin their NQT year and to develop professionally. Clearly when their own identities as teachers, their professional self-esteem and their task perceptions were close to being threatened by the professional context then self-interests began to emerge. These self-interests concerned the protection of their own professional identity as teachers and focused clearly on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour.

The way that these NQTs managed their pupils and in particular the degree to which they had authority and were able to keep order in their classrooms were clearly important and pertinent professional qualities. Very few teachers would deny the importance of good classroom management but in the case of the NQTs in question it was the most important preoccupation. When this was expanded upon through discussion, however, it became clear that their concern with authority implied more than just a technical matter of skills but that also self-interests were at stake; each of the NQTs being well aware that publicly manifesting their authority and classroom management skills contributed to their perceptions of the persona of an 'idealised teacher'. NQT 1 for example revels in the fact that in the first few days she appeared to be able to 'teach the un-teachable'. NQT 2 begins straight away with the statement that he is determined to start with strict rules so that 'classroom control will not be an issue'. All the NQTs were highly aware that their actions were perceived, interpreted and judged by others and that these perceptions determined the image others built from them. It was clear from these opening statements that the management of pupils' behaviour was of crucial importance in the NQTs' self-presentation and their quest for professional recognition.

7.3 Emerging Issues

Each of the 2003 self-characterization sketches highlighted the confrontation with the complexities and responsibilities of a classroom, provoking a form of 'praxis shock'¹ (Gold,1996; Veenman,1984; Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon, 1988). NQT 1 for example states that at first she enjoyed being the 'new kid on the block' but very soon things took a turn for the worst: 'the teachable became the un-teachable'. The 'honeymoon period' was over and many classes very quickly began to display disruptive and challenging behaviour. The confrontation between the professional self and subjective educational theory, as developed during initial teacher training on the one hand and experience of the full responsibility for a group of pupils on the other, was inevitably going to lead to tensions, doubts and possible revisions of each of the NQTs' personal frameworks. NQT 1 talks of 'tightening the reins' and trying not to despair. NQT 2 is very unsure of how to be *consistent* in his approach to pupils and indeed how to assess this. NQT 3 wants to be in control but is not a natural disciplinarian. NQT4 is concerned that she may not receive the pupils' respect.

7.4 Vocabulary used

The longer the time of uncertainty about the management of pupils' behaviour, the more the NQTs' self esteem was likely to become threatened and the more they were likely to doubt their professional competencies. NQT 1 makes significant use of emotive vocabulary e.g. 'just beginning to raise their ugly heads', 'a multitude of hormone fuelled characters', 'the ongoing trauma of year 11', 'the class were running riot'. She also states that when abuse is not aimed at her it can be more disruptive. However when it is aimed at her it appears to have a detrimental, debilitating effect. Apart from a comment about 'tightening the reigns' there is no reference to her own behaviour; the sketch giving several examples of observable, unacceptable behaviour on the part of the pupils. NQT 2 talks of 'trying to get to grips with the pupils' and being determined they are 'not going to get to him. NQT 3 considers that all her previous successes now seem 'worthless' as none of the strategies she had previously found

¹ Praxis Shock: refers to the teacher's confrontation with the realities and responsibilities of being a classroom teacher that puts their beliefs and ideas about teaching to the test, challenges some of them and confirms others.

effective were of any use. She also feels that some of her pupils have 'serious' problems.

7.5 Themes in closing statements

Each of the 2003 sketches had elements of frustration and despair as they found to their disillusionment that all their planning and preparation still fell short of what was required by the classroom reality. Somehow the hard-won knowledge base of subject matter, teaching skills, educational theories and curriculum programmes did not appear to have prepared them for the demands of pedagogical life in the classroom. NQT 2 for example states that on his PGCE course there was lots of theory about all aspects of the teaching and learning process but he doesn't think that it equipped him to deal with the problems he is presently facing. There is low level disruption in every class he teaches.

At this early stage the sketches overall provided a wealth of discussion points and, as a result, very purposeful and focused discussions ensued. Clearly the NQTs' concern with discipline was linked to their stage of development as a teacher. They all shared concerns about self and coping within a new environment, followed by concerns about the task of teaching, then concerns about meeting the needs of individual pupils. They all expressed that they were coping on a daily basis and voiced concern that whatever concerns they had or how well they were actually doing in practice, they felt they just had to 'get on with it'. They pointed out that the support they were receiving was markedly less than the support they received as PGCE students. They also pointed out that they felt that other teachers expected them to cope or expected them to be coping unless they asked for help; but they felt they didn't want to trouble others with their concerns. They were also concerned as to the effect that asking for help on a regular basis would have on their induction assessment.

One NQT in particular felt extremely supported by her department but others felt significantly less so. Although this commentary is generalized in relation to all four NQTs, the self-characterization sketches also suggested that the combination of aspects of teaching identified by any one NQT were unique to that individual, and

resulted from a combination of situational and personal factors. This supported the findings by Menter (1995 p.21). 'that inductees' needs are idiosyncratic – everyone's needs are quite different'. Clearly there is a complexity of factors involved in making learning to teach a unique experience for each individual. It is consequently of much importance that mechanisms are developed to enable the unique needs of individuals to be identified and addressed. The self-characterization sketch at various stages in the induction year would serve an extremely useful tool for this purpose. Additionally, in my research key issues were identified and focused upon at a very early stage providing a firm base for discussion and also creating a very substantial background to the repertory grid technique.

7.6 Repertory Grids

My aim in using the repertory grids was to identify ways in which the NQT's construed / identified the 'rules' which governed their interaction with pupils and identify specific aspects of their constructs in relation to discipline, control and support. It was also intended that analysis of the grids would give structure to the original responses which were then used as a basis for valuable further discussion with the NQTs. The purpose of *two* grids for each NQT involved a time frame. I was interested to see how they construed the issue of discipline, control and support at the beginning and end of their induction year. Three elements were changed slightly in the second grid to give the NQTs the full scope to indicate the extent to which their views may have changed and to introduce new people who may have influenced their constructs over time. Original elements involving 'looser' terminology e.g. 'colleague you admire/respect' were retained.

At this stage I wish to make the point that grids were developed as a way of describing individuals and the characteristic, and differing, ways in which they construed experience. In this sense they could be viewed as some form of personality assessment. In my research they were used specifically to facilitate the NQTs' thinking about issues concerning discipline, control and support. The aim was to make the NQTs' tacit knowledge explicit and in this sense I was construing *their* construing. Constructive alternativism promotes that there is always more than one way of making

sense of anything and therefore as a researcher I cannot claim to have an *authoritative* commentary and analysis. I am aware that the judgments and interpretations I made of the research data was as much a part of my own view of the world as the material I was analysing was a part of the NQTs' view of their world. I clearly did not want to misrepresent the information that the NQTs provided however and therefore it was vital to get the basic information down accurately. In order to ensure that this happened I had the advantage of having access to a body of knowledge and technique (Personal Construct Psychology and the Repertory Grid technique).

7.7 Reflections on the Process (overview)

The actual process of explaining and administering the grids was very straightforward. However, I certainly benefited from the elicitation of several pilot grids and explanations of the technique. I was pleasantly surprised how soon the concept of triadic elicitation was understood and as a result how quickly the dialogue became very pertinent and interesting. The elements in the first and second grid were provided. Four elements were retained in the second grid (those involving 'looser' terminology) but three were replaced (see italics in figure 20). It was considered that these new people may have altered the NQT's constructs during their induction year due to their role in the institution.

Grid 1

- Yourself
- A schoolteacher you remember positively
- A family member
- A schoolteacher you remember negatively
- A colleague you admire and respect
- A manager prior to your present post
- A colleague you have no admiration /respect for

Grid 2

- Yourself
- *Your mentor*
- A family member
- *Member of the SMT²*
- A colleague you admire/respect
- *The Headteacher*
- A colleague you have no admiration /respect for

Figure 20: Elements for grids 1 and 2 (italics denote new elements in second grid)

² School Management Team

The constructs were elicited during twenty to thirty minutes of concentrated discussion. With regard to their elicitation the use of specific phrases ensured a consistent approach to the process e.g. 'concentrate on these three people – in what way are two of them alike (emergent pole) that makes them different from the third (implicit pole), in relation to the notion of discipline, control and support?' Some of the constructs came quite quickly and readily whereas others required more thought. Clearly several constructs were at the 'front of their brain' so to speak whereas others represented distinctions that they may not have found necessary to make before. In several instances the 'journey' taken was as interesting as the arrival at the construct.

The ratings of the constructs against each of the elements proved to be a further 'emotional' experience for the NQTs and quite time consuming in some cases. This was reassuring to some degree as it confirmed that they were taking the process seriously, with substantial thought and reflection. Discrepancy ratings (identifications of areas of dissatisfaction) and Socratic³ questions such as 'Where do you need to change?' and 'What might be good about staying where you are?' facilitated some very interesting discussions, arguably further elaborating their construct systems. Overall the grids cram a mass of information into a very small space, the constructs indicating *how* the NQTs think and the ratings of the elements on the constructs *what* they think.

7.8 Describing the basic grids

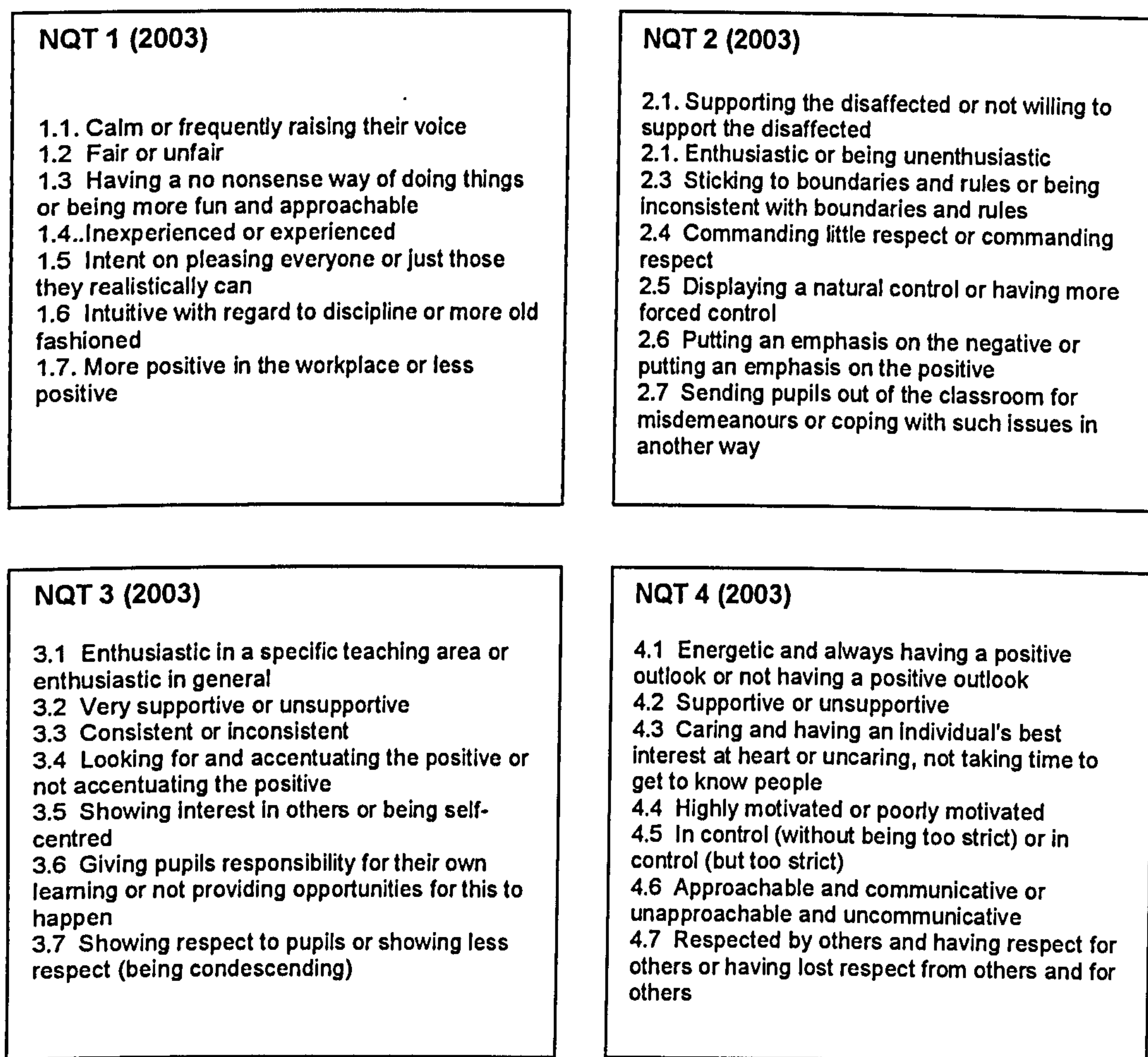
In the first instance a *process analysis* was carried out on each of the grids in order to reflect on the organization of the process. The next step was to read each grid as a whole (*an eyeball analysis*) and familiarize myself with what was there. Because I elicited all the grids myself I needed to step back from the detailed elicitation procedure. The eyeball analysis provided me with an overview of each of the constructs and I was able to identify the actual terms of reference that each of the NQTs found relevant in thinking about, and working with.

³ Socratic Method: a method of teaching, as used by Socrates, in which a series of questions leads the answerer to a logical conclusion foreseen by the questioner.

7.9 Eyeball analysis

The purpose of the 'eyeball analysis' was to simply read what the grid presented on first viewing. This technique was used immediately after the grid interview to confirm my interpretations and facilitate discussion. I was at this point focusing on what the grid presented on the topic of discipline, control and support, as opposed to how the NQTs were thinking in general. The four NQTs construe (interpret and analyse) discipline, control and support in terms of whether individuals are:

Figure 21: Elicited Constructs



All knowledge is socially defined and it is clearly important that I am able to communicate my understanding of the NQTs' construing to other people. This is

particularly important as I was dealing with several grids at one time in order to best communicate the outcomes of the process. NQT 1's repertory grid and charts which show the extraction of information are given in figures 22, 23 and 24 pp. 180-182 as an exemplar of the process. A commentary is then given on the information extracted from NQT1's grid. Figure 28 p.192 then gives a comparison and overview of information extracted from all four grids in September 2003.

Figure 22 : Repertory Grid NQT 1 (notions of discipline, control and support) Sept. 2003

Elements

1. Yourself (Y)
2. A schoolteacher you remember + (Miss F)
3. A family member (D)
4. A schoolteacher you remember - (Miss W)
5. A colleague you admire/respect (CBE)
6. A manager prior to your present post (E)
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect for (AD)

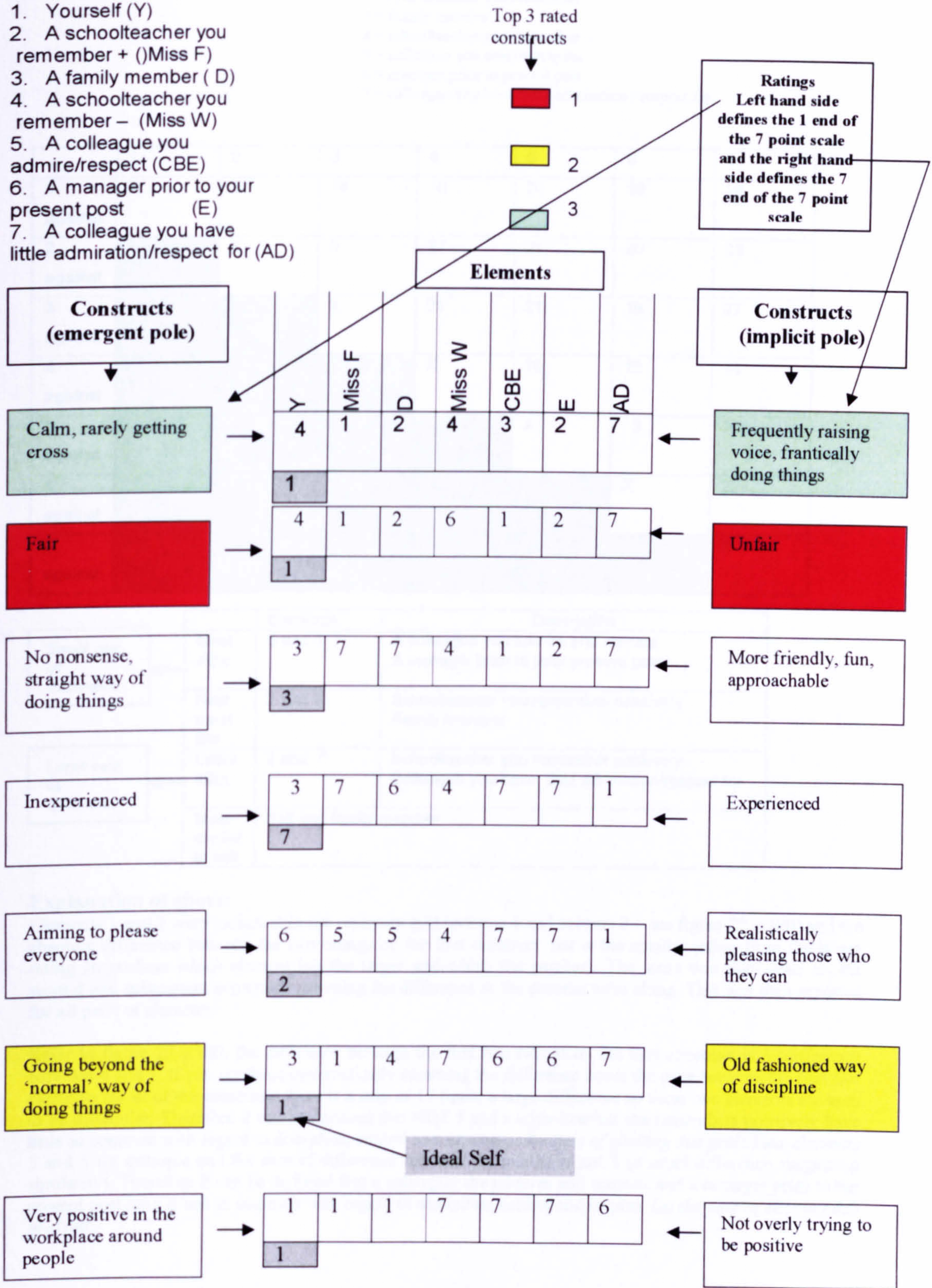


Figure 23 : Relationship between Elements in Repertory Grid (NQT 1 Sept. 2003)

- 1 = yourself
- 2 = schoolteacher you remember +
- 3 = family member
- 4 = schoolteacher you remember -
- 5 = colleague you admire/respect
- 6 = manager prior to present post
- 7 = colleague you have little admiration / respect for

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 against	X	17	14	16	20	19	26
2 against		X	6	27	21	20	33
3 against			X	21	21	19	27
4 against				X	16	15	14
5 against					X	3	30
6 against						X	29
7 against							X

	Elements	Description
Small sum of difference	5 and 6	A colleague you admire and respect A manager prior to your present post
	2 and 3	Schoolteacher you remember positively Family member
Large sum of difference	2 and 7	Schoolteacher you remember positively Colleague you have little admiration/respect for
	Self and family member	
	Most alike	
	Next most like	
	Least alike	
	Most similar to self	

Explanation of above:

Elements 1 and 2 were looked at in the repertory grid (column 1 and column 2 – see figure 22 p.180) and the absolute difference between the two ratings on the first construct that is the smaller rating from the larger rating (regardless *which* element has the larger and which the smaller). The same was then done on the second and subsequent constructs summing the difference as the process went along. This was then repeated for all pairs of elements.

Refer to figure 22 p.180: the difference between the first two ratings on the first construct is 3 (difference between 4 and 1. If you continue systematically summing the difference down the page between the first two elements on all of the constructs there is a sum of 17 (quite a large difference so these two elements are seen to be dissimilar. Therefore it can be deduced that NQT 1 and a schoolteacher she remembers positively have little in common with regard to discipline, control and support *at the time of eliciting this grid*). Take elements 5 and 6 for example and the sum of difference between the ratings is just 3 (a small difference suggesting similarity). Therefore it can be deduced that a colleague she admires and respects and a manager prior to her present post have much in common with regard to discipline, control and respect (*at the time of eliciting this grid*) etc.

Figure 24 : Relationships between Constructs in Repertory grid
NQT 1 (September '03)

Constructs	Elements							Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	4	1	2	4	3	2	7								
1. Calm, rarely getting cross	4	1	2	4	3	2	7	Frequently raising voice	X	4	14	26	24	13	17
2. Fair	4	7	6	4	5	6	1	Unfair	26	X	14	30	28	13	17
3. No nonsense, straight way of doing things	3	7	7	4	1	2	7	More friendly, fun, approachable	16	20	X	18	24	21	29
4. Inexperienced	5	1	1	4	7	6	1	Experienced	4	4	14	X	6	19	21
5. Aiming to please everyone	6	5	5	4	7	7	1	Realistically pleasing those who they can	8	8	10	26	X	19	21
6. Going beyond the 'normal' way of doing things in a positive way	2	3	3	4	1	1	7	Old fashioned way of discipline	19	21	15	17	17	X	8
7. Very positive in the workplace	1	1	1	7	7	7	6	Not overly trying to be positive	25	25	13	20	21	34	X
	7	7	7	1	1	1	2								

N.B. Red numbers indicate reversals

Smallest un-reversed: 1 and 2: calm ,rarely getting cross / frequently raising voice andfair / unfair (related construct)
 Next smallest un-reversed: 4 and 5: inexperienced / experienced andaiming to please everyone / realistically pleasing those who they can (related construct)
 Largest un-reversed: 2 and 4 : fair / unfair andinexperienced and experienced (unrelated)
 Smallest reversed: 1 and 4 and 2 and 4: frequently raising voice / calm, rarely getting cross..... and inexperienced /experienced... and unfair / fair... and inexperienced and experienced (related construct)
 Largest reversed: 1 and 2: frequently raising voice / calm, rarely getting cross andfair /unfair (unrelated)

Figure 25: Explanation of how the Relationship between constructs was arrived at in figure 24

Constructs	Elements	Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Calm, rarely getting cross	4 1 2 4 3 2 7 4 7 6 4 5 6 1	Frequently raising voice	x	4	14	26	24	13	17
Fair	4 1 2 6 1 2 7 4 7 6 2 7 6 1	Unfair	26	X	14	30	28	13	17

A. Difference between these first two numbers = 0 and then the next two and so on summing up as you go along.

B. Difference between construct 1 un-reversed and construct 2 reversed is 3.

Explanation of how to calculate the difference in ratings of the first element on the first pair of un-reversed constructs:

Take construct 1 (Calm, rarely getting cross and Frequently raising voice) and construct 2 (Fair, Unfair) and find the absolute difference between the ratings on the first element (black numbers) = 4 (see A in figure 25). As the sum of difference is small this is a related construct so for example this NQT relates people who are calm and rarely get cross as also being fair. If the sum of difference had been above 10 for example then it would have been an unrelated construct i.e. the NQT would not have necessarily put the two together.

Explanation of red numbers (reversed constructs)

Unlike an element a construct is bipolar (two poles, one at each end of its dichotomy) and can express the same meaning with ratings which run from 1 – 7 or with ratings that run from 7 – 1, so long as the words at each pole of the construct are reversed from left to right. When calculating construct similarity you have to do it twice: once with each construct as it stands (refer to A in figure 25) and once with the ratings of the first construct being the same but the ratings of the second construct of the pair being reversed (the red numbers, refer to figure 25). The elements are presented in triads and whatever two of the three have in common is written down on the left

(emergent pole) and the contrast to this (implicit pole) is written down on the right. Clearly the triads are arbitrary and can obscure a possible construct relationship. Reversing the constructs gives a more accurate picture of construct relationships.

In the extract from the table in figure 25 p.183 it can be seen that the sum of difference between construct 1 and 2 (reversed) is 26 (refer to B in figure 25), a high total suggesting an unrelated construct. Therefore This NQT does not relate people who are calm and rarely get cross with those she perceives to be unfair (remember in this calculation the second construct is reversed from left to right).

Refer to figure 24 p.182 to see related constructs (a small sum of difference) and unrelated constructs (a larger sum of difference between related and unrelated constructs). A narrative commentary now follows on the repertory grid of NQT 1 with additional comments on the relationship between elements and constructs and how these were used to facilitate discussion.

7.10 Commentary on Repertory Grid

NQT 1: September 2003

I was at this point focusing on what the grid presented on the topic of discipline, control and support; as opposed to how the NQT was thinking in general. This NQT construes (interprets and analyses) discipline, control and support in terms of whether individuals are:

- Calm or frequently raising their voice
- Fair or unfair
- Having a no-nonsense way of doing things or being more fun and approachable
- Inexperienced or experienced
- Intent on pleasing everyone or just those that they realistically can
- Intuitive with regard to discipline or more old fashioned
- More positive in the workplace or less positive

7.11 Relationship between the elements (*what* is being said about the elements?)

NQT 1 seemed very confident in the decisions that were made and the constructs 'appeared' very quickly and assertively. From the ratings of the constructs against each of the elements it can be seen that NQT1 has a very high regard for a schoolteacher she remembers positively. None of the other elements come near to this high rating. The colleague she has little admiration and respect for receives consistently high 'negative' ratings on all of the constructs. Not surprisingly the colleague for whom she has little respect is put in direct contrast with a schoolteacher she remembers positively. When asked to identify her 'ideal self' with regard to discipline, control and support she clearly aspires to the teacher she remembers so positively. She would like to be calm and rarely getting cross, fair, experienced, and be intuitive. All these traits she identified in the teacher she remembered so positively from her schooldays. She also identifies herself most closely with a family member.

On the construct 'Having a no-nonsense way of doing things (1 end of scale) or being more fun and approachable' (7 end of scale) she rates her teacher as a 7. She, on the other hand rates herself as a 3 and when asked to say where her 'ideal self' would be on that construct, she indicates that she is happy where she is. When asked what would be beneficial about staying where she was she stated that if she was more approachable she considered she would be taken advantage of by staff and pupils. Equally she rates herself as a 1 on the construct being very positive in the workplace (1) and being less positive (7). On the construct 'Aiming to please everyone (1 end of scale) or just those that they realistically can' (7 end of scale) she rates the schoolteacher she remembers positively as a 5 and herself as a 6 (veering towards being realistic). When asked where her ideal self would be she indicates a 2 (a desire to try and please everyone).

She rates being calm, fair and intuitive as the three most important constructs with regard to discipline, control and support (her schoolteacher gets top ratings on all of these). When asked *why*⁴ she considered it was important to be fair (her top rated construct) she stated 'the kids will respect you for that in the long run'. When asked

⁴ Laddering technique

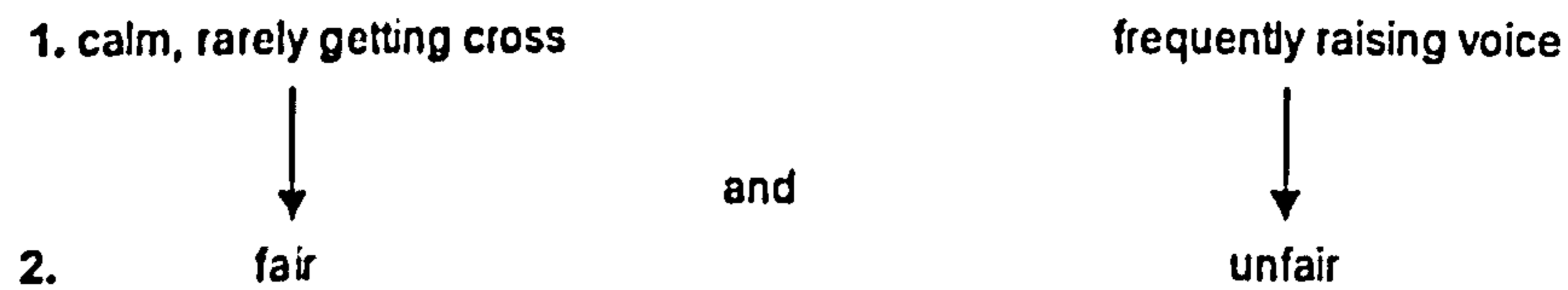
why it was important to gain respect from the pupils she suggested that respect from her pupils would indicate that she was progressing in the way that she wanted to. It would also cut down her stress levels! Another important construct for her was staying calm. When asked *why* it was important to stay calm she thought that it gave messages relating to control and that she could handle things. When asked *why* it was important to have this control she felt that without it then the majority of pupils would take advantage and there would be very little learning taking place which would make a nonsense of the hours of preparation that she was putting into her lessons. Overall, her discrepancy rating (difference between self and 'ideal self') is 16 suggesting that not surprisingly, at this early stage she feels there is significant room for improvement. This notion is supported by her self-characterization sketch when she clearly indicates that she has difficulties and concerns.

During the grid discussion with NQT1 she was keen to emphasise that you can't please everyone. This concept was considered by her to be unrealistic with the notion of 'realistically pleasing those who you can' being a probable alternative. She did talk at length however of her desire to make all her lessons as interesting as possible 'With some of my pupils you have to really go beyond the basic presentation and try and interest them in some way, otherwise their boredom or disinterest (sic) will soon be quite evident'.

7.12 Relationship between constructs (addressing similarities in *how* the NQT talks about the elements)

The smallest difference, indicating the two constructs which are being used most similarly, and the largest difference, indicating the two whose meanings are most dissimilar were particularly useful to examine. These were identified from the far right hand side of the table and it was noted whether the relationship was an unreversed or a reversed one.

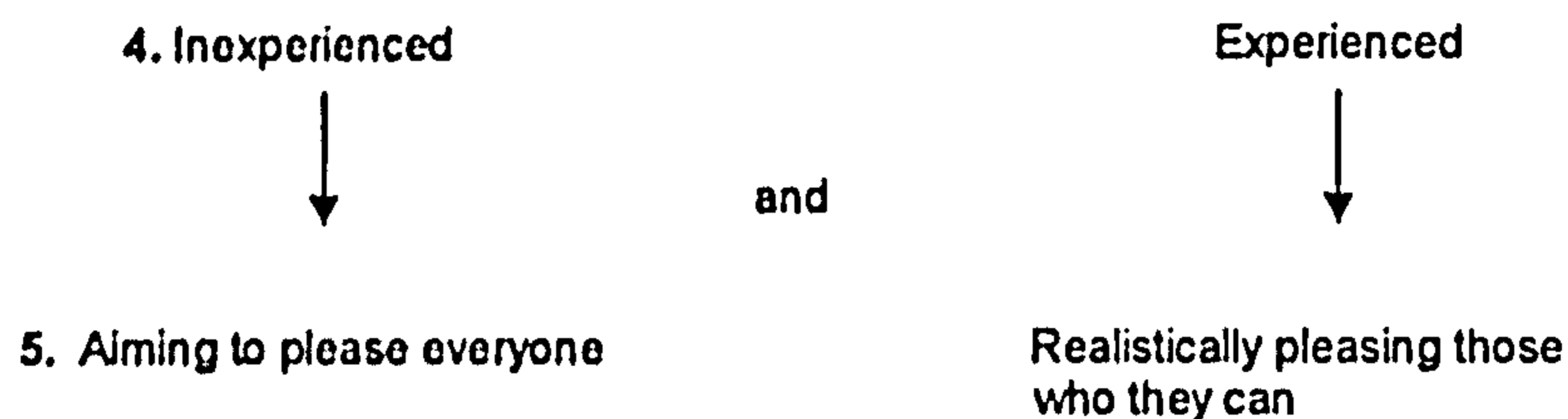
In the construct table (figure 24 p.182) the smallest difference (4) , indicates that the two most highly matched constructs are constructs 1 and 2:



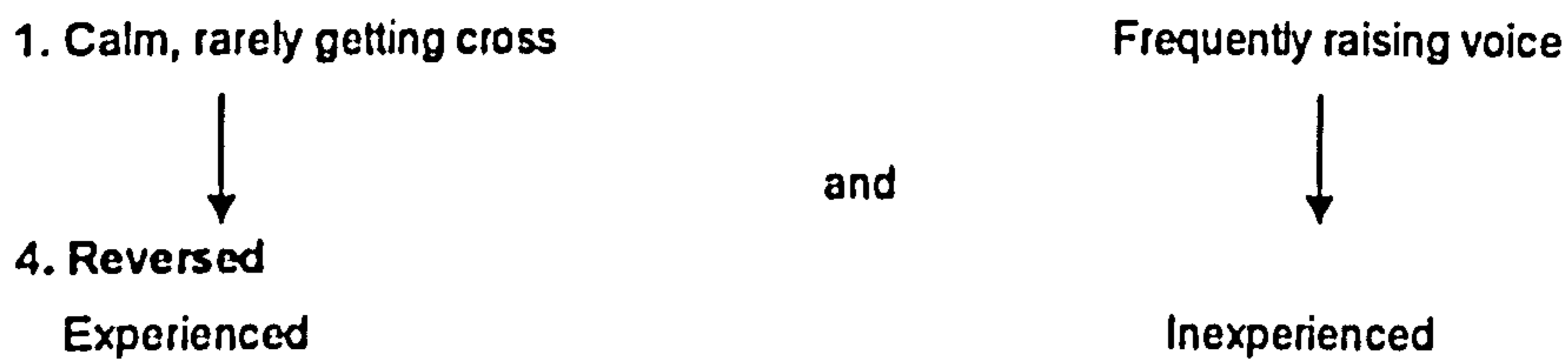
It was pointed out to this NQT that the fact that these two constructs are highly matched (a small sum of differences) may reveal:

- a belief about the *causal* influence of construct 1 on construct 2. e.g. this NQT believes that a teacher who is usually calm and rarely gets cross is likely, as a *result*, to be a *fair* teacher.
- alternatively, a belief about a causal relationship which runs the other way round: construct 2 influences construct 1. For example the NQT may be thinking that a teacher who is known to be *fair*, is also likely to be calm and rarely gets cross.
- that the high match is a sheer coincidence. The NQT's ratings on both constructs may be unrelated. Other factors may influence the perspective they take. A teacher who is perceived to be *fair* may relate to their experience, personality, confidence etc. whilst a teacher who is calm and rarely gets cross may reflect something very different e.g. not coping, debilitated, intransigent etc.

Constructs 4 and 5 have a difference of 6 indicating quite a high match (small sum of difference):

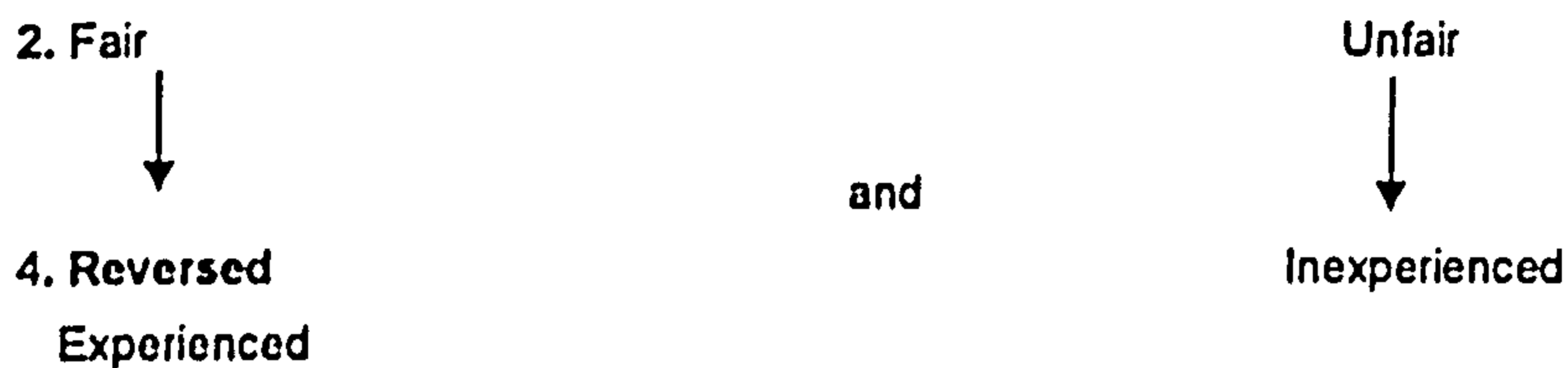


There are small differences, indicating a strong relationship, between two *reversed* constructs. Constructs 1 and 4 for example; un-reversed the sum of differences is 26, practically negligible you would imagine. But if you reverse one of them:

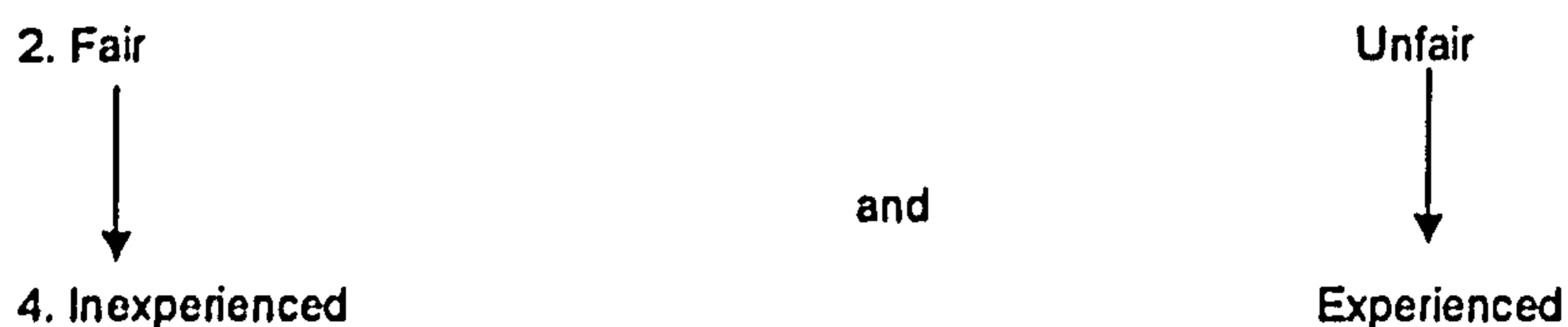


then the constructs become highly related with a sum of differences of just 4. This NQT tends to associate teachers who are calm and rarely get cross as *more experienced*. She also as a result tends to relate the characteristic of frequently raising voices to *inexperienced* teachers.

Constructs 2 and 4 (reversed) also have a strong relationship (also with a difference of only 4):

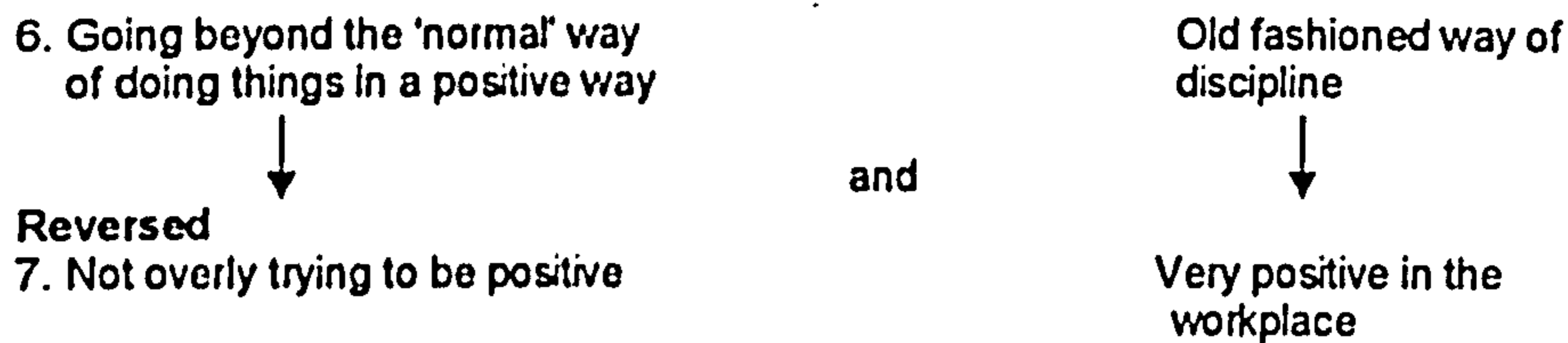


Constructs that were most dissimilar were also looked at as they also created an interesting discussion and more often than not confirmed the links between constructs that were similar. For example the two most *dissimilar, un-reversed* constructs were:



Clearly this NQT does not see these constructs related. In other words she does not relate the construct of being fair to whether you are experienced or inexperienced.

The most *dissimilar, reversed* constructs were:



These unrelated constructs speak for themselves but still were a rich source for discussion.

Relationships relating to related and unrelated constructs were discussed with the NQT. Sometimes the association was unremarkable but alternatively there were some surprises, since the knowledge involved was tacit but did, on reflection, make sense as the analysis was based directly on the ratings given by the NQT. In other words there was a sense of ownership, as there was with the elements; this is not surprising however as I was simply pointing out the implicational connections of the NQT's own construct system. The strong relationship between constructs 1 and 2 are supported by this NQT placing these in her top three (out of the seven stated) most important constructs (refer to figure 22 p.180).

In order to investigate the notion of 'fairness' the laddering technique was used. This is a form of construct elicitation in which the person is able to indicate the hierarchical integration of their personal construct system. For each construct elicited, the person is asked which pole of the construct they would be preferred to be described by. For each answer given the interviewee is asked another why question etc. The purpose of this is to reach an end product close to the interviewee's superordinate⁵ constructs. The 'why' technique can be directed downwards to more subordinate⁶ constructs by asking the question 'What?' or How? (see figures 26 and 27 p.190).

⁵ A superordinate construct is one which includes another as one of the elements in its context.

⁶ Reminder: a subordinate construct is one which is included as an element in the context of another.

Figure 26: Extract from Laddering exercise used with NQT 1:

- On the construct fair / unfair which pole would you best be described as at the moment?

NQT1: I would like to be seen as fair ultimately and I am certainly trying to be fair.

- Why is it important to be fair with the pupils?

NQT1: *because if pupils know you are going to be fair with them they know where they stand and know where you draw the line.*

- Why is it important for them to know where you draw the line?

NQT 1: *because they would have more confidence in you and will more than likely respect you more.*

- Why is confidence and respect important in a teacher pupil relationship?

NQT 1: *I guess pupils like to know where they stand and will probably respect you for that in time. Also if they have a respect for you they are less likely to cause you any real difficulties.*

- Why do you think pupils who have no respect for their teachers cause them difficulties?

NQT 1: *They don't feel any allegiance to them. They just don't care. If a teacher doesn't show any interest in their pupils, doesn't try to get to know them as individuals, isn't fair with them and interested in them as individuals then it's not surprising.*

Figure 27: Extract from Pyramding exercise used with NQT1:

- How best can a teacher communicate this fairness to their pupils?

NQT 1: *talk to them, listen to them, show an interest in them, try and incorporate aspects of their own interests into lesson plans wherever possible.*

- How do you plan to do this in your lessons?

NQT 1: *lots of groupwork, discussion and feedback wherever possible. I am also taking time to talk to pupils about their interests when there is time, say at the end of the lesson.*

- What do you think are the benefits of doing this?

NQT 1: *I think that if they think you are interested in them and are prepared to have a dialogue with them about topics which they feel confident in talking about then that can*

only help your relationship with them. At the end of the day if they know you are fair they will respect you more.

Figure 28 gives an overview of the other grids from the NQTs taken in September 2003. It must be noted at this stage that the same detailed analysis took place with all four 2003 grids in the presence of each of the NQTs. I have simply elected to present *two* examples of detailed analyses rather than four in order to maintain the interest of the reader. I consider that the two examples chosen give a clear indication of the potential of the repertory grid analysis in eliciting pro-active discussions about the notions of discipline, control and support.

2003	Person most similar to self	Top three constructs	Highest discrepancy rating	Overall discrepancy rating	Closest matched un-reversed construct	Closest matched reversed construct
NQT 1	Family Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm • Fair • Intuitive 	Aiming to please everyone (1) realistically pleasing those they can (7): awards herself 6, aims to be 2	16	Calm, rarely gets cross/frequently raises voice with fair/unfair	Calm, rarely gets cross/frequently raises voice with experienced/inexperienced
NQT 2	Colleague little admiration for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commanding respect • Having natural control • Sticking to boundaries/rules 	Emphasis on the negative (1) / emphasis on the positive (7): awards himself 1 aims to be 7	21	Supporting the disaffected / not willing to support the disaffected with enthusiastic/unenthusiastic	Commands little respect / commands respect with more forced control / natural control
NQT 3	Schoolteacher remembered positively plus manager prior to present post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency for own learning to reinforce ability • Respect 	Very supportive, positive attitude (1) / unresponsive, negative attitude (7): awards herself 3 aims to be 1	4	Very supportive, positive attitude / unresponsive, negative attitude with looked for, identified and accentuated positive / did not accentuate positive	Enthusiastic in specific teaching area / enthusiastic in general with self centred / showed interest in others
NQT 4	Schoolteacher remembered positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy, positive outlook • Passionate, highly motivated • In control (without being too strict) 	Discrepancy ratings: only one out on 5 constructs (the remaining two are exactly where she wants to be)	5	Supportive / Unsupportive with best interests at heart, caring / uncaring, doesn't take time to get to know you	No closely matched reversed constructs

Figure 28: Comparison of Information taken from Repertory Grids (2003)

e.g. NQT 2 very low morale (confirmed during observations and discussions), compares himself to a colleague he has little admiration / respect for. Big discrepancy rating on construct 'emphasis on negative / positive. Awards himself a 1 where 1 is negative and 7 positive (aiming for a 7). Very large overall discrepancy rating indicating he is dissatisfied with his personal ratings at the time of elicitation (also verified in his self-characterization sketch). Compare to NQT 4 who in contrast appears to be much more confident. Again this was substantiated by her self-characterization sketch and my observations and discussions with her. Substantial difference in overall discrepancy ratings (compare NQT 1 with NQT 3).

Interviews were held with each of the NQTs immediately after the elicitation of the grids when an eyeball analysis furthered questioning and debate. At a later stage additional conversation took place around the relationship between elements, constructs and content analysis.

7.13 Content comparison of NQTs' grids (September 2003)

Content analysis is a technique in which the constructs of all the interviewees were pooled and categorized. I wanted to find a way to make sense of all four grids at the same time and importantly to be able to communicate this to others. The amount of information I was dealing with grew exponentially with each new grid interview because at some point I wanted to make comparisons across all four grids. I realized that I would have to sacrifice some detail in each of the grids whilst recognizing trends that were common to all of them. A content analysis would do the job and I am indebted to Jancowicz (2004) for a very communicative explanation of how to go about this.

I was aiming to produce a grid which gave an overview of the constructs of all four NQTs in September 2003. This was to be used for a group discussion with them in which a range of recurrent themes would be able to be identified. The categories were derived from the constructs themselves by looking at them systematically and identifying the various themes they expressed. The categories devised are my opinion as my category system is simply a way of construing the interviewee's constructs. It is acknowledged that other people may not see the same kinds of meaning in the constructs.

To guard against this problem however, the content analysis incorporated a reliability check. This ensured that the category system should make sense to other people. Hill (1995) reminds us that there are three kinds of reliability in content analysis terms: firstly there is *stability*, the extent to which the results are invariant over time i.e. are my category definitions robust enough to ensure that if the procedure were to be repeated again, the same categories would be there with the same constructs under each category? Secondly, there is *reproducibility*, the extent to which other people

may make the same sense of the constructs. I was conscious to avoid laying my own idiosyncrasies on to the data as I was aware of the importance of the content analysis being reproducible. Finally there is *accuracy*, how consistently was I applying my category definitions once I had fixed them as a standard to aim at?

7.14 Reliability Check

Content analysis can't be idiosyncratic. It needs to be reproducible and to make sense to other people. Therefore all content analyses should incorporate a reliability check.

Firstly I identified the categories by looking carefully at each construct and seeing if they were in any way similar. For example if the second construct is similar to the first I would group them together under one category. If they weren't similar I would create a new category and so on. The remaining constructs were compared with each of the categories and allocated to an appropriate one if one existed. If it didn't then a new one was created. If more than 5% were unclassified it is practice to re-look at the categories to subsume some of the miscellaneous ones. I then tabulated the result. I then involved a colleague (an experienced practitioner in the management of pupils' behaviour and a fellow researcher) and asked him to produce a table like my own which summarized his efforts with regard to the core categorization procedure.

The extent to which the two tables, mine and my colleague's agreed would indicate how reliable my procedures had been. A new table was drawn up whose rows stood for the categories I had identified and whose columns stood for the categories my colleague had identified. The purpose was to compare the two separate tables. It is therefore called the 'Reliability Table'. We firstly discussed categories and agreed on which ones meant the same. The rows were rearranged so that the categories we shared were placed in the same order: mine from top to bottom and my colleague's from left to right. In other words the shared categories were tucked into the left hand corner of the table, with the categories we didn't share in no particular order outside this area.

Working from our two separate tables each of the constructs were recorded in the joint table. If we were in joint agreement on all of them they would all lie along the diagonal of the reliability table (the shaded cells) ; those on which we disagreed would lie off the diagonal. Those categories which showed disagreements were redefined (to both our agreement) in order to fit additional constructs in. According to Jancowicz (2004) we were aiming for an agreement of 90% or better. This eventually became achievable through negotiation of category meanings. The final stage was to repeat the procedure again with the revised categories and see if we arrived at the same result, including the categorization of the constructs to the carefully redefined categories. This was a lengthy but fascinating process.

Once the reliability figure had risen above 90% the process stopped and the table was finalized (see figure 29 p.196). The question was whose content analysis table did I present (in other words which categories was I to work on with the NQTs?). Together we had increased the reliability but we didn't achieve a 100% match, therefore the two separate tables would differ slightly. Jancowicz (2004) advises that the interviewers rather than the collaborators should be used as in this case it was the interviewer that had designed the whole study. It therefore seemed fair that any residual inaccuracies were based on my way of construing rather than my colleague's. (However, as Jancowicz (2004) suggests, there could be an argument for tossing a coin based on Kelly's alternative constructionism i.e. one investigator's understanding is as good as another's once the effort to minimize research idiosyncrasy has been achieved!)

A very interesting group meeting of the NQTs was based on the discussion of my final categories in relation to discipline, control and support: Teaching Style; Respect; Rules and Boundaries and Professional Role. The discussion was enhanced and motivated in the knowledge that the NQTs' role in the research process had led to these categories. I have no doubt that if these categories had just been created 'out of the blue' there would not have been the same intrinsic interest and motivation on the part of the NQTs.

Figure 29 : Reliability / Consistency Table (2003 constructs)

N.B. 1.1 / 1.2 etc. refer to NQT 1 constructs 1 and 2 and so on: see figure 21

Collaborator Interviewer	→	←	Perceptions of professionalism	Emulating an idealized teacher	Total	Differential Analysis
Teaching Style	1.1 / 1.2 / 1.5 2.2 / 4.1 / 4.4			1.3	7	NQT 1 = 4 NQT 2 = 1 NQT 3 = 0 NQT 4 = 2
Respect		2.1 / 3.4 / 3.6 / 4.3		2.4	6	NQT 1 = 0 NQT 2 = 2 NQT 3 = 3 NQT 4 = 1
Rules and Boundaries			2.3 / 2.5 / 2.6 2.7 / 3.3	1.6 4.5	7	NQT 1 = 1 NQT 2 = 4 NQT 3 = 1 NQT 4 = 1
Professional Role			1.4 / 1.7 / 3.1 / 3.2 3.5 / 4.2 / 4.6 / 4.7		8	NQT 1 = 2 NQT 2 = 0 NQT 3 = 3 NQT 4 = 3
Total	6	4	8	4		

Shaded cells denote agreement on categories e.g. teaching style being very similar to reflections of individual's personality. Constructs within shaded cells were agreed on. Constructs outside shaded cells were not agreed on in terms of them being placed in a mutually agreed combination of two categories.

Index A: number of constructs along the diagonal for the categories agreed on, as a percentage of all the constructs in the table:
 $6 + 4 + 5 + 8 = 23$ 28 constructs in total; $100 \times 23 / 28 = 82\%$

Index B: number of constructs along the diagonal for the categories agreed on, as a percentage of all the constructs in the categories agreed on:

$6 + 4 + 5 + 8 = 23$ 24 constructs in the categories agreed on ($6 + 4 + 6 + 8 = 24$) $100 \times 23 / 24 = 95\%$ (final reliability figure) (previous percentage before revised category system = 84%)

7.15 Commentary on content analysis of Repertory Grids (2003)

It can be seen from figure 30 that professional role (28%), is the top rated category ranking with teaching style, rules and boundaries sharing equal second place at (25%) and finally, respect (21%). These results are perhaps unsurprising; one would have hoped that these notions would have been mentioned in any discussion concerning discipline, control and support. However, what is particularly interesting is whether each individual NQT thinks any *differently* to the others (identified by the percentage of constructs allocated to the particular construct category). Figure 30 indicates the distribution of the NQTs' constructs allocated to particular categories.

Figure 30 : Distribution of NQTs' constructs allocated to particular categories (September 2003)

Construct Category	NQT 1	NQT 2	NQT 3	NQT4
Professional Role	2	0	3	3
Rules and Boundaries	1	4	1	1
Teaching Style	4	1	0	2
Respect	0	2	3	1

NQT 1 clearly puts an emphasis on teaching style and indeed her own personality is illuminated throughout her self-characterization sketch. She is going through a turbulent time and is searching for her own teaching style. Not surprisingly the majority of her constructs were within this area. Interesting also that she is the only NQT who didn't mention 'respect' in the first grid interview or the self-characterization sketch.

NQT 2's self-characterization sketch was permeated throughout with thoughts on rules and classroom control. His opening statement states that he was 'determined to start with strict rules so that classroom control would not be an issue'. His closing statement is about detentions. Everything in between his opening and closing statement is rules and boundaries linked. Therefore it is quite clear, given the categorization of his constructs, that this is clearly an issue for him. Observation of his lessons and debriefs also confirmed this. The evidence gained from various sources enabled a frank discussion to take place on the fact that he perhaps needed to relax a little and

attention was given to the remaining three categories in the distribution table (figure 30). Again because there was concrete evidence to support the discussion there was interest and enthusiasm to have a meaningful discussion.

NQT 3 very typically shares her top two construct categories between her professional role and mutual respect. Her much calmer persona than the first two NQTs, enables her to be significantly more reflective about her professional role. She talks about 'planning for disruptive behaviour' in her self-characterization sketch and having to very soon 'adapt her normal strategies for some groups'. Overall a very positive, analytical thinker.

NQT 4's emphasis on her professional role is clear. She is extremely enthusiastic and draws her enthusiasm from various role models in her life. Her constructs make much reference to an energetic and positive outlook, being highly motivated and in control, all in her opinion crucial aspects of her professional role. These are reflected in her self-characterization sketch and she states she has 'earned the right to stand in front of her classes'. Overall a very confident outlook.

The elicitation of the grids along with the self-characterization sketches provided a 'snapshot' at one particular moment in time, the beginning of the NQTs' induction year. Therefore the tools used allowed me to capture and describe each NQT's construing at that point in time within the context of the topic of discipline, control and support. It is important to note that in the case of the grids and the emphasis on numerical analysis that this was in no way meant to be a definitive analysis of each individual concerned. This would be very difficult to justify on either professional or statistical grounds. I fully acknowledge that the grid only provides a partial record on an individual's construing as much will be inevitably left in the mind of the individual. The grid technique was used specifically to allow insight into *some* of the ways each of the NQTs construed the topic of discipline, control and support.

In addition it is important to state that in all the feedback sessions regarding the self-characterization sketches and the grids, in which I aimed to encourage the NQTs to think more deeply about their constructs, I was aware at times of the ongoing

empathetic support that was needed throughout this period (an important ethical consideration).

The process of elicitation is a distinctly interpersonal process and therefore I acknowledge there will be aspects of myself within each grid. As I was eliciting *two* grids from each of the NQTs at *two separate stages* of their induction year I needed to be sure that any changes were to do with *substance* rather than of appearance resulting from the way the grid interview was handled. What kind of changes were likely to be observable? Broadly speaking it was anticipated that some of the constructs may be different and perhaps several of the original ones dropped. This would inevitably mean altered ratings. As previously mentioned, four elements were retained in the second grid (those involving 'looser' terminology) but three were replaced (refer to figure 20 p.176). Chapter 8 investigates whether any changes in personal construing had occurred at the time of the elicitation of the second grid *one year on* (September 2004).

Chapter 8

8.1 Identifying personal changes in construing

A central theme running through Kelly's (1955) work is action, choice and re-construal (re-interpretation and re-analysis). The dynamic aspect of his theory runs alongside the idea of human beings as agents of their own behaviour, having control over their actions through the decisions, choices and changes that they make. At this stage in my research I wanted to ascertain how the NQTs construed discipline, control and support *after* the experience of their induction year and was particularly interested in any *changes* in their construing. I firstly looked at the self characterization sketches which provided an interesting prologue to the repertory grids when embarking on discussions with each of the NQTs. At this point it should be emphasised that at no time were the self characterization sketches and grids interpreted by myself alone; any comments made in this chapter regarding interpretation of content are a result of discussions with each of the NQTs.

8.2 Self-characterization sketches September 2004

Themes in opening statements

In the 2003 sketches the item causing the most concern was maintaining an appropriate degree of class control. Although this was a recurring theme in the 2004 sketches there was an air of increased confidence and renewed energy at the start of the NQTs' second year. An additional issue for two of the NQTs was the taking on of new responsibilities. These responsibilities inevitably involved increased paperwork alongside interactions with others and therefore a concern was raised with regard to potential demands and whether they would be able to cope with the extra work load as well as a full timetable.

Emerging issues

The self concerns highlighted in the 2003 sketches (coping and surviving in the teaching environment) had now been replaced with impact issues (enhancing pupil progress and recognising and addressing the social and emotional needs of pupils). In all four cases the NQTs had survived the initial adjustment to the realities of teaching and had become sensitised to the different demands placed upon them. All were keen to progress and perform well and were focusing on teaching methods and materials to enhance pupil progress and meet individual needs.

Vocabulary used

NQT 1's overall construction of her classes was, unfortunately, still problematic. Again there was an amount of emotive language use: 'challenging pupils', 'appallingly behaved boys', 'astonishment' at the way she had been spoken to and, as in 2003, there is reference to 'moody, hormonal teenagers'. NQT 2 was much more confident one year on, talking of his 'eagerness' to try out the new techniques that he had picked up by reading into the subject of behaviour management over the summer holidays. NQT 3 was optimistic, talking of the 'valuable strategies and insights' gained in the induction year stating that she was 'ready for the challenges ahead'. NQT 4 talked of her 'high level of motivation' and how she felt 'driven to do well'; there was however a level of nervousness about meeting the standards and expectations placed upon her due to taking on additional responsibilities at such an early stage in her career.

Theme of closing statements

The nature of concern and the emphasis within each of the sketches was found to shift as the NQTs developed towards increased confidence and independence. They had changed from the role of the student to taking on the role of the teacher, their views on planning and evaluation changing from a narrow to a broader focus suggesting an expansion in thinking. Their concerns about discipline began to change from focusing on specific techniques to building a relationship with their pupils based on legitimate authority.

8.3 Repertory Grids 2004

Each of the NQTs completed two grids which outline a description of their construing at two particular points in time; at the beginning of their induction year and at the beginning of their second year in teaching. The purpose of the timing of the two grids was to identify the NQTs' personal constructs with regard to discipline, control and support and investigate any alternative ways of construing this topic after their first year in practice. It was important to find a way of identifying changes in each of the NQTs' individual's construing that could be reported succinctly. Personal growth and development was a key issue which was happening due to the inevitable richness of day to day experience at the 'chalk face'.

What kind of changes were observable between grids 1 and 2 (one year apart) in the case of each one of the NQTs? The topic stayed the same but there were a significant number of new constructs between grids 1 and 2 which resulted in different ratings. Three of the seven supplied elements were changed in grid 2 to include new people who may have contributed to an alteration in the NQTs' construing (their mentor; a member of the senior management team (SMT) and their tutor). The rationale for this was that if I had worked with the original elements and constructs the second time around I may well not have given the NQTs the full scope to indicate the extent to which their own views had changed.

Additionally, as the grids were used to investigate change in an advisory setting and provide a vehicle for professional development, discussions limiting the NQTs' constructs in this way would have been difficult to justify. As a consequence the changes in constructs occurred spontaneously in order to capture and reflect the NQTs' new experiences and growing expertise. In PCP terms, Kelly's (1955) experience corollary states that 'a person's construction system varies as he successively construes the replication of events' (Kelly, 1970 p.17).

The way forward was to focus on the constructs and their meanings: what is being said and what has changed? In order to do this however it was necessary to have an organising framework which would aid a systematic approach based on a rationale for

how people change their construing. As a consequence I looked at two models from Personal Construct Psychology, the experience cycle and the creativity cycle.

8.4 Kelly's Experience Cycle (1955)

Construing over time consists of a cycle made up of several stages as follows:

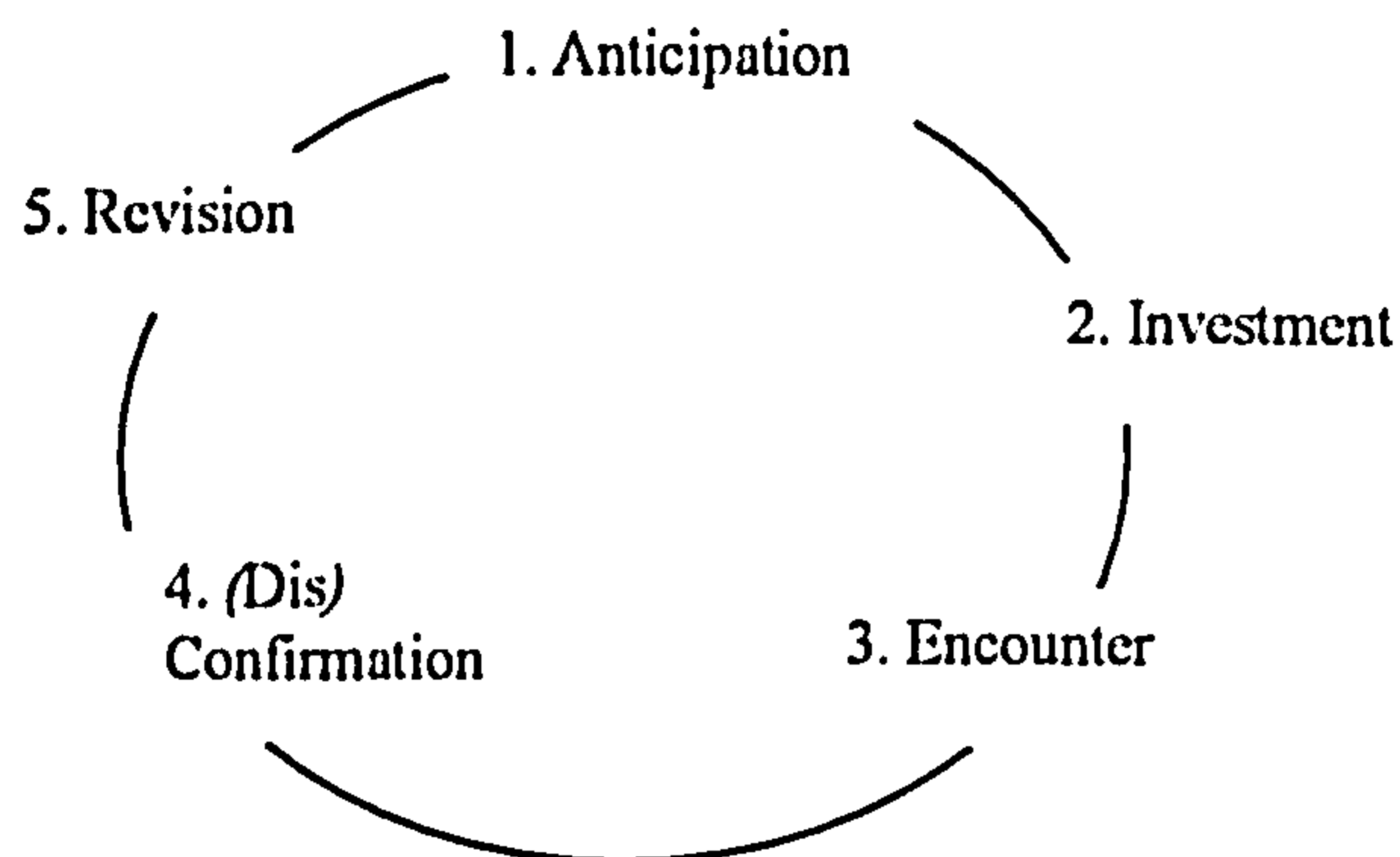


Figure 31: Kelly's (1955) Experience Cycle

Kelly's (1955) Experience Corollary states that a person's construction system varies as they successively construe the replication of events. People change their construct systems according to the accuracy of their anticipations. Predictions are sometimes proved correct, sometimes found wanting and sometimes totally irrelevant in terms of unfolding events. Kelly's (1955) theory works on the principle that individuals are in the business of anticipating events; that they wish to make sense of the world in order to become better at anticipating events and they operate as a scientist would do in so doing. Thus they set up a hypotheses, test it out and then incorporate it or reject it according to the results of their 'experiment'. If a teacher expects to be able to handle a difficult class and finds out that they have difficulties, those constructions about themselves which lead them to believe they could handle difficult classes become suspect. Bannister and Fransella (1971) point out that changing our construction systems involves changing ourselves and therefore we may experience the change as more a painful chaos than a logical exercise.

Keeping in mind that events do not actually repeat themselves and that the replication we talk about is a replication of ascribed aspects only, it begins to be clear that the succession we call experience is based on the constructions we place on what goes on. Kelly (1955) suggests that if those constructions are never altered, all that happens is a sequence of parallel events having no psychological impact. However, if teachers *invest* themselves in the outcome to the extent that it may differ from their expectation then it dislodges their construction of themselves. In recognising the inconsistency between the anticipation and the outcome there becomes a discrepancy between what they were and what they are. Kelly (1970 p.18) describes the *investment* stage in his experience cycle as 'the most intimate event of all'. Upon reaching the encounter that they had anticipated and invested in, their theories about the event and its consequences will be either confirmed or disconfirmed. Revision of this process may lead to new anticipations.

Since movement and change are the essence of the psychology of personal constructs, Kelly (1955) saw creativity as being a cyclic phenomenon. His creativity cycle 'starts with loosened construction and terminates with tightened and validated construction' (Kelly, 1955, p.258). Refer to figure 32: The Creativity Cycle.

8.5 Kelly's (1955) Creativity Cycle

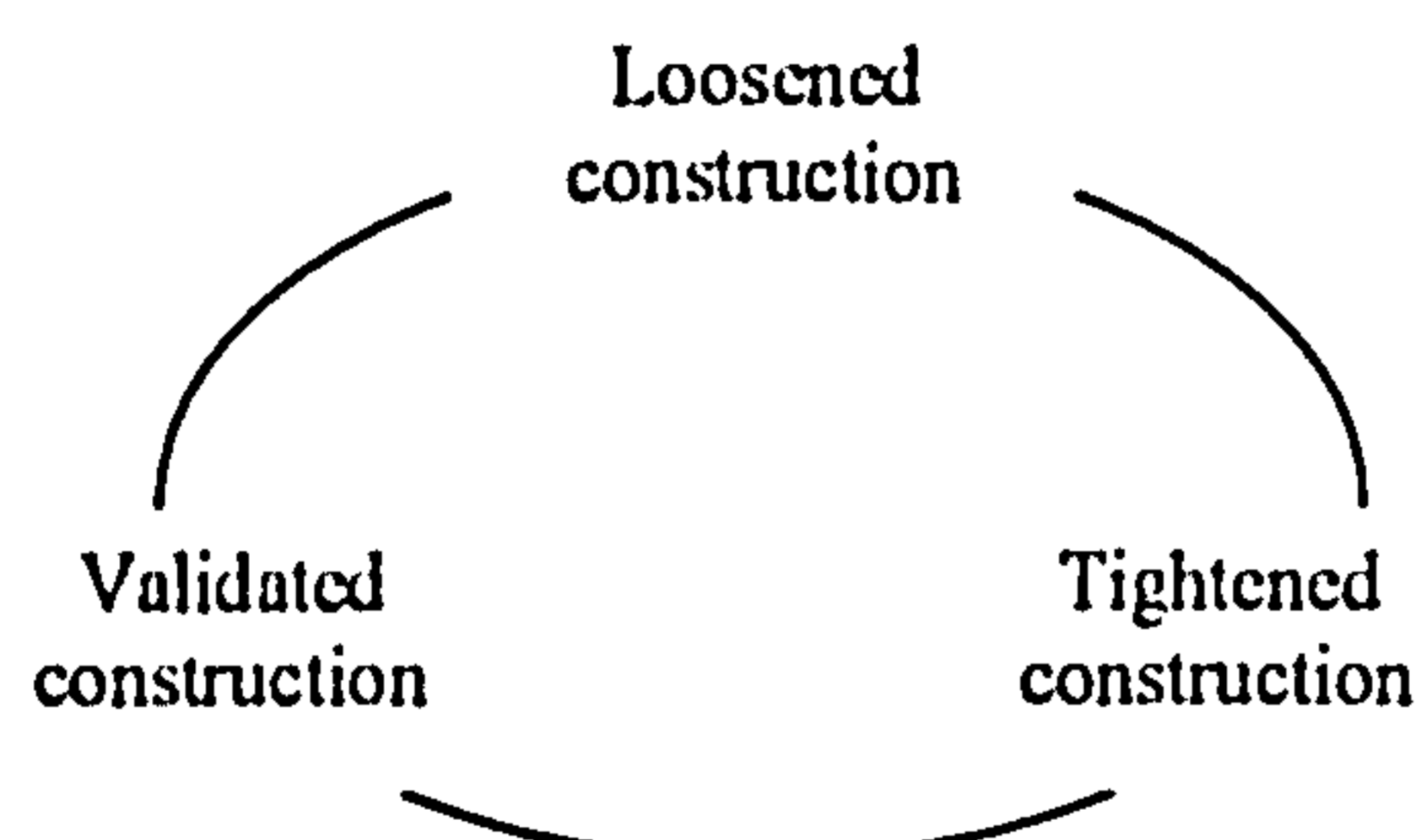


Figure 32: The Creativity Cycle

When we construe loosely we are flexible, look at possibilities and tolerate uncertainty or vagueness. Teachers, for example, who always indulge in tight construing may never be able to produce new strategies about the management of pupils' behaviour since creative thinking can only result in loosening constructs and realigning them in

another way. Conversely, those teachers who think loosely all the time may not be able to be very effective with their management of behaviour because they are unable to tighten up on their ideas so they come into clear focus and can be experimented with. Bannister and Fransella (1986) suggest it is by living through cycles of loosening and tightening that we develop understanding of ourselves and the situations that we find ourselves in. Changes from tight to loose construing and back again defines the cycle. The tight-loose dimension is a crucial aspect of personal construct theory because it is about our ability to be creative and consequently is about change.

'Loosened construction ... sets the stage for creative thinking ... the loosening releases facts, long taken as self-evident, from their occupational moorings. Once so freed, they may be seen in new aspects hitherto unsuspected, and the creativity cycle may get underway' (Kelly, 1955, p.1031).

Often we may have a number of ideas in our head. Then suddenly two ideas collide that make us tighten our construing 'That's a good idea, I wonder if that would work?' We may experience several of these occasions before we are convinced that this new idea will *really* work. We then have to go and test it out. Our behaviour is the experiment that tests out our construing. The NQTs in my research went through many cycles as they created new constructs and took on new ideas.

Kelly's (1955) theory encourages individuals to become aware of the freedom they have to explore different avenues. As this notion was particularly pertinent in my research and the two grids from each of the NQTs were part of an ongoing process of reflective analysis I decided to concentrate on Kelly's (1955) experience cycle (incorporating his creativity cycle) as vehicles for communicating the NQTs' differences in personal construing over their induction year.

In terms of the Creativity Cycle (tight versus loose construing) I was particularly interested if the second grid, produced from each of the NQTs, was part of an attempt to tighten or loosen construing. In order to ascertain this I looked particularly at the ratings in the second grid with a view to finding out if they were more closely or less closely related to each other than the first grid. Was the second grid an attempt to

loosen (lower similarity scores for the two constructs being compared) or tighten (higher similarity scores between the two constructs being compared?).

Personal construct theory implies that we are in a continual process of development. We change our construct systems in relation to the accuracy of the way in which we interpret people and events. Kelly's (1955) argument that constructions change at varying speeds in relation to experience explains why his psychology is essentially a dynamic theory.

8.6 Changes in construing

As indicated previously three of the elements were changed (to include new people who may have altered the NQTs' constructs during their induction year). Refer to figure 33.

Grid 1 (2003)

- Yourself
- A schoolteacher you remember positively
- A family member
- A schoolteacher you remember negatively
- A colleague you admire and respect
- A manager prior to your present post
- A colleague you have no admiration /respect for

Grid 2 (2004)

- Yourself
- **Your mentor**
- A family member
- **Member of the SMT**
- A colleague you admire/respect
- **The Headteacher**
- A colleague you have no admiration /respect for

Figure 33: Elements for grids 1 and 2 (bold type denotes new elements in second grid)

Using the Experience Cycle (Kelly, 1955), questions were asked related to the following (adapted from Jancowicz, 2004):

- What stage in the cycle is represented by the transition between the two grids?
- What kind of confirmations or disconfirmations were involved and what sort of revisions were being made?
- What feelings were expressed during the elicitation of the grids?
- What strength of feeling is represented? (investment phase)

- What difference is represented by the constructs dropped from the first grid and used in the second? (assessment and constructive revision phases)
- Are the ratings in the second grid more closely or less closely related to each other than in the first grid? (Kelly's (1955) Creativity Cycle).

Overall, a content analysis of the 2004 constructs (this was achieved through a reliability check; the process of which is explained in section 7.14) revealed that there was a change in the distribution of the NQTs' constructs in 2004. Figure 34 shows a comparison table in which the number of constructs allocated to categories in 2003 and 2004 is indicated.

Figure 34 :Distribution of NQTs' constructs allocated to particular categories in 2003 / 2004

Construct category 2003 / 2004	2003	2004
Professional Role	8	8
Teaching Style	7	6
Rules and Boundaries	7	5
Respect	6	4
Support and Teamwork	n/a	5

N.B. The numbers denote the number of constructs allocated to each category

In 2004 the constructs fell easily into the categories devised in 2003. There was one exception however. There were additional constructs in 2004 specifically relating to support and teamwork suggesting the NQTs' growing professionalism. For an overview of the 2004 grids refer to figure 35.

There now follows an overview and discussion of two of the NQTs' compilation grids (2003 /2004). Firstly, figure 36 highlights NQT 1's personal changes in construing over the induction year. The grids from NQT 1 and 2 have been used again at this juncture in order to provide some consistency with chapter 7 and show clearly the changes over time. It should be noted however that the 2003/4 grids from NQT 3 and 4 were taken through exactly the same process with each of the NQTs concerned. I have however, elected to feature just two detailed analyses in my thesis in order to maintain the interest of the reader.

Figure 35: Overview of the 2004 grids (n.b. full grids in appendices M, O, Q and S)

2004	Person most similar to self	Top three constructs	Highest discrepancy rating	Overall discrepancy rating	Closest matched un-reversed construct	Closest matched reversed construct
NQT 1	Colleague admire/ respect	1.In control 2.Stamina, energy and skills in difficult situations 3.ability to reflect on the advice of others	N.B. Very confident one year on. Highest discrepancy only rating 1 on three constructs. The rest reveal no discrepancy	3 (16 in first grid) Good progress – much more confident	Have stamina, energy and skills to deal with a situation / stamina.....with in control / lack of control	Appears to have given up caring / ability to care about people with lack of communication / ability to communicate
NQT 2	Mentor	1.Having respect from pupils 2.Firm boundaries 3.More approachable character	Effortless control (1) More difficulty with control (7) awards himself 4, aims to be 1	9 (21 in first grid)	Available for support / Less available for support with more approachable character/ less approachable character	More approachable character/ less approachable character with uses support to effect change / uses support but no change
NQT 3	Headteacher	1.Flexible approach to discipline 2.Strong support for and myself 3. willing to take on advice to strengthen discipline, control and support	N.B. very confident one year on. Highest discrepancy rating only on two constructs, the rest reveal no discrepancy	2 (a confident 4 in first grid)	Clear boundaries, expectations/inconsistent and unclear boundaries with need for ongoing communication re discipline, control and support/ would not instigate this notion	Rigid approach to discipline/flexible approach with strong support for pupils and staff / support not evident
NQT 4	Family Member	1.Consistent use of policy, rewards and sanctions 2. Positive relationship with most pupils 3. Knows their stuff (subject knowledge)	Always there for help and support (1) Rarely there for help and support (7) awards herself 4, aims to be 1	11 (5 in first grid) An interesting response NQT was very confident throughout her induction year. Increased discrepancy rating related to nature of constructs and her increasingly high standards rather than lack of confidence	Consistently fair / Inconsistently fair with control in difficult situations/ less control quicker to shout	Inconsistent use of policy and rewards/ consistent use of policy and rewards with lack of evidence of positive progress with individuals /much evidence of positive progress with individuals

1	2003 / 2004 Elements										2003 / 4 elements				7											
	Yourself		Family member		Colleague you admire		Colleague you don't admire		Teacher recalled positively (2003)	Teacher recalled negatively (2003)	Previous Manager (2003)	Teacher recalled positively (2003)	Teacher recalled negatively (2003)	Previous Manager (2003)												
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	Diff.	2003	2004					Diff.										
A1.1 and A2.5 Calm, in control NB. Ideal self = 1 *	4	2	2	3	1	3	2	1	7	7	0	Mentor (2004)	Member of SMT (2004)	2	Headteacher (2004)	3	4	2	2	Frequently shouting, out of control						
A1.7 and A2.5 Very positive, Appears to respect Everyone NB. Ideal self = 1	1	1	0	3	2	7	2	5	6	7	1	Teacher recalled positively (2003)	Teacher recalled negatively (2003)	7	Previous Manager (2003)	7	1	7	7	Little respect for others, not overly positive						

8.7 Commentary on NQT 1's personal changes in construing (refer to figure 36)

Constructs in purple are ones repeated by the NQT in September 2003 and September 2004. As can be seen there were only two *similar* constructs across the two grids. NQT 1 rates herself as a 4 in 2003 with regard to being calm and in control. In 2004 she rates herself as a 2 (a positive movement of 2 ratings indicating progress). She rates herself as a 1 (the highest rating) in both 2003 and 2004 on the construct 'very positive, appears to respect everyone'. The rating 1 is relevant to the construct at the left hand side of the chart and the rating 7 is relevant to the polar opposite on the right hand side of the chart. Constructs in blue are the 2003 constructs and those in green denote constructs elicited in 2004.

The NQT concerned, as with all the others, was not shown the original 2003 grid (refer to figure 22) when embarking on the second grid (refer to appendix M) one year later so as not to pre-empt any constructs and allow them to emerge naturally. There was evidence of a significant elaboration of constructs. NQT 1 was constantly experimenting with new forms of behaviour, both during the grid session and out of it. Indeed the second grid session took substantially longer than the first due mainly to the intense amount of thought and consideration given to the constructs she finally decided upon. It became clear that some of the new constructs arrived spontaneously as this NQT decided that existing constructs were insufficient to capture her new experiences i.e. her 2003 constructs were now invalid; they were no longer acceptably accurate in predicting life events (Kelly, 1963, p.157-160). There was a continual investment in the outcome to the extent that it often differed from her original expectations. This was followed by an intense assessment and constructive revision phase whereby this NQT confirmed and/or disconfirmed her experiences e.g.

'A year 10 girl was constantly asking irrelevant questions whilst I was teaching. I answered one or two but then said: 'just wait until I have finished please'. Her response to this was to get stroppy and slam her book down saying she wouldn't understand anything if I didn't answer her questions. I found this rude and stroppy and I told her so. She then responded in a very bitchy way leading to a slanging match and her refusing to leave the room. On reflection I should not have called her stroppy. I should have repeated my request with the explanation that I needed to finish my

sentence/explanation to the whole class and then go and help her. I know now that many pupils do not respond well to an aggressive manner – it simply aggravates the situation' (NQT 1).

With regard to this NQT's 'ideal self', ratings on her constructs in 2003 reveal a discrepancy score of 16, in comparison to a healthy discrepancy of just 3 on her constructs in 2004, suggesting a significant improvement in confidence. She rates being in control, having energy, skills and stamina to deal with situations and having an ability to reflect on the advice of others as her three most important constructs (2004), rating herself highly on all three. Clearly a colleague she does not admire receives the same negative scoring across all of the constructs suggesting a particularly difficult professional relationship. This NQT's most highly matched constructs were 'Having stamina, energy and skills to deal with a difficult situation' and 'Being in control'. She confirmed that she tends to see teachers as those who are good communicators and care about pupils; and those who in her view have 'given up', are poor listeners and have communication problems with both pupils and staff. There was a substantial strength of feeling about this latter issue along with a determination that she wanted to be respected by the pupils but also liked. There were also emerging issues relating to communication and support within her department.

It was fascinating to talk with NQT 1 and listen to a succession of ideas drifting around in her thoughts (loose construing). Suddenly two ideas would collide and she would tighten her construing when she hit on an interesting idea and began to find out if it worked. Indeed she usually went through several cycles before she was convinced her ideas would work. To relate an example to the creativity cycle, there was one particular pupil whom this NQT had an issue with. He was very disruptive (in the majority of his classes) and she virtually was in dread of teaching him. Initially constructs were elicited which were constellatory¹ in nature (this pupil was disruptive therefore hard to like, rude and insensitive etc). After much discussion however she identified one or two occasions when his behaviour had been better and described the tasks he was involved in. She began to realise that some activities clearly cut down the chance of his overt, attention-seeking behaviour. She then coined the phrase 'planning for better behaviour' and began to produce lesson plans where this particular

¹ This is essentially stereotyped or typological thinking.

pupil was given specific tasks which were designed to lessen opportunities for him to cause problems. Although this was a time-consuming task regarding planning and preparation, it worked quite well. She was additionally able to incorporate praise and reward which helped the situation considerably as this pupil was now often doing what was requested and therefore warranted praise. When eliciting further constructs about this pupil at the start of a new term her constructs were more propositional i.e. she still saw him as disruptive but realised now that was only *one* way of viewing him, and indeed, had some positive comments to make about his behaviour.

Following the advice of Jancowicz (2004) I was particularly interested if the second grid was part of an attempt for this NQT to tighten or loosen her construing. I looked particularly at the ratings in the second grid with a view to finding out if they were more closely or less closely related to each other than the first grid. Remembering the creativity cycle consists of an alternation between tight construing (in the sense of effective action) and loose construing (in order to search for alternatives) and reviewed tight construing (efficient predictions using the revised construct set) it is perhaps unsurprising that NQT 1's second grid shows evidence of attempt to tighten her construing (higher similarity scores between two constructs). These scores were only slightly higher however suggesting that this NQT was perhaps somewhat reluctantly beginning to tighten her construing. With loose construing there is a danger of losing control of things, we do not know where such construing might lead. At one stage this NQT was so locked into loose construing that she was finding it very difficult to come to any firm conclusions. This would certainly match what was seen in reality, as this NQT was keen to look at so many options and try them out that there was at times a danger of nothing creative coming from the experience due to an inability to tighten up on something that had struck her as interesting.

During discussions with this NQT the difference represented by constructs dropped from the first grid and new constructs used in the second grid were used to explore the assessment (confirmation/disconfirmation) phases in the experience cycle. For example the construct 'no nonsense way of doing things/more friendly, fun and approachable' had been replaced in 2004 with 'variety of approaches/one approach'.

'I now realise it's not as simple as being either friendly and approachable or not. It's about having a variety of approaches to capture the interest and imagination of the pupils. It's knowing when to change tack to keep their interest going. I am trying to be less reactive and more preventative' (NQT 1).

The 2004 construct 'Having stamina, energy and skills' is very important to this NQT and fortunately she rates herself highly, on a par with a member of the SMT and the Headteacher (only needing to travel from a one to a two to reach her goal). Overall the 2004 constructs are more predictively robust than those elicited in 2003, reflecting a steep learning curve and a myriad of experience. Clearly this had been and still was an emotional journey for the NQT in focus in which she generated constructs which were related to the way she felt about the events she was confronted with. Her personal ratings in the second grid, however, suggest an improvement in confidence and this was reflected in the positive classroom observations undertaken, not only by myself, but also by a member of the senior management team and her mentor.

There now follows a second discussion of personal changes in construing using NQT 2's grids. Figure 37 features four constructs which were similar across the 2003 and 2004 grids and figure 38 highlights the remaining constructs.

1	2003 / 2004 Elements					2003 / 2004 Elements					7
	Yourself	Family member	Colleague you admire	Colleague you don't admire	Teacher recalled positively(2003)	Teacher recalled negatively (2003)	Previous Manager (2003)	Teacher recalled positively(2003)	Teacher recalled negatively (2003)	Previous Manager (2003)	
B1.1 and B2.2 Supporting the disaffected/available for support Ideal self = 2 (2003) discrep. 1 = 2 (2004) discrep. 0	2003 3 2004 2 Diff. 1	2003 2 2004 2 Diff. 0	2003 3 2004 3 Diff. 0	2003 4 2004 4 Diff. 0	2 Mentor (2004)	6 Member of SMT (2004)	5 Headteacher (2004)	2 Mentor (2004)	4	4 Headteacher (2004)	Not willing to support the disaffected, less available for support
B1.3 and B2.1 Sticking to boundaries / rules/firm boundaries Ideal self = 1 (2003) discrep. 4 = 1 (2004) discrep. 2	2003 5 2004 3 Diff. 2	2003 1 2004 4 Diff. 3	2003 1 2004 2 Diff. 1	2003 3 2004 4 Diff. 1	2 Mentor (2004)	5 Member of SMT (2004)	1 Headteacher (2004)	2 Mentor (2004)	2	2 Headteacher (2004)	Inconsistent with boundaries, rules/ boundaries stretched
B1.4 and B2.5 Commands total respect / respected by pupils Ideal self = 1 (2003) discrep. 4 = 1 (2004) discrep. 2	2003 5 2004 3 Diff. 2	2003 1 2004 5 Diff. 4	2003 1 2004 2 Diff. 1	2003 5 2004 4 Diff. 1	3 Teacher recalled positively(2003)	7 Teacher recalled negatively (2003)	7 Previous Manager (2003)	3 Teacher recalled positively(2003)	3	3 Mentor (2004)	Commands little respect / no respect from pupils
B1.5 and B2.3 Natural control/effortless control Ideal self = 1 (2003) discrep. 5 = 1 (2004) discrep. 3	2003 6 2004 4 Diff. 2	2003 3 2004 4 Diff. 1	2003 1 2004 2 Diff. 1	2003 5 2004 5 Diff. 0	3 Mentor (2004)	2 Member of SMT (2004)	2 Headteacher (2004)	3 Teacher recalled positively(2003)	6	5 Previous Manager (2003)	Forced control/ more difficulty with control

Figure 37: NQT 2 Similar constructs 2003/2004 * top three constructs 2003 ** top three constructs 2004 (N.B. refer to fig. 45 for 3rd top rated construct)

1	Yourself	Ideal self	Family Member	Colleague you admire	Colleague you don't admire	2003 elements			2
						Schoolteacher +	Schoolteacher -	Manager	
Enthusiastic	2	1	3	2	3	2	5	5	Unenthusiastic
Emphasis on the positive	7	1	2	3	6	5	7	4	Emphasis on the negative
Sends out of classroom	3	3	6	7	2	2	2	7	Copes with issues in other ways
Discrepancy rating (2003)		21*				2004 elements			
						Mentor	Member of SMT	Headteacher	
More detached from everyday grind	7	6	1	4	6	6	6	2	More in tune with difficulties which may arise
Approachable **	2	2	3	3	4	2	4	4	Less approachable
Uses support to effect positive change	2	1	4	4	5	3	5	4	Uses support but does not achieve any positive change
Discrepancy Rating (2004)		9*							

Figure 38: NQT 2 - 2003 and 2004 constructs

• including discrepancy from similar constructs in figure 39

** one of top related constructs 2004 : see figure 44 for remaining two top rated constructs

8.8 Commentary on NQT 2's personal changes in construing

(refer to figure 37 p.214 and figure 38 p.215)

In comparison to NQT 1 there are fewer *changes* in construing evidenced by four pairs of similar constructs across the two grids (as opposed to two pairs in NQT1's case). As with NQT 1 this NQT was not shown their 2003 grid (refer to appendix N) in order to avoid pre-emption of constructs. New concepts appeared relating to being in tune with difficulties, being approachable and being responsive to support in order to effect positive change. These replaced enthusiasm, emphasis on the positive and coping with issues in another way rather than sending out of the classroom. The new concepts indicate an experimentation with new forms of behaviour in order to make sense of the new experiences. In the 2004 grid, one year later (refer to appendix O), with a revised set of elements, this NQT's most importantly rated constructs in 2003 appear again: firm boundaries, effortless control and having respect from pupils (in addition the construct supporting the disaffected/being available for support re-appeared). This particular NQT was clearly somewhat pre-occupied with issues relating to control, rules and respect:

'Successful control and discipline needs firm boundaries. If you haven't got the boundaries then kids don't know where they are so it's not their fault if they step over them all the time' (NQT 2).

'Discipline goes along with respect. The teachers I have seen who have difficulties don't have respect from their pupils because their boundaries aren't clearly defined. They need to be told the boundaries rather than the teacher assuming they will guess them. They have to be taught the boundaries alongside the subject' (NQT 2).

With regard to this NQT's 'ideal self', ratings on his 2003 constructs reveal a discrepancy score of 21 in comparison to 9 in 2004, a clear indication, as with NQT 1 of a change for the positive in his overall confidence. On similar constructs across 2003 /2004 there are indications of progress. With regard to having respect from pupils he rates himself as a 5 in 2003 and a 3 in 2004 (his ideal self being a 1 so clearly a change has occurred and a journey is taking place). Regarding his top three

constructs in 2004, 'having respect from pupils' and 'firm boundaries' remain in the top three in both grids (indicating two core constructs)² 'Having natural control' (a top construct in the 2003 grid) is replaced with 'being approachable' in 2004. This was also a pertinent issue with this NQT. He was tussling for a time with how to set firm boundaries yet at the same time remain approachable, a role he was particularly interested in due to his form tutor responsibilities.

In the case of closely related constructs, in 2003 he saw teachers who were 'willing to support the disaffected' also being 'enthusiastic' (the converse applying at the opposite poles of these constructs). He also sees teachers who are enthusiastic as having a natural control, the latter in particular being a construct he aspires to. In 2004 he sees being 'available for support' as linked to being 'approachable' (a new construct which appeared in 2004 which he also aspires to). Interestingly enough, however his 'ideal self' regarding the notion of being approachable remains the same in 2003 / 2004 (*he awards himself a 2*) which in 2004 he achieves, equalling his 'ideal self'. When asked why he did not aspire to a rating of 1 he explained that he didn't want to be any more approachable or else he might get taken advantage of 'I would never get anything else done'. At the beginning of the second year he was beginning to show a particular interest in pastoral matters and this is reflected in his revised constructs. Matters of control and respect, however, continue to pervade his thoughts.

With regard to tight and loose construing (the creativity cycle) the higher similarity scores in the second grid suggest he was beginning to tighten his construing. In general the more tightly connected the subject's constructs, the more change occurs when predictions are met with invalidation (Bannister and Fransella, 1971). Most certainly this NQT was trying so many strategies at one stage that prioritising had to take place in order to ensure some kind of consistency. He could not get out of the stage of 'thinking about them' (i.e. his constructs) in order to test them out. Additionally, when a core construct was involved in the invalidation (in NQT 2's case: 'sticking to boundaries/rules and 'commanding respect') there was little attempt at change. At one stage he had to admit that, although he was sticking to boundaries and rules, he was not receiving the respect that he felt he deserved (two highly related constructs in both

² A core construct is one which governs a person's maintenance processes (Bannister and Fransella, 1981).

of his grids). Clearly here was a threatening situation for this NQT, a possible imminent change in his core construing. When this happened the reluctance to change could possibly be explained by the fact that too many important changes would need to occur if his core construing were to change. As a consequence there was a danger of this NQT taking up residence at a fixed point in what ideally should be a cycle. In these circumstances slow progress inevitably followed.

Constructs dropped after the first grid ('enthusiastic/unenthusiastic'; 'emphasis on positive/negative' and 'sends out of classroom/copos with issues in another way') were replaced with 'more detached from the everyday grind/more in tune with difficulties', 'approachable/less approachable and 'using support to effect positive change/using support but not achieving change' (used to explore the assessment / revision stages in the experience cycle). There is arguably an air of despair here, suggested by the emotive phrase 'the everyday grind'. In addition the issue of support is now very important to this NQT (a third grid I suspect may have revealed this as an additional core construct).

'These two are more detached from the everyday grind and this one is more in tune with what's going on and what the difficulties can be. I suppose it's difficult for this person. I don't know whether it's because they've got a lot of other things to do but they're not exactly 'around' if you know what I mean' (NQT 2).

'It's the issue of not accepting help and support ... using it for a little while and then going back to the old whatever. Some people use support but only for a little while. They use the support but they don't change' (NQT 2).

In terms of Kelly's (1955) experience cycle the transition between this NQT's two grids represented the investment stage of the cycle. This NQT often recognised the inconsistency between his anticipation and the outcome, conceding a discrepancy between what he was and what he is. A succession of such investments and dislodgements, however, provided a very rich basis for discussion and further reflection.

With all four NQTs certainly some of their changes in construing occurred spontaneously as they clearly felt that existing constructs were insufficient to capture their new experiences. Each of them had been on an emotional journey. Changes that took place involved a growth of confidence towards an area of understanding. As they became more confident in themselves, they felt at one point that things were simpler than they believed. Experience then showed that matters were not so easily understood. However, experience gained at this stage in my research suggested that the NQTs were more able to accept such disconfirmation because they had developed a sense of being able to cope and gained a belief in the potential of their personal constructions and understanding.

Chapter 9 now focuses on the applicability of PCP to the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour.

Chapter 9

9.1 The Applicability of PCP to the Management of Pupils' Disruptive and Challenging Behaviour

A short recap on the basic concepts of PCP reminds us that 'man as a scientist' is the central metaphor of Kellyan theory. We anticipate events and experiences, we 'construe' our reality, find our constructions eventually validated or invalidated and subsequently keep to them or modify them.

The introduction of this thesis highlighted that teachers bring to the process of the management of pupils' behaviour a pre-existing system of beliefs, attitudes and perceptions that can have a significant bearing on the prevention or remediation of problems. To a layperson, learning to teach may be seen to involve a range of practical skills and updating them as and when new initiatives appear. However, these skills are ineffective without an appropriate mindset to be able to take them on and use them effectively. The major theme resulting from this research is that students' learning regarding the management of pupils' behaviour, particularly at initial stages, must integrate concerns about their professional practice with their personal views and commitments.

PCP is essentially an optimistic theory which has implications for action, change and growth through experience. It sees human beings as responsible, active, meaning-seeking adults who are open to change and development when this potential is fostered; as such this is initially what attracted me to exploring the implications of PCP for understanding the management of pupils' behaviour. There have been many times when I have thought 'If only teachers could see the situation from another point of view' 'How can I get them to explore a wider range of possible solutions?'. I believe firmly that the origin of much poor classroom behaviour lies in *teacher* behaviour in areas of social interaction and emotional understanding. Since the Elton Report in 1989, in which the concept of *teacher* behaviour is noticeable by its absence, reports on discipline in schools from various teacher organisations and Government papers and initiatives similarly ignore or sidestep the issue of *teacher* behaviour to focus on

the *pupils'* behaviour. It is like trying to solve a mathematical problem with half of the equation missing.

As outlined in chapter 6, an assumption underpinning Personal Construct Theory is the notion of constructive alternativism, which essentially suggests that all our current perceptions, insights and understandings are open to question and reconsideration. The theory rejects the existing schism between affect, cognition and action and recommends that they be construed together for developing a fuller understanding of human behaviour. This underpinning assumption states that events, people, relationships and situations, in fact most of the things we have to deal with in our lives, do not come labelled ready to slip into different categories; it is we who construct the categories so that the events around us have order and pattern. The NQTs in this research for example talked of 'un-teachable pupils'; 'a multitude of hormone fuelled characters'; 'ongoing traumas' 'the class from Hell!' etc. The problem here is that teachers can get so used to a particular system of categories that they are in danger of feeling they are in possession of *facts* rather than merely one perspective amongst an infinite variety of possible alternative perspectives or constructions. Hence the famous example cited by Kelly (1955) of the teacher with twenty years experience who had simply repeated the first year twenty times over. Unfortunately my professional practice, involving observing and talking to many teachers over the last ten years, could cite examples of this notion, particularly in relation to the management of pupils' behaviour.

Significantly, it is possible for a teacher's attitude to a pupil to be forever fixed in a particular mindset which affords no chance of alternative construction and therefore no scope for progress. This is because teachers may often assume that their own construal of a situation is correct and believe that the pupils should be similar. Assuming that pupils should possess a similar construction of events means that teachers can explain disruptive behaviour in terms of unusual and extreme personality traits (a somewhat reactive response) rather than different construals of a situation (a more proactive viewpoint).

PCP's underpinning philosophy and research tools have an important contribution to make to the management of pupil behaviour because they have the potential for creating significant personal development over and above that which, arguably, can be gained from the more conventional lectures and seminars. NQTs arrive for their induction year already 'socialised' i.e. they have a conception of what comprises 'good teaching'. However, this socialisation of familiarity does not lay the foundations for informed assessment of their own teaching style and techniques. NQTs in particular need to learn how to reflect on their management of pupils' behaviour and articulate their criteria of success.

The concept of reflection relies on an ability to uncover one's own personal theories and make them explicit. Teachers will certainly be au fait with the concept of reflective practice but do they know how to do it? Chapter 1 highlighted that current standards for QTS state that 'to teach effectively teachers need to have the capacity and commitment to analyse and reflect on their own practice' (standard S1.7). Dewey (1964) suggests that reflection precedes intelligent action and generally addresses practical problems, allowing for some perplexity before possible solutions are reached. Schon (1983;1987) is well known for his concept of reflection in-action and on-action suggesting that professionals should learn to frame and reframe the problems they face, test out various interpretations and modify their results (Kelly's Experience Cycle facilitates this framing and reframing).

In my research, PCP facilitated teacher thinking about framing and reframing the problems they faced and, additionally, encouraged dialogue about classroom interactions which may not as a norm have been easily articulated. It does not provide new ideas (are there any?) in the management of pupil behaviour but it can equip teachers to reflect on their own ways of dealing with the multiplicity of issues they will face on a daily basis. It also illuminates *tacit* knowledge (the knowledge that we possess but do not necessarily articulate). The difficulty usually inherent in tacit knowledge transfer is that people may not be aware and hence unable to articulate, communicate and describe what they know. Whilst tacit knowledge may be characteristic of many things that teachers do, our obligation as teacher educators

must be to make the tacit explicit. Teachers will become better educators when they can have specific answers to the following questions:

- How do I know what I do?
- How do I know the reasons for what I do?
- Why do I ask my pupils to perform or think in particular ways?

In my opinion, the tacit assumptions, values and intuitions of NQTs in particular need to be surfaced and analysed.

Certainly tools in PCP encourage a union of skilled methods with attitudes. The self-characterisation sketches and repertory grid techniques used in my research encouraged a degree of open-mindedness and sincerity as well as the need for thinking in a reflective way. During the tutorials the discussion of constructs led to looking back on their actions in the classroom. For example:

NQT 1 (leading on from discussion of the construct 'fair / unfair')

'I feel that at the moment I am just keeping my head above water and I often reflect on the way home and think I should have handled things in a fairer way but then again I'm only human'. (NQT 1)

For an example of how this construct was extended using Laddering and Pyramiding (refer to figures 31 and 32)

NQT 2 (leading on from the construct 'emphasis on the positive / emphasis on the negative')

'I often say most of you have been very good but I always seem to finish off by pointing out those who were not well behaved'.

NQT 3 (leading on from the construct 'gives responsibility for pupils' own learning by reinforcing ability' / 'doesn't provide opportunities for this to happen')

'It's something I have been aware of when people have been teaching me as well and even not in teaching, when I have been working. When you realise that someone is valuing what you are doing and when you are aware that someone is valuing what you are doing it can make a big impression on your own view of your ability. When I can say to my pupils 'you can do it, you've just showed that you can', the better I feel about teaching and that's a good day'.

NQT 4 (leading on from the construct 'positive relationship with pupils / negative relationship because of over-reaction to issues')

'...otherwise before the children get here they are going to say 'Oh no there's Miss, she doesn't pay any attention to me, she's not interested in me'... whereas if it's 'Oh it's Miss, she asked me how I injured my foot last week or 'she's taken a bit of interest in me' then maybe I'll show her a bit of respect by putting some effort in. It's a two way process if you show them a bit of respect / interest. They may reiterate it with some respect or some trust in what you are trying to pass on'

Each of these extracts from transcripts would lead on to further discussion with the NQTs who often highlighted actions that did not go well and then reflected on how they might have 're-run the tape'. The flexibility of the repertory grid in terms of its potential for in-depth, individual exploration of meaning was particularly encouraging. Most certainly the grid facilitated the exploration, reflection and discussion of issues within a tutorial framework. The majority of reflection by the NQTs in this research was about judgments of practice, although it was clear that these practical judgments involved intellectual and theoretical considerations, which were unique to each one of the NQTs.

I inevitably came to my research with personal constructs about the management of pupils' behaviour. Devine and Heath (1999); Henwood and Pidgeon (1997); and Olesen *et al.* (1994) recognise the importance of being reflexive about how data are interpreted, the researcher's role in the analytic process and the pre-conceived ideas and assumptions we bring to our analysis. I was keenly aware that I would need techniques which would allow the NQTs to express their own understandings without the contamination of my own views.

'The trouble is that researchers often fail to see much of what is there because they come to analytic sessions wearing blinders, composed of assumptions, experience and immersion in the literature' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.75).

The research tools to be found within Personal Construct Psychology gave time, a space, a context and a method for operationalising a degree of reflexivity during the

analytic stages of my research. Whilst identifying personal changes in construing of each of the NQTs it was prudent to remember that because elicitation is an interpersonal process there would be something of myself in each of the grids. Therefore if two grids for each NQT differed in any way it was important to identify that the difference was one of substance, rather than of appearance, as a result of how the grid interview was handled. It was of particular importance, therefore, that I conducted each grid interview in the same manner and format. I am confident that differences in presentation of the grid elicitation procedure were relatively small and the process benefited from the fact that I carried out all the grid interviews, therefore cutting down the possibility of different ways of addressing the process.

The importance of this stage of the research process cannot be underestimated and I was well aware of the pitfalls of glossing over the processes through which individual subjective accounts are transformed into social science 'theory'. I was also aware of the ways in which my emotional response to the respondents could shape my interpretation of their accounts. However, research tools within PCP are designed particularly to avoid 'leading questions' that would indicate the researcher's interest and bias; as a consequence they elucidate what is important from the *participant's* perspective. Additionally, at all times any interpretation of content was in collaboration with each of the NQTs concerned.

It soon became clear that the basic activity of eliciting and articulating constructs, many of which may have been 'pre-verbal'¹ or 'taken for granted' could in itself provide a rich foundation for promoting reflection and change. However, it was understood that the NQTs' experience of detailing their construing about discipline, control and support could be quite a challenging experience, even though discussions were set in an informal, conversational framework. As a consequence there were ethical issues to consider when deliberately confronting the NQTs with their constructs (refer to chapter 5). The main tools used in my research to identify ways of construing and the elicitation of constructs were the self-characterisation sketch and the repertory grid.

¹ Pre-verbal constructs: a pre-verbal construct is one which continues to be used even though it has no consistent word symbol. It may or may not have been devised before the participant had command of speech symbolism (Bannister and Fransella, 1971).

9.2 The Self-Characterization sketch

The self-characterization sketches were used to monitor changes or form the basis of a tutorial interview. Kelly (1955) believes that the 'clients' 'hottest' issues (personal themes) are revealed in the text. Most certainly, the NQTs referred to topics that were in the forefront of their minds and the 'safety' of the third person helped them touch on emotionally loaded issues that they may have left unsaid in a conventional interview. The assumption supported in this research is that such work is catalytic in helping people to find their own 'voice' (Penn and Frankfurt, 1994; McLeod, 1997). The self-characterisation sketch indicated the way that an individual construes rather than the extraction of constructs. Their sketches became self-affirming and representative of educational values being transformed into practice.

The whole self characterisation exercise rested on that ability unique to humans: the ability to try and see things through the eyes of another person. Kelly (1955) states that the art of reading a self-characterisation is to try and get into the perspective of the writer and attempt a 'restatement' of the argument. Tutorials were held in which the self characterisation sketches were discussed and brought into focus. The instructions given to the NQTs prior to them writing the sketch ('write it from the perspective of someone who knows you really well'), resulted in an overall picture, yet one that was not superficial. The end product inevitably bore the stamp of their core construing in relation to the notion of discipline, control and support. It was through the tone and flavour of the sketches, rather than the actual content, that the perspective became evident (refer to appendices I and J for an example).

Radley (1973) proposes that it is our core construing that constitutes this perspective. We can inspect and work with our subordinate constructs but our core constructs 'work us'. In re-stating the argument with the NQTs their core construing became clearer. This was not an interpretive process; rather it was a process of negotiation and each NQT was always the final arbitrator of the outcome. I would say 'It looks like you feel strongly about ... is that right?' and then ask them to expand upon their ideas. The purpose of two self characterisation sketches, at the beginning of the NQTs' induction year and at the beginning of their second year of teaching was to structure

conversations about the themes, traits and personal characteristics which the NQTs had attributed to themselves; the *constructs* in other words that the NQTs had about themselves. The picture obtained was then triangulated with the grid for a more detailed account of each of the NQTs in relation to discipline, control and support.

9.3 The Repertory Grid

The Repertory Grid was an excellent vehicle for enhancing discussion with the NQTs which raised their personal philosophy about the management of pupils' behaviour and their aims. Even in the absence of specific barriers to learning not everyone starts with the necessary skills for reflection; the technique within the repertory grids of triadic elicitation provided a structure for exploring similarities and differences in dialogues with the NQTs. As a consequence negative judgments began to be questioned and the basis for judgments was also scrutinized. The approach to the technique was non-threatening; it engaged the NQTs in examining their attitudes, but without labelling such attitudes as unacceptable. As a result they discovered that some attitudes were inappropriate and discriminatory for themselves.

NQTs, as learners, arguably, need to be aware of their frames of reference from the outset and continue to reflect on their developing assumptions which may underlie their management of pupils' behaviour. Crucially, the repertory grid technique enhanced the development of a 'language' for behaviour. At this stage simply being able to talk about it in observable terms was a significant achievement.

It remains an interesting challenge to enhance an appropriate language in which to articulate personal theories about the management of pupils' behaviour. Burnard and Yaxley (2000) state that we have a curriculum that is common to all so why don't we have a language of behaviour that is common to all in which adults can communicate the observation and solving of problems in an atmosphere that is conducive to a collegiate approach with the pupil? Burnard and Yaxley (2000) found that not only was the development of teachers as reflective practitioners lacking but reflective skills needed to be *taught*. Teachers need to be able to communicate issues about their management of pupil behaviour in order to try and understand them. These

understandings in turn would create a more professional approach to behaviour management.

Previous research (Grundy, 2000) suggests that a teacher's ability to manage a class can be facilitated by having principles, practical advice and strategies available. However, without practising the strategies, reflecting on them and refining their uses (with support) the strategies will not be as useful and the teacher's confidence will suffer. In my opinion, a pertinent skill in the management of pupils' behaviour lies in the confidence of the individual teacher. If there is a common language to discuss and develop an understanding of the management of pupils' behaviour then the amount of control through experience alone would not intimidate Newly Qualified Teachers who would be more likely to recognise the problems they were having and be open in discussion with their colleagues and mentors. As an example of the grids facilitating a 'language for behaviour', figure 39 shows the richness of Kelly's (1955) bipolarity of constructs.

Figure 39: NQT 3's constructs 2003 /2004

2003	2003
Enthusiastic in teaching area	Enthusiastic in general
Very supportive / positive attitude	Unsupportive / negative attitude
Consistent approach	Inconsistent approach
Looks for and accentuates positive	Does not look for positive
Shows interest in others	Self-centred
Gives responsibility for pupils' own learning	Doesn't provide opportunities for this to happen
Shows pupils respect	Shows little respect for pupils
2004	2004
Flexible approach to discipline	Rigid approach to discipline
Strong support for pupils and staff	Support for pupils and staff not evident
Clear boundaries and expectations	Inconsistent and unclear boundaries
Work to support whole school issues	Follows own agenda
Willing to take on advice re: D,C,S.*	Lack of acknowledgement that D,C,S needs improvement
Acknowledges the need for on-going communication re. D,C,S.	Would not instigate or volunteer ideas around this notion
Sends clear, consistent messages re: D,C,S	Unclear messages, inconsistency

*DCS – Discipline, Control and Support

In the space of about twenty to thirty minutes (in each grid session) the constructs in figure 39 were elicited from NQT 3. The grid elicitation procedure on its own was an impressive interview tool. I am confident in suggesting that if I had sat down with NQT 3 and said 'How are things? / What are the issues?' we would not have arrived at something so significant so quickly. The left hand column reads like an extract from a behaviour text with regard to proactive teacher behaviour! Although the focus was clearly on *teacher* behaviour, discussions on the impact of this on *pupils'* behaviour led to a variety of anecdotes about incidents that had been handled well and those which needed some thought and reflection.

At these times practical strategies and techniques were considered which inevitably involved issues regarding teacher - pupil interaction. Techniques of laddering, (through asking 'why?' questions) indicated critical values of each NQTs' value systems and helped them identify constructs that were particularly important to them. Ratings on these constructs led them to consider the advantages of staying where they were or if movement was necessary. Pyramiding gave more specific information at a different level from the original construct (stimulated by the question 'what?' or 'how?').

The purpose of the grids was twofold: they were used to illicit the constructions of the NQTs and used as a powerful tool to enhance discussion about teacher-pupil interaction, thus identifying a catalyst for open ended conversations. They also provided an opportunity for a dialogue and collaboration of ideas and reflection on possibilities for change and progress. The grids allowed them to challenge their initial perceptions about the management of pupils' behaviour and explore the potential of alternative views.

It is important to realise that the grids only provide information for structural/content analysis – they do not provide *solutions* to *problems*. What they did provide however was an illumination of the importance of *teacher* behaviour and how this can impact on *pupil* behaviour. It is after all the *quality* of the relationship between teacher and pupil that brings about the largest factor for change. Pupils exhibiting disruptive and challenging behaviour may have few, if any, quality relationships in their lives:

'I am not convinced that pupils, certainly those having no quality relationship in their lives, always put themselves out industriously for neutral, longer-term and noble incentives, such as education opening doors of opportunity, but they do so for their teachers, particularly those with whom they have a wholesome relationship' (Lines, 2003, p.33).

Additionally it was important to be aware of systems of ongoing support for the NQTs. I was aware that appraising one's construing of people and/or events had the potential to be unsettling and thus ongoing empathetic support was needed throughout this period. Overall however the repertory grid technique was an interview tool which provided an opportunity for a dialogue and collaboration of ideas and reflections on possibilities for change and progress within the management of pupils' behaviour. Properly applied PCP respects individuality and allows an in-depth view of participants' perceptions, judgments and values. Bell (1999) reminds us that teaching is part art, part technique and part personality and character. In the management of pupils' behaviour teachers have often to dig deep into their own private resources to reach out to and inspire reluctant learners. They can also, through the use of tools from PCP, learn better how to proceed, how to evaluate their own effectiveness and how and why to make changes.

The NQTs in my research identified problems, elaborated on how their own behaviour was contributing to the problem and discussed possible resolutions. In my view PCP tools have the potential to *transform* ideas rather than simply enhance or extend them. The NQTs developed alternative ways of looking at their management of pupils' behaviour which resulted in productive change. This created a concept of 'hope'. Havel (1993) states that hope is not the same as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless of how it turns out. Fullan (1998) considers that teachers with hope are much less likely to succumb to the daily stresses of the job and, especially important, they set the tone for others. The result of this culture of 'hope' within the grid sessions and tutorials was an atmosphere open to ideas which encouraged innovation and initiative. There was a willingness to learn and an enthusiasm to progress and develop. The PCP tools used in my research encouraged the engagement of the NQTs with their own learning in contexts that made learning not only relevant but necessary. New ideas were constantly

examined, both from received wisdom and those from their personal theories and assumptions. Thoughts were clarified and self-managed change became a viable option. Having the freedom to explore different avenues became a liberating experience and one which helped them chart their way through their first year in teaching, revealing aspects of their personal and professional growth.

As the NQTs strived to apprehend the wide range of disruptive and challenging behaviour during their induction year they were confronted by a diversity of responses which reflected the unique ways in which humans create meanings from their past. It is my belief that Personal Construct Theory provides tools which are individualised enough, broad enough, flexible enough and above all respectful enough to aid the reflection, analysis and understanding of the management of pupils' behaviour.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 My personal approach to interpretivism and its development over the journey of the PhD

In the introduction to this thesis I outlined my perspective on interpretive research in which I voiced the view that most knowledge is an interpretation of experience. Throughout this research it has been clearly evident that in the management of pupils' behaviour teachers construct personal meanings about circumstances and events and react accordingly. The experience of conducting this research has created a personal insight into my theoretical approach towards interpretivism which informed me as an educational researcher and justified my research methodology, principles and consequent research practices that constituted this final thesis.

My journey as an interpretive researcher over the last five years has involved me coming to grips with an aspect of the social world where people have their own perspectives, intentions, feelings and emotions. Education, and specifically the management of pupils' behaviour, is part of my social world and my research has focused on the thoughts and actions of individuals within this aspect of the educational arena. My research approach has centrally incorporated the notion of creative individuals at the heart of social interactionism. Having this theory to frame my analysis and identify key concepts enabled me to conceptualise what I was seeing and hearing. I gained confidence from a realisation that I was not collecting data in a theoretical void. As time went on concepts were illuminated which gave me a framework in which to formulate ideas about what was happening.

I recognised the fact that teachers interpret the meaning of processes and practices within their lessons and they construct forms of action as a result of that interpretation. In the pilot study for example, whilst observing 'snapshots' of lessons in mainstream secondary schools there was a salutary reminder that some lessons can be stimulating, encouraging, well-paced and interactive and some can be none of these. What gave importance, value and vitality to each person's teaching style and interaction with the pupils was their personal style of communication and action and I

suggest that it is precisely this or the absence of it, which is the real substance of the management of pupils' behaviour.

Teachers have been at the forefront throughout my research, interacting, negotiating and having influence on the pupils and classes with which they are involved. It was necessary for me, throughout this research, to grapple with the relationships between the valuing, meaning-attributing human and the institutions and organisations which they inhabited. The notion of the NQTs in phase two of my research as active agents, participating in a dynamic, changing world of interaction framed within a very specific context, came to encapsulate my theoretical approach to interpretivism and captured the spirit in which I work. The NQTs in my research all had different constructions as individuals about the management of pupils' behaviour and my research has principally involved me 'getting to know' their constructions about this very important aspect of their practice. In order to do this there had to be a particular relationship between myself and the NQTs. I approached them at all times with respect and sensitivity and as a result came to understand their approach to the management of pupils' behaviour by researching their experiences.

Through the interaction between myself, as the investigator and others, as the investigated, particularly in phases 1b and 2, meanings were constructed and interpreted. My social world during the research became a conversational world. There is clearly no direct route to the experiences of others and it is not possible to ever really know how someone else feels but as my research progressed, through empathetic understanding, I dialogued, conversed and shared experiences with the NQTs. As my research unfolded I came to realise that it is how people *apply* the knowledge, that becomes their way of operating in the world that impacts on how they behave and what they do. As an interpretive researcher I came to believe and understand that I can articulate and interpret my experiences in the management of pupils' behaviour and therefore consequently believe that others can 'explain' themselves to me. I began to recognise personal prejudices, thoughts and feelings which could cloud the perception of the NQTs' experiences. We can of course never lose subjectivity but as my research progressed I came to realise that by recognising and acknowledging our own myths and prejudices we can more effectively put them in

their place. This greater self knowledge also helped me to separate my thoughts from those of my research participants, be less judgemental and come to appreciate experiences that may deviate from my own.

Taking responsibility for this thesis from inception to fruition has been a very personal journey and one in which I have been involved with watching, listening, asking and recording. I have honed my knowledge as a data collector, observer, note-taker and interviewer whilst at all times bringing my knowledge and intellect to the proceedings. The expressive characters of action and speech were often so subtle that a developing, perceptive eye and informed mind were needed to recognise their significance. As Eisner (1988) suggests, balance, trade-off, context and other features of social life must be considered if the interpretation of socially shared meanings is to have validity.

As I sorted through and analysed the data, although I used tools to assist me in this process, I acknowledge that it was myself, as the researcher, that was constantly making sense of things and making decisions about the next steps. I cannot remove my own way of seeing things but I did, at all times, engage reflexively in the process and was aware of my interpretive framework. At the beginning of the research I was conscious that reflexivity is related to subjectivity and of my possible effect on the research process and its participants. Initially, it was difficult to unravel these influences but I believe I have become more aware of them and as a consequence understood them better. My personal journey through this research process has led to a clear understanding of my own views on the management of pupils' behaviour and resulted in my keeping a critical distance from the data and my own embedded assumptions.

One of the main incentives for embarking on this research was that I was looking for an opportunity to further my understanding about the management of pupils' behaviour. I believe that I now have insights which I did not have previously and I also believe that the NQTs in phase 2 of my research have so too. The ability to articulate these insights will secure a new direction for my professional practice at the 'chalk face' and in my delivery of in-service training. Researching from an interpretive

premise has given me tools to further my understanding, as it has engaged me in articulating my own and others' reflections on practice.

10.2 Findings

Findings from the pilot study, referred to in chapter 2, highlight how one teacher's behaviour can be very different from another. The implications of pro-active, positive teacher behaviour e.g. praising, smiling, flexible approach, judicial ignoring, firm, fair, consistent etc. contrasted sharply with those teachers displaying negative behaviours towards their pupils e.g. constantly bringing attention to and therefore reinforcing inappropriate behaviour, not taking opportunities to praise and encourage pupils and using verbal threats e.g. detentions etc. It is to be expected that pupils will be faced with a variety of personalities and teaching styles over the course of their weekly timetable. However, in my view, there are clearly some teachers who may benefit from a re-appraisal of their perceptions and attitudes towards their management of pupils' behaviour. This, I would argue, is a skill that some teachers may have inherently but in others needs to be supported and encouraged.

Responses from university tutors regarding the *content* of the behaviour management input on PGCE courses (referred to in chapter 3) suggest that there is a distinct emphasis on how to manage *pupils'* behaviour as opposed to *teachers'* behaviour. Consistent 'topics' across the responding universities involve planning and organisation for discipline, rewards and sanctions and classroom management. The most popular *approach* to learning about the management of pupils' behaviour in the responding universities is the permeation model (this was confirmed by NQTs in the focus group interviews). Although this model undoubtedly has its merits in terms of recognising that behaviour management does indeed permeate all teaching subjects and situations, I have concerns about a dilution of instruction and varying degrees of emphasis depending on the interest, enthusiasm and ability of subject tutors. Additionally, collective responsibility for the management of pupils' behaviour, without *specific* monitoring and assessment, may allow some student teachers to move forward with ineffective ideas and strategies that can quickly become entrenched into their daily practice. This notion may contribute towards the tension (reported in chapter

4) relating to the considerable 'mismatch' between what is learnt about the management of pupils' behaviour in training and what NQTs find is required in actual practice.

Lifetime experiences of the purpose and structure of education are likely to have contributed to an NQT's perception of discipline, control and support and their resultant management of pupils' behaviour. Although the difficulty has been acknowledged of entirely escaping our perspectives derived from our past experiences, Kelly (1955) challenges the notion that we are victims of our past. Through the use of tools within PCP, the NQTs in phase 2 of my research came to realise and understand that their current hypotheses were open to gradual challenge and possible invalidation and that their learning was a dynamic and creative process. In order for this to happen it was vital that their perceptions, attitudes and judgments were articulated. Without this articulation how could their ideas be challenged, negotiated or changed? How could a dialogue exist where strategies could be suggested, put to the test and examined? Arguably, the NQTs in my research may neither have been aware of their own theories about the management of pupils' behaviour nor that there were any alternatives until they were unearthed and challenged.

In the management of pupils' behaviour, unless NQTs are engaged at a *personal* level they may not identify with the content. During the grid interviews the NQTs engaged in theorising about discipline, control and support by making their reasoning explicit, exploring alternatives, extracting underlying principles and testing out their reconstructions against practice. The grid interviews provided a way for the NQTs to see things differently or to use Kelly's (1955) language, to make 'alternative constructions'. The therapeutic qualities of PCP potentially provide a way for a dialogical construction of knowledge to be developed that can contribute to a broader view of the management of pupils' behaviour. However, this does not come easily and in the process there must be something of a dialogical concern, something that causes the NQTs to think again, for them to look back on a behavioural 'incident' in order to see it differently.

Each NQT completed a grid at the beginning of their induction year and then engaged in their daily practice which involved many situations requiring behaviour management. They then completed a second grid at the *end* of their induction year when personal changes in construing were evident (referred to in chapter 8). The NQTs reported that the experience of talking about their perceptions, judgments and attitudes about behaviour management during the grid interviews was helpful in focusing and clarifying their thoughts. They acknowledged the importance of being prepared to consider their own theories if they were to become reflective and autonomous practitioners.

During my research I saw a complex process of change in the NQTs' personal theories in which they developed, tested and reconstructed their own hypotheses about the management of pupils' behaviour (examples of which are documented in chapter 8). At times the confrontation with their own constructs was a challenging experience. However, the NQTs' active involvement in the research process encouraged them to have a greater awareness of their own personal theories about the management of pupils' behaviour and themselves as teachers. The reflective atmosphere created by the self-characterization sketches and the repertory grids was important in that there was a clear opportunity to give 'voice' to each of the NQTs.

The NQTs in my research learnt about the management of pupils' behaviour by generating constructs which were related to the way they felt about the particular behavioural event they had been faced with and how they felt about and responded to similar events. This meant that learning was likely to be an emotional or affective process. Anticipations were successively revised as events were encountered and their construct system progressively evolved. By making explicit the constructs that an NQT holds regarding a behavioural 'incident' then comparing those constructs to another NQTs' constructs may allow a sharing of meaning which could lead to changes in each participant's construct system. By actively encouraging the construing of construct systems of others, the promotion of social involvement in their own and others' learning is a viable possibility.

The learning approach used in phase two of my research was well grounded in PCP and because it was successful it can claim that Kelly's (1955) ideas regarding learning and meaning have some validity in the context of the management of pupils' behaviour. Tools within PCP have a number of *notable* strengths that, used with care, can uncover perspectives which may otherwise remain neglected. These include the ability to:

- provide a structure in which to facilitate an intense examination of individual thoughts
- encourage the articulation of personal behaviour
- illuminate the primacy of individual perspectives
- promote self-directed change
- provide a direction for learning
- identify assumptions and create an opportunity to challenge them
- enhance a 'language for behaviour'
- encourage the sharing of perceptions and judgments with others
- develop reflective skills that facilitate pedagogical decision making

A personal construct approach to the management of pupils' behaviour can be successful in facilitating the translation of formal, abstract thinking into NQTs' own set of meanings. For example, through a PCP approach the concept of firmness, fairness and consistency, with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour, would not be rote learned but meanings related to these concepts would be constructed through discussion of ideas. This would result in NQTs constructing their own personal theories with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour, expressible in their own language, which is capable of being shared with others. Clearly, this personally constructed knowledge is more likely to be enacted in everyday practice and to remain as part of the NQTs' knowledge system than that acquired through rote learning.

The dialogical process used in my research encouraged the NQTs to reflexively re-order their narratives in the light of new experiences. During the elicitation process in the repertory grid interviews the NQTs' increasingly flexible thought processes began to match the contours of their personal development, challenged by the ever-

demanding disruptive and challenging behaviour that they were facing on a daily basis. Their re-construed professional knowledge and personal theories which occurred within this research are consistent with Kelly's (1955) assertion that the most obvious of human occurrences can be transformed if we are inventive enough to construe them differently. The reflexivity inherent within the tools of PCP provides the impetus for facilitating this notion (highlighted in chapter 9). The case studies in my research illustrate that this can be a very personal journey and one that obviously does not lead to the same degree of change in all persons (referred to in chapter 8).

10.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical concerns emerged throughout my research as I sought to seek access to organisations and individuals, collect, analyse and report my data. I needed to consider ethical positions at each phase of the research process, constantly remaining sensitive to the impact of my work on those whom I approached to help and those who provided access and cooperation. Each phase of the research contains clear and succinct information about what I did to address the ethical considerations at the time with reference to several appendices. In this final evaluation of the ethics of my research I refer to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) revised guidelines for ethical research (2004) and draw upon Oxford Brookes University's ethical guidance on research involving human participants (2004).

Throughout the different phases in my research I was dependent on other people for access and information. As Wells (1994, p.290) states 'In general the closer the research is to actual individuals in real-world settings, the more likely are ethical questions to be raised'. Additionally, as a researcher in organisational settings I was keenly aware that I needed to be sensitive to the fact that my presence was a temporary one, whereas the people from whom I was collecting data would be working together after my departure. With regard to voluntary informed consent the BERA guidelines (2004 no. 11) state that 'Researchers must take the steps necessary to ensure that all participants in the research understand the process in which they are to be engaged, including why their participation is necessary, how it

will be used and to whom it will be reported'. The dual roles I had in the pilot phase (trainer-researcher) and phase two (mentor-researcher) initially looked set to provide additional tensions. However in practice, each of the roles balanced each other. During the pilot phase for example the attention I gave to the data gathered from the observations ensured a particularly focussed presentation related to the specific needs of each of the establishments. During phase two the relationship I built up with each of the NQTs through my mentoring role enhanced my researcher role and vice versa (this notion is expanded upon in chapter 5).

Throughout phase two I shared aspects of fellow professionals' experiences. Kelly (1985, p.147) advises researchers to be clear about what is 'the pursuit of trust and maintenance of trust' in order to sustain the collaboration that is required between the researcher and the researched, rather than over emphasising the researcher's interests. This was sound advice to which I adhered closely.

In phases 1b (Focus Group discussions) and two (Linked Case Studies) the participants were given the opportunity to verify comments and statements when the research was in draft form. Copies of the Network Analysis were sent to the participating NQTs for comment (phase 1b) and in phase two the analysis of the self characterisation sketches and grids were always carried out with the NQTs present and therefore verified immediately in the presence of the NQT concerned. The linked case studies in phase two meant that my relationship with the NQTs lasted for one academic year. Throughout this time I was very conscious that I needed to take constant steps to reduce any sense of intrusion and put them at their ease. I was also aware of the 'bureaucratic burden' (BERA guidelines, 2004, no. 19) in phase two and therefore sought to minimise the impact of my research on their normal workload. Finally, in terms of my withdrawal from my relationship with the NQTs, this was cushioned by the fact that I continue to have professional responsibilities with the institution concerned on a weekly basis. I therefore have kept close contact with all four NQTs and watch their professional growth with interest and enthusiasm.

10.4 Policy

The writing of this final chapter coincides with the launch of the Government's White Paper *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, 2005b) and the implementation stage of the *Every Child Matters* (ECM) agenda (Great Britain. Department for Education and Skills, 2003). The ECM agenda endorses an interactionist perspective (refer to section 1.18) and is a proactive and encouraging document. The management of pupils' behaviour has much to contribute to 'enjoying and achieving' and 'making a positive contribution' (two of the five outcomes in the ECM report that mattered most to children and young people). This interactionist perspective and proactive style is in stark contrast to the Government's White Paper. Disappointingly, yet again a major report emerges with a focus on *pupils'* behaviour. Much confidence is placed in the White Paper on the findings of the Report of the Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline '*Learning Behaviour*' (Great Britain. Department for Education and Skills, 2005c) which has amongst its *main* recommendations: a legal right for teachers to discipline and restrain pupils; parenting orders; sanctions for misbehaviour; powers of headteachers to exclude; zero tolerance for both serious and low level disruptive behaviour and a right to search pupils. Unfortunately, there is no reference to the importance of *teacher* behaviour in the management of *pupils'* behaviour.

Although these recommendations will be welcomed by some and, sadly, may be relevant in some contexts, they are somewhat *reactive* in nature, and clearly put the emphasis on *pupils'* behaviour. In this sense the White Paper has not moved on from the Elton Report (1989). However, there is a gesture towards a consideration of the behaviour of others (assuming 'skills and understanding' means 'behaviour'!) highlighted in the Report of the Practitioners' Group on School Behaviour and Discipline '*Learning Behaviour*' (Great Britain. Department for Education and Skills, 2005c section 3, paragraph 87):

'There is a need for a continuous emphasis on the development of skills and understanding of teachers, teaching assistants, classroom supervisors and all those in contact with and capable of affecting the lives of pupils during the school day'.

In addition it is stated that 'more specialist training should be available for those who lead on behaviour management' (section 3, paragraph 88). I would recommend that this includes not just lead behaviour professionals but ITT lecturers, school mentors and induction tutors. This is clearly a further area for research and development.

10.5 Recommendations

Learning about the management of pupils' behaviour should be a continual process of hypothesis testing framed by a detailed and reflective analysis. I propose that the induction year is the optimum time to engage in this process when daily experience at the 'chalk face' will arguably be bringing to the surface NQTs' perceptions, attitudes and judgments. The implications are that this would encourage NQTs' immediate understanding of their own problems and needs in order to give direction and purpose to their search for helpful ideas from other sources.

MacIntyre (1993) would, presumably, support this notion regarding sustained periods of reflection best being facilitated during the *induction year*. He clearly states that there is a limited role for reflection in *initial teacher training* due to it taking 'two thirds of the year before most student teachers have learned enough about the complexities of classroom teaching to be able meaningfully to attempt to relate their classroom practice to their educational values' (p.45). Additionally, the way in which ITT has been restructured with its heavy emphasis on curriculum elements has inevitably restricted the time available to provide information and debate on the principles and practices of behaviour management. In this race against time for the acquisition of standards, issues relating to perceptions, judgments and attitudes are, perhaps understandably, not a priority, due to a steep learning curve for student teachers during their initial teacher training.

Most certainly the induction year is a very pertinent time for reflection as NQTs embark upon their first teaching post with technically the same responsibilities as more experienced teachers. As a consequence, it is a very rich learning experience, in which sustained periods of reflection within supportive structures are essential. The

implementation of a reflective NQT programme on the management of pupils' behaviour is not without its difficulties however. Creating a framework that helps NQTs to become more analytical about their practice is potentially a task with a number of inherent dilemmas. The goals of reflective teaching are extremely ambitious – what is reasonable to achieve in the induction year? What are the implications for the training of induction tutors? How can trained induction tutors foster reflection about the management of pupils' behaviour when in schools much greater importance appears to be attached to immediate, spontaneous action rather than to reflection and evaluation? These questions would form the basis of further research and development.

Recommendations arising from this research for induction tutors are that NQTs need assistance in making public both their espoused theories and their theories in use. It simply is not good enough to let them practise in field settings and then tell them what they are doing right and wrong. They need to be encouraged to state their proposed solutions to problems of practice and the rationale underlying their actual implementation of the solution in the classroom. Working from these understandings of teacher knowledge and practice, it would seem highly appropriate for induction tutors to facilitate the thinking of the newly qualified teacher on the inherited knowledge that constructs their personal theories about the management of pupils' behaviour, as well as the professional knowledge that informs the art of teaching.

Additionally, I would recommend that there should be a focus on NQTs' propensity for critical self-reflection about the management of pupils' behaviour and looking at ways of assessing this robustly. The Career Entry and Development Profile (CEDP) exists to provide a mechanism for NQTs to develop their individual path of professional learning and development. It does not, therefore, have a central role in the assessment of the induction year. However, I would recommend that during the professional discussions that each NQT has with their induction tutor (using the profile at each of the three transition points)¹, time is given to the NQT's critical self reflection about the management of pupils' behaviour (a further recommendation would be that the

¹ Transition point one takes place at the end of the ITT year coinciding with the award of QTS; transition point 2 takes place at the beginning of the Induction year and transition point 3 occurs during the last half term of the Induction year.

questions for guidance at each of the transition stages mention behaviour management *specifically*). This act of self-reflection during the transition points in the CEDP would then prepare the NQT for the three *formal* assessment meetings held towards the end of each term with the induction tutor or Headteacher. A further recommendation is that the NQT's ability to reflect about their management of pupils' behaviour is again assessed *specifically* at these three formal assessment meetings and recorded under one of the three headings² on the induction form.

Teacher development is not about providing new ideas but helping teachers choose their own (by giving them the opportunity to reflect on the assumptions they make about their work), thus enhancing the possibility of promoting development from *within* each individual rather than trying to impose it from without. If *development opportunities* for the extended professional and reflective teacher are put in place, then *sustainable* development is a viable proposition.

Recommendations arising from this study are that during their induction year NQTs will need:

- opportunities to articulate their perceptions, attitudes and judgments about the management of pupils' behaviour
- a forum in which to reflect upon their *personal theories* regarding discipline, control and support
- encouragement to develop a 'language for behaviour' which will support the reflective process
- substantial access to the theories of others in order to compare and contrast with their own
- guidance and support throughout this reflective process when their current hypotheses may be open to gradual change and possible invalidation
- frequent discussions on how their *own* behaviour may affect their *pupils'* behaviour

² The three headings on the induction assessment form are: Professional Values and Practice, Knowledge and Understanding and Teaching.

Induction tutors will need:

- proven expertise in the management of pupils' behaviour
- an ability to provide opportunities for NQTs to articulate their perceptions, attitudes and judgments about the management of pupils' behaviour
- training in the use of elicitation tools from PCP
- an ability to be supportive and encouraging to emerging issues
- a belief in the importance of promoting development from *within* each individual
- an awareness and understanding of how *teacher* behaviour can impact on pupil behaviour

10.6 Concluding Comments

The major theme throughout this research is that NQTs' learning about the management of pupils' behaviour must integrate concerns about their professional practice with their own personal views and commitments. Facilitating NQT thinking, relating to the management of pupils' behaviour, through PCP, encourages the re-examination of ideas, both from received wisdom and those composed of personal theories and assumptions. It enhances a self-conscious assessment from a personal and professional viewpoint, promoting a reinterpretation of knowledge. Certainly, from my experience in phase 2 with the NQTs during their induction year, tools within PCP enabled them to visualise how their own development should proceed.

The learning conversations that followed the completion of the self characterization sketches and the repertory grids provided a comprehensive picture of the NQTs' personal constructions regarding discipline, control and support. Overall, the research became very practically focused as I and the NQTs gained new knowledge and understanding through a dialogical process. The NQTs learnt about what they knew and what they believed in. They also learnt what they did not know. Additionally they formed a self-identity through the knowledge that they themselves constructed. This construction process was in a framework that allowed them to develop within a context but based on their personal beliefs and professional understandings. I would argue

that such flexibility legitimates a plurality in teacher development that can inspire the newly qualified teacher.

Although this research has focused on NQTs and the induction year it has brought into focus issues regarding the management of pupils' behaviour during initial teacher training. As a consequence I propose that the content of initial teacher training programmes in relation to the management of pupils' behaviour should start from 'problems of practice'. I would suggest that most of these 'problems' will fall into the broad category of social interactionism (referred to in section 1.19) and the *quality* of interaction that takes place between teachers and pupils (referred to in section 1.20). Felson and Tedeschi (1993) propose that people are concerned about the quality of treatment that they receive from others in social interactions and refer to an individual's sensitivity to respectful treatment as an aspect of interaction justice. I consider that this social interactionist perspective is an extremely pertinent notion in the management of pupils' behaviour, deserves a high profile during initial training programmes and leads neatly into a focus on *teacher* behaviour and how this may affect positive teacher-pupil interaction.

While it is important that skills required for the effective management of pupils' behaviour are addressed on ITT courses and students are provided with underpinning theory to support their developing practice as teachers, *individual needs* of student teachers must also be addressed. Whilst it would be difficult to make changes to an already overcrowded PGCE year, consideration should be given as to how students can address their own individual needs based on a discussion of their strengths and areas needing work on. This will need to include explicit encouragement for student teachers to share their experiences and help each other and ostensibly to develop their reflective abilities.

During initial teacher training foundations could be laid in which a 'mindset' (ready for development in the induction year) is created which develops a common language for talking about the behaviour of *teachers* as well as pupils. This should be discussed in the early stages of training in order that student teachers begin to realise the significant contribution that their *own* behaviour can have on the management of their

pupils' behaviour. Initial teacher trainers should be aware that the student teachers will require support in this area (we need to move on from Elton, 1989 and the recent White Paper 2005b). This will entail talking confidently and unashamedly about *teacher* behaviour and the impact this can have in every classroom in every school; furthermore that the responsibility lies with the *teacher* to forge a proactive relationship with pupils and classes.

It is acknowledged that the management of pupils' behaviour, for some teachers, is a complex process of change in their personal theories involving development, testing and reconstruction. These personal theories need to be unearthed in order that NQTs in particular can gain insight into their perceptions about the management of pupils' behaviour. Once it is accepted that the best way forward in learning about this crucial aspect of their profession is that it is something that NQTs need to do for *themselves*, not the product of something which is done to them, then I would argue that significant progress would occur regarding the management of pupils' behaviour in mainstream schools.

Teaching, more than most occupations, is one that depends heavily on the quality of personal interactions. The *personal* development that this involves is as important as the professional development that is aimed at within the QTS and Induction Standards. Facilitating NQT thinking, most importantly about their *own* behaviour, may well be the best long-term investment that can be made, laying the foundations for good practice on which future generations of teachers can build.

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Appendix A: Overview of Fieldwork

Fieldwork	Date and Duration	People involved	Location	My involvement	Data gathered
Pilot Study (Baseline observations)	January / February 2003 Duration: 10 days (5 schools, 2 days in each)	Teachers and pupils	Five mainstream secondary schools	Observer / Researcher for research and INSET purposes as each of the schools involved received training on behaviour management - a reciprocal arrangement	Top ten most frequently recorded pupil and teacher behaviours (using a coding scheme) Refer to chapter 2
National Survey	March – June 2003 Duration: throughout this period	Secondary PGCE Directors of Studies, Heads of Departments, Course Directors, Course/Programme Leaders	Universities and Institutes of Higher Education in England and Wales offering the secondary PGCE course	Researcher 75 institutions were emailed requesting information about the PGCE course that they were responsible for	Response to set questions (sent to all institutions) concerning behaviour management input on secondary PGCE courses Refer to chapter 3
Focus Groups	September 2003 Duration: throughout this period	25 NQTs (working in six schools) in the first term of their Induction Year	Six mainstream secondary schools Each focus group contained NQTs who were working together in the school in which the focus group was held	Researcher / Focus Group facilitator	Transcripts of Focus Groups Refer to chapter 4
Linked Case Studies	September '03 – October '04 Duration: throughout this period	4 NQTs throughout their Induction Year all working in the same school	A mainstream secondary school	Mentor / Researcher	Information regarding the NQTs' perceptions, attitudes and judgments about discipline, control and support Refer to chapter 5

Appendix B2

Letter to schools in which observations were taking place

Dear colleague,

I have been asked by members of the SMT to provide INSET on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. This will take the form of a presentation and workshops lasting a whole day. In order to ensure that the training meets the needs of ***** school myself and a colleague will carry out observations of classes over a two day period in January / February (date to be confirmed). This will involve 15 minute observations of lessons covering all subjects and key stages. A coding scheme will be used in which both pupil and teacher behaviours will be recorded (attached) leading to an overall indication of the frequency of behaviours. The results of the observations will be integrated into the training and pertinent issues will be highlighted but they will be de-personalised at all times.

Additionally, the results of the observations may be used for research purposes as I am presently involved in research in the management of pupils' behaviour. I wish to make clear that any information from the observations, used for research purposes, will be kept strictly confidential and anonymity will be ensured with regard to the collection, storage and publication of any research material.

Taking part in the observation schedule is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time on the day of the observations without giving a reason. Results of the observations will be communicated on the INSET day and it is hoped that the information gleaned from the observations will lead to an identification of pertinent issues and discussion of strategies to alleviate them.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions about the INSET or research at any time. Myself and my colleague look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix C: Research Instruments

Copy of initial e-mail sent to Universities and Institutes of Higher Education in the national survey

For the attention of: (key contact identified prior to e-mail)

Please forward to the most appropriate person if you are unable to reply yourself – thank you.

I am currently involved in PhD research, at Oxford Brookes University, concerning how secondary PGCE courses address the issue of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. I am hoping to establish a completely anonymous overview of provision regarding this issue in universities and institutes of higher education in England and Wales.

In order to achieve some consistency in response please would it be possible to give me a brief outline of the behaviour management input on your secondary PGCE course in line with the following questions:

1. How is the issue of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour incorporated into your course?
2. What kinds of issue are addressed?
3. How much time is allocated to these issues?

If it is difficult to respond in the terms outlined above please reply in the most suitable format. May I stress that all information received will be treated confidentially and any reference in my research to information received is guaranteed anonymity.

A response would be very much appreciated.

Thank you

Appendix D: Research Instruments

Copy of *follow-up* e-mail sent to Universities and Institutes of Higher Education in the national survey

For the attention of:

You may remember that I wrote to you recently regarding my PhD research on how secondary PGCE courses address the issue of the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. I am hoping to obtain an anonymous overview of current models of provision within universities and institutes of higher education in England and Wales.

The institutions that have replied to date have indicated various models of provision for behaviour management:

- A. specific university-based lectures on behaviour management with titles such as classroom climate and classroom craft etc.
- B. permeation model i.e. indicating that behaviour management is incorporated within subject study areas
- C. lecture inputs on behaviour management 'bought in' from specialist consultants
- D. a combination of A, B and C

Please could you indicate whether your provision identifies with any of the above or if you have another model to add? I would be very grateful if you could find time to respond and any further clarification would be much appreciated. Could I stress again that all information will be treated anonymously.

Many thanks

Appendix E1

Letter to focus group participants

Dear colleague,

I have been given permission from your Headteacher to invite you to take part in an informal discussion about the management of pupils' behaviour with other NQTs from your school.

I am a teacher currently involved in Doctoral research at Oxford Brookes University and I am wanting to establish the nature of the behaviour management input on your PGCE course. I will be interested in hearing you discuss with the other NQTs your concerns about the training, the methods which had the most impact, how you think the PGCE course could be improved and if you felt equipped to embark on your induction year with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour.

I can assure you that all information collected in the discussions will be kept strictly confidential and anonymity will be ensured with regard to the collection, storage and publication of research material. You will all have the opportunity to verify comments and statements when the research is in draft form. Taking part in these discussions however is entirely voluntary and if you decide to take part at this stage you are still free to withdraw at any time without explanation. I anticipate the discussion taking no longer than 45 minutes and for those who are willing to take part, the discussion will take place within school time as your Headteacher has kindly agreed to arrange cover for this activity. I will confirm the date in the next few weeks.

If you have any questions about this discussion please feel free to contact me at any time on *****. If I am unavailable when you ring I will return your call as soon as it is convenient.

If you are willing to take part please would you sign the attached tear off portion of this letter and return in the SAE within the next seven days. Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

I am willing / not willing (please delete as necessary) to take place in an informal discussion about the behaviour management input on my PGCE course. I understand that all information will be kept confidential and my own anonymity, along with that of my training establishment, is guaranteed with regard to any information discussed during the meeting. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my acceptance to be involved at any time without reason.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix E2: Research Instruments

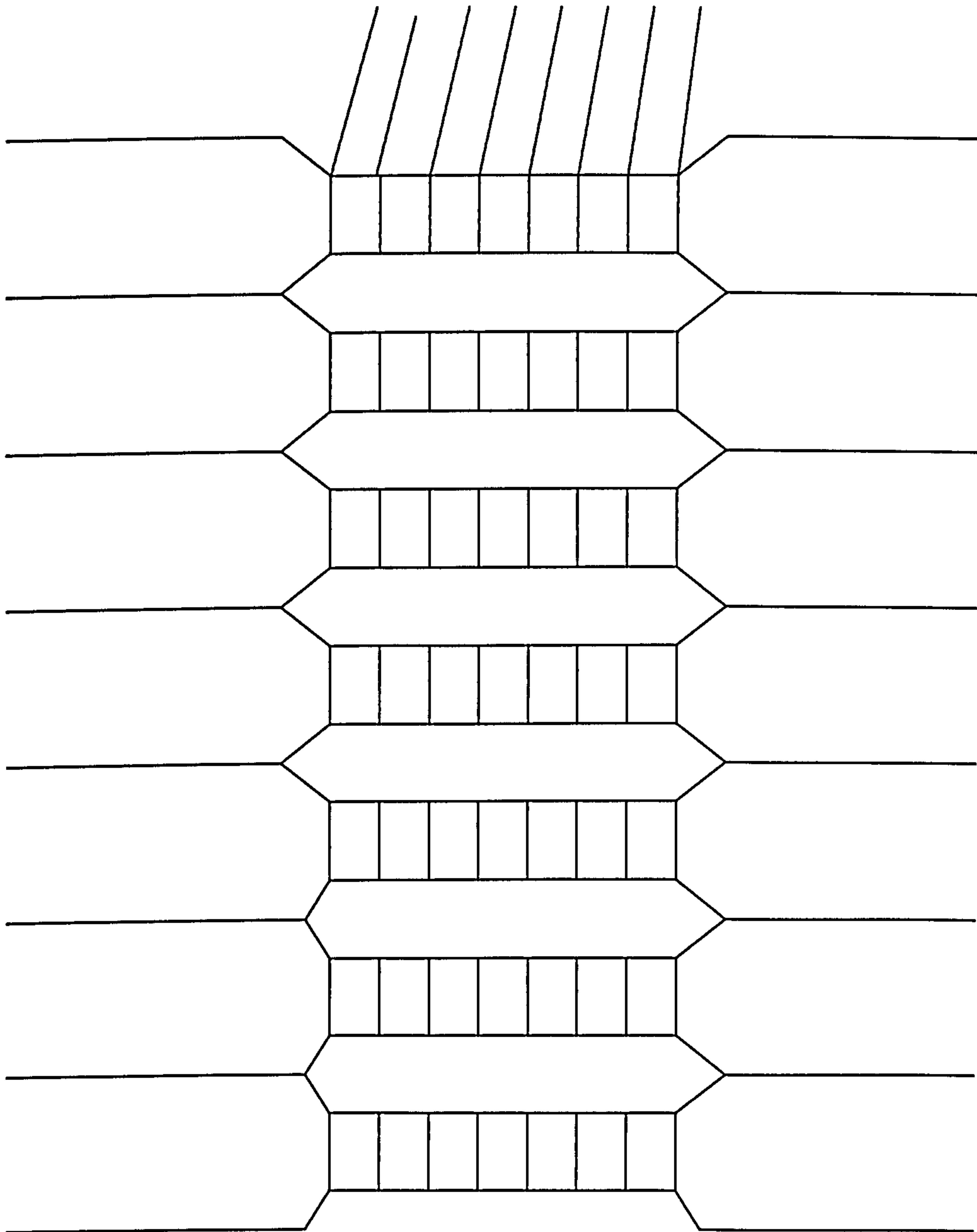
Questions for Focus Group discussions

1. How much input did you have on the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?
2. What was the specific content of the behaviour management input?
3. In your personal opinion, which methods of training on the PGCE course made most impression on you regarding the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?
4. Do you think the PGCE course has equipped you to manage pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour in your first teaching post? (If not, how could it have been improved?)
5. What are your present concerns about the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour?
6. What kind of difficulties do you have to deal with on a regular basis?
7. What useful strategies did you learn on your PGCE course?
8. How could the course be improved?
9. What further training and support do you need in this area?

Appendix F: Research Instruments

Blank Repertory Grid

Topic



Appendix G

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: *The Management of Pupils' Disruptive and Challenging Behaviour: facilitating Newly Qualified Teacher Thinking through Personal Construct Psychology*

1. You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.
2. This research aims to investigate how NQTs reflect on their interaction with pupils. It will focus on the nature of these interactions, how they influence their actions and beliefs and ultimately whether acts of self-reflection engaged in by NQTs enhance their management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour.
3. Your school was chosen due to my knowledge of the institution and therefore the ease of access. You are one of the four NQTs at the school who is being invited to participate in my study. Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
4. If you decide to take part we will meet twice every half term. These meetings will sometimes involve me observing you in class followed by a short discussion, or may be a longer discussion without a prior observation. In either format you will be asked to reflect on your management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. This reflection will be enhanced by highlighting specific incidents that have created some difficulty or surprise, or things that haven't worked out as expected, either negative or positive. I will also be available to discuss any issues in between our meetings over the telephone.
5. During this research I will have a dual role as mentor/researcher. Your reflections about your management of pupils' behaviour will be an integral part of my research. These reflections may cause you occasional anxiety when relating incidents which caused you concern, but the potential benefits are that through our discussions and tutorials you will further your understanding of the topic and feel empowered to consider alternative strategies and approaches in your management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour.
6. All information collected in my research will be kept strictly confidential and anonymity will be ensured with regard to the collection, storage and publication of research material.
7. The results of my research will be used in my doctoral thesis. I am conducting my research as a student at Oxford Brookes University studying in the School of Education and my research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

8. If you are not happy about anything that happens to you during this study then you have the right to get in touch with:

The Research Ethics Officer
Oxford Brookes University
Westminster Institute of Education
Oxford Brookes University
Harcourt Hill Campus
Oxford OX2 9AT

Contact details: Wendy Grundy Tel: ***** [home] ***** [mobile] email:
wegrundy@hotmail.com

Thank-you for considering taking part in this study.

Appendix H

Participant Consent Form

I understand that Wendy Grundy is conducting research concerning the management of pupils' disruptive and challenging behaviour. Her main research question is 'How can NQT thinking, relating to the management of pupils' behaviour, better be understood and best be facilitated?'

I am one of four NQTs at the school who has been asked to participate. I understand that taking part in the research is entirely voluntary and if I decide to take part I am still free to withdraw at any time. I will be given an opportunity to refute or verify any statements that I make that may be anonymously used for research purposes.

Wendy has explained that we will meet twice every half term. Some of these meetings will involve one to one interviews and others may include being part of a discussion group with the other NQTs taking part. Additionally, some of my lessons will be observed but I will be able to specify the date and times of these observations.

Throughout the research I understand that I will be asked to reflect on my management of pupils' behaviour and my interaction with pupils. Any information collected by Wendy will be kept strictly confidential and my anonymity will be ensured.

I agree to take part in this research programme.

I do not wish to take part in this research programme

(please delete the above as necessary)

signed:

date:

Appendix I

Self-Characterisation Sketch NQT 3 (September 2003)

Clare felt apprehensive to begin with as she felt she needed more time to prepare. In terms of behaviour management she felt reasonably confident about her ability, owing to her previous experiences and strategies being generally effective. She had already learnt that planning for disruptive behaviour before lessons, as well as knowing the school's procedures helped, as pupils would quickly understand what her limits / boundaries were. She was therefore generally looking forward to her first day.

By the end of the first day she was feeling much less confident. The lessons had posed problems which surprised her as many pupils, in some instances the majority, would not listen to instructions or even acknowledge her presence when she tried to explain tasks. All her previous successes seemed worthless as none of the strategies she had previously found effective were of any use.

She still feels that some pupils pose serious problems and is not completely happy with their disruptive behaviour but in general things are improving. She is concentrating on looking for positives even with the most disaffected pupils. She is also making some tasks really simple so they are achieved more easily and quickly by the pupils; thus giving more opportunities for praise.

Clare wants to be in control but is not a natural disciplinarian. She is aspiring to being known as firm but fair and realises the importance of a consistent approach so the pupils know where they stand. Despite the few difficulties she is having she feels very enthusiastic about her subject and hopes that this will eventually pass on to the majority of her pupils.

Clare is still concerned about one class in particular with whom she does not feel in control which is quite scary for her. She feels that sometimes she tenses up and it

may be noticeable. She knows she has to be more optimistic about this class but it is difficult when she wakes up and realises it is Thursday!

After speaking to the Head of Department in the last few days Clare realises that she needs to adapt her normal strategies for some groups. However, as the term is progressing she is beginning to feel more positive, especially as most of the pupils seem to be coming more accustomed to her.

Appendix J

Self-Characterisation Sketch

NQT 3 (September 2004)

Clare started her second year in a more confident frame of mind than the previous September. She felt that her experiences last year [especially with difficult classes and individuals] had provided her with more valuable strategies and insights that could make her classroom teaching more successful.

She had taken on more pastoral responsibility which she felt would allow her to contribute more fully to some of the issues which had arisen last year. She was also aware that this new role would also bring new challenges and difficulties which made her slightly apprehensive. However she felt that she would be able to tackle such problems by seeking advice from colleagues and trying to find the most suitable solution to the individual problem at hand.

She hoped that this new role would allow her to be involved with behavioural issues etc. at a slightly higher level, thereby removing some of the obstacles and frustrations she had encountered in order to benefit other staff members.

Discipline wise things are continuing to improve for Clare. She is finding a happy medium regarding being flexible towards individual needs but consistent with her overall approach. This hasn't been easy but she feels she is making progress. Her aim is to show that she can be a strong support for pupils both academically and socially.

Although progress is being made Clare is still prepared to take advice and support as she is still aware that she is going through a steep learning curve. Clare realises it would be extremely arrogant to think that she no longer needed help and advice.

Overall she felt that her first year of teaching had ended on a positive note and that the majority of students had responded in a positive way to her approach. She was able to

see that there were still some pupils who would need attention and evaluation, in terms of the strategies used to date, but she felt ready for the challenge.

Appendix K

NQT1 - Grid 2003 (extracts from the Repertory Grid interview)

(This transcript gives the appearance of a very fluent conversation. It is important for the reader to realise that the NQT concerned often took several minutes 'thinking time' before arriving at her constructs. In addition note the laddering and pyramiding technique highlighted in green)

Topic: Discipline, Control and Support

Elements: Yourself; A schoolteacher you remember positively; A family member; A schoolteacher you remember negatively; A colleague you admire and respect; A manager prior to your present post; A colleague you have little admiration/respect for.

WG: This interview technique is going to help you communicate your thoughts on discipline, control and support. It is called a grid interview and this is the grid that we will be filling in as we go along. Firstly I would like you to fill in the columns at the top of the grid, using initials to represent the people you have selected to match these headings. I don't need to know who the people are.

.....
OK – thank you. For the purposes of this exercise these people are the 'elements' of the grid and I have written each of the elements separately on a postcard to help you during the interview. The basic technique of this is that I select three elements (called triads) and ask you 'In what way are two of these people alike that make them different from the third person? (in relation to discipline, control and support). Let's take these three to start with.

.....
NQT 1: Is that the third one?

WG: Any of them, you just put them together as you wish. Two together and one apart. OK, so what do these two have in common that makes them different to this one?

NQT1: These two are always very calm. They rarely get cross. You know when they are going to lose their temper but it very rarely happens. They don't raise their voice too soon so it's like sort of quietly spoken; they just have a lot of control. Whereas this one is always raising their voice, sounding frantic, frantically doing things.

WG: OK so the words I will put in here are called 'constructs'. On this side of the grid I am going to put the construct you first thought of which was 'calm, rarely getting cross' and on this side your second construct which was 'frequently raising voice, frantically doing things'. Is that OK? Do these represent what you want to say?

NQT 1: Yes, that fine.

WG: Now for the second triad. What about these three people? Two are the same but a new one has joined them. Again, in terms of discipline, control and support, in any order and combination, what way are two of these alike that makes them different from the third?

NQT1: I would put these two together.

WG: What word or words would describe these two in terms of discipline, control and support?

NQT 1: Fairness I suppose. These two always seem to be quite fair and this person is quite often unfair. You hear stories from other people too that would, I imagine, agree with me. Yes, definitely these two are fairer than this person.

WG: So what constructs would you like me to record here?

NQT 1: Fair and Unfair, yes that's it.

WG: Three more now. You have picked the technique up very quickly. How are these two different from the third?

NQT 1: This one has a no nonsense, straight way of doing things whereas this one is more friendly I suppose. No nonsense straight to the point, more approachable. They can be fun too and more friendly I suppose.

WG: So in terms of constructs? What should I write here and here?

NQT 1 : No-nonsense, straight way of doing things and there, ... more friendly, fun, approachable.

WG: OK, now three more.

NQT 1: Can it be absolutely anything?

WG: As long as it is in relation to the notion of discipline, control and support.

NQT 1: Right well, these two are inexperienced and this one is very experienced. This person, you sort of know they will be able to help you and give you ideas. These two may try to help you but they won't be as much help because of their lack of experience.

WG: OK so the two that are similar are inexperienced and the other inexperienced?

NQT 1: Yes that's right.

WG: OK, now these three

NQT 1: These two are too quick to please without thinking of the consequences. They try to aim to please everyone without thinking sometimes of the consequences that might occur. I think they really want to be liked so find it difficult to say no.

WG: What would the opposite of that be?

NQT 1: Er ...realistically pleasing those who you can. It's just so unrealistic to think you can please everyone. You just can't do that.

WG: OK – now these three.

NQT 1: Er ... I would say going beyond the normal way of doing things in a positive way rather than a negative way. You know just bringing things in that will make the lessons more interesting. I remember this teacher. There was a no make up policy in school so she bought a bag of 'Bodyshop' make up remover and instead of going 'Why have you got that make up on?' she would just send them to the toilets with the make up remover. She never wore make up, it certainly wasn't her sort of thing, just a different way of tackling an issue.

WG: So what would the opposite of that be do you think?

NQT 1: Probably just an old fashioned way of dealing with things that weren't acceptable. Slamming things on the desk like a metre ruler for example or pointing and shouting.

WG: OK, so what are your two constructs at this point? What do these have in common that makes them different from this person?

NQT 1: These two I would say would go beyond the normal way of doing things whereas this person has an old fashioned way of discipline.

WG: Now the next three. What about these people?

NQT 1: These two are very positive in the workplace, very positive, just very straight and to the point, not beating about the bush. Very objective, good to have around. They would always encourage you to look on the bright side.

WG: So the opposite of that?

NQT 1: It's not necessarily negative, just not trying, I suppose, not trying to be positive, but not necessarily negative but just not overly trying to be positive.

WG: Ok thank you for that. The next thing I want you to do before we talk about it and make it relevant to you, is score these people on each of these constructs from one to seven. One being the left hand side of the diagram and seven being the right hand side. So for example where would you put yourself on this construct ... being calm, rarely getting cross or do you frequently raise your voice etc? If you thought for example that you were constantly raising your voice then that would be a seven. If you thought you did occasionally then that may be a four or a five for example. Do you see what I mean?

NQT 1: Yes. I understand.

WG: When you have finished could you go back to yourself and give yourself an additional 'ideal score' on each rating. In other words where would you like to be with regard to these constructs.

WG: Ok thanks for that. Lets look over that now. In particular lets glance over the ratings you have given yourself. On the first construct you have put yourself just below the mid point. I would infer from that that you feel you do a certain amount of raising your voice.

NQT 1: Yes I certainly do at the moment but I'm trying to use other tactics because it just doesn't seem to be having a consistent effect. It sometimes works but then you think there must be an easier and less stressful way of getting them to be quiet. Ideally I would eventually like to appear really 'cool' with a very calm manner, rarely getting cross.

WG: Its also interesting that you have given yourself the same score for being fair. Can you say more about that?

NQT 1: Yes I feel that at the moment I am just keeping my head above water and I often reflect on my way home and think I should have handled things in a fairer way but then again I'm only human!

WG: You have indicated a mid way point on you construct of being friendly / approachable. Any comment on that?

NQT 1: I think its important to keep a *professional distance so you are not taken advantage of*. I've heard the phrase 'don't smile till Christmas' but I think *there's a happy medium*. I think I'm as approachable as I want to be at the moment.

WG: This construct: *experience / inexperience* is quite understandable . You have given yourself a very positive score which is good. I know this is can be a challenging environment, especially for NQTs but you will certainly learn your craft very quickly.

NQT 1: Yes I agree. I do feel I am gaining a lot of experience very quickly.

WG: The aiming to please everyone is an interesting construct. You indicate you would like to be higher up the rating than you are at the moment.

NQT 1: Yes I think its difficult for me at the moment as I haven't much energy left for others but ultimately I would like to be known for helping, encouraging and supporting others.

WG: With this next one (*positive and innovative re. discipline / old fashioned way of discipline*) you obviously feel quite confident that you have an interesting and intuitive way of planning aspects of your lessons.

NQT 1: I try to. With some of my pupils you have to really go beyond the basic presentation and try and interest them in some way, otherwise their boredom or disinterest will soon be quite evident.

WG: This is a good positive way to finish. You have given yourself top rating for this one (*very positive in the workplace around people*).

NQT 1: Yes I do feel that it one of my strengths. Even if I've had a difficult day I can usually be quite philosophical about it and not get too down hearted.

WG: OK thank you for all this. Just one last thing now. Could you indicate the top three most important constructs for you in relation to discipline, control and support.

NQT 1: I think it is very important that the pupils see that you are fair. I would like to be seen as fair ultimately and I am certainly trying to be fair.

WG : Why is it important to be fair with the pupils?

NQT1: Because if pupils know you are going to be fair with them they know where they stand and know where you draw the line.

WG: Why is it important for them to know where you draw the line?

NQT 1: Because they would have more confidence in you and will more than likely respect you more.

WG: Why is confidence and respect important in a teacher pupil relationship?

NQT 1: I guess pupils like to know where they stand and will probably respect you for that in time. Also if they have a respect for you they are less likely to cause you any real difficulties.

WG: Why do you think pupils who have no respect for their teachers cause them difficulties?

NQT 1: They don't feel any allegiance to them. They just don't care. If a teacher doesn't show any interest in their pupils, doesn't try to get to know them as individuals, isn't fair with them and interested in them as individuals then it's not surprising.

WG: How best can a teacher communicate this fairness to their pupils?

NQT 1: Talk to them, listen to them, show an interest in them, try and incorporate aspects of their own interests into lesson plans wherever possible.

WG: How do you plan to do this in your lessons?

NQT 1: Lots of group work, discussion and feedback wherever possible. I am also taking time to talk to pupils about their interests when there is time, say at the end of the lesson.

WG: What do you think are the benefits of doing this?

NQT 1: I think that if they think you are interested in them and are prepared to have a dialogue with you about topics which they feel confident in talking about then that can only help your relationship with them. At the end of the day if they know you are fair they will respect you more.

WG: What about the second most important construct for you?

NQT 1: Well I would put this second (positive and intuitive re. discipline) because if you try and be more intuitive with your planning they will respect that hopefully.

Combining these two (being fair and being intuitive) is a way in which you may eventually get through to some of the more difficult ones.

WG: That is an interesting concept. Tell me more. Why is being intuitive so important to you and your subject?

NQT 1: So much of what I have to teach is very 'dry'. (There is a lot of fun stuff too!). With some topics it doesn't take long before they can lose interest. I try and make it relevant to them or tell them an interesting fact about how what we are doing relates to real life.

WG: Why do you think relating it to real life makes a difference?

NQT 1: Well it depends on the story or fact but I find the more I can relate it to something that they might be interested in the more I can hold their interest and attention. Sometimes I ask them if they can relate what we are doing or what is happening to everyday examples.

WG: OK. What about your third most important construct?

NQT 1: I think being calm would be my third one, again linked closely to the other two.

WG: Why is being calm important for you?

NQT 1: Well it gives messages that you're in control more and that you can handle things. If they sense you can't some will take advantage.

WG: What tactics do you use to remain in control?

NQT 1: I'm very organised – you have to be in this subject. It takes a lot of doing sometimes but it makes such a difference. I also 'plan for behaviour'.

WG: What does that entail?

NQT 1: Well I try and make sure that I have differentiated tasks for those pupils who have shown they find it difficult to concentrate and are easily distracted. I also sometimes give the ones who find it difficult to remain in their seats jobs to do so they can legitimately walk round the classroom. This one doesn't always work however as some are even more silly as they walk around. You have to choose your pupils.

WG: How does praise and reward fit into your planning for good behaviour?

NQT 1: I remember what you said about using specific praise. That does seem to help. I make a point of being very specific when I talk about a piece of work or an aspect of their behaviour. They seem to like that. Also I am careful about who can cope with public praise and who can't. I also think it's important to praise those pupils who *always* get on with their work, not just the ones who behave in a way that interrupts the rest of the class. Sometimes praising the ones who *are* working has an effect on those who are not.

WG: Yes, that is a good point. OK, thank you very much for that, I know you have to go and teach now.

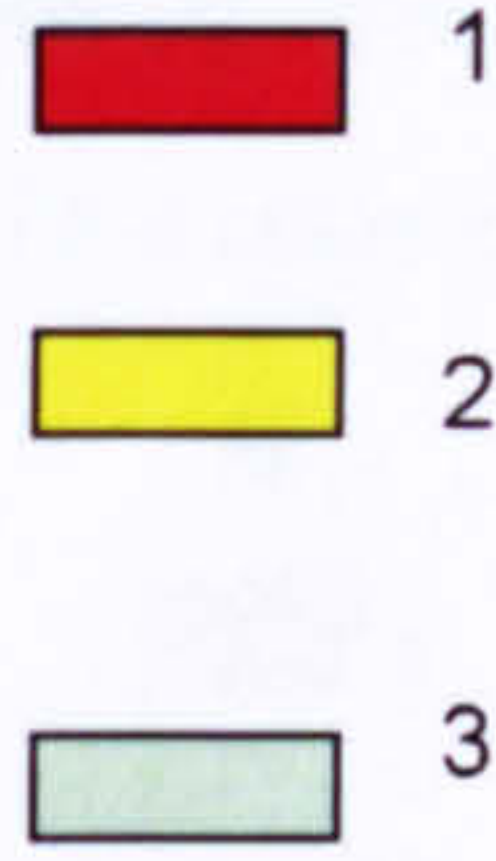
NQT 1: Yes, thank you. That was an interesting way of making me think about behaviour management. I am always trying to improve that part of my work.

Appendix L

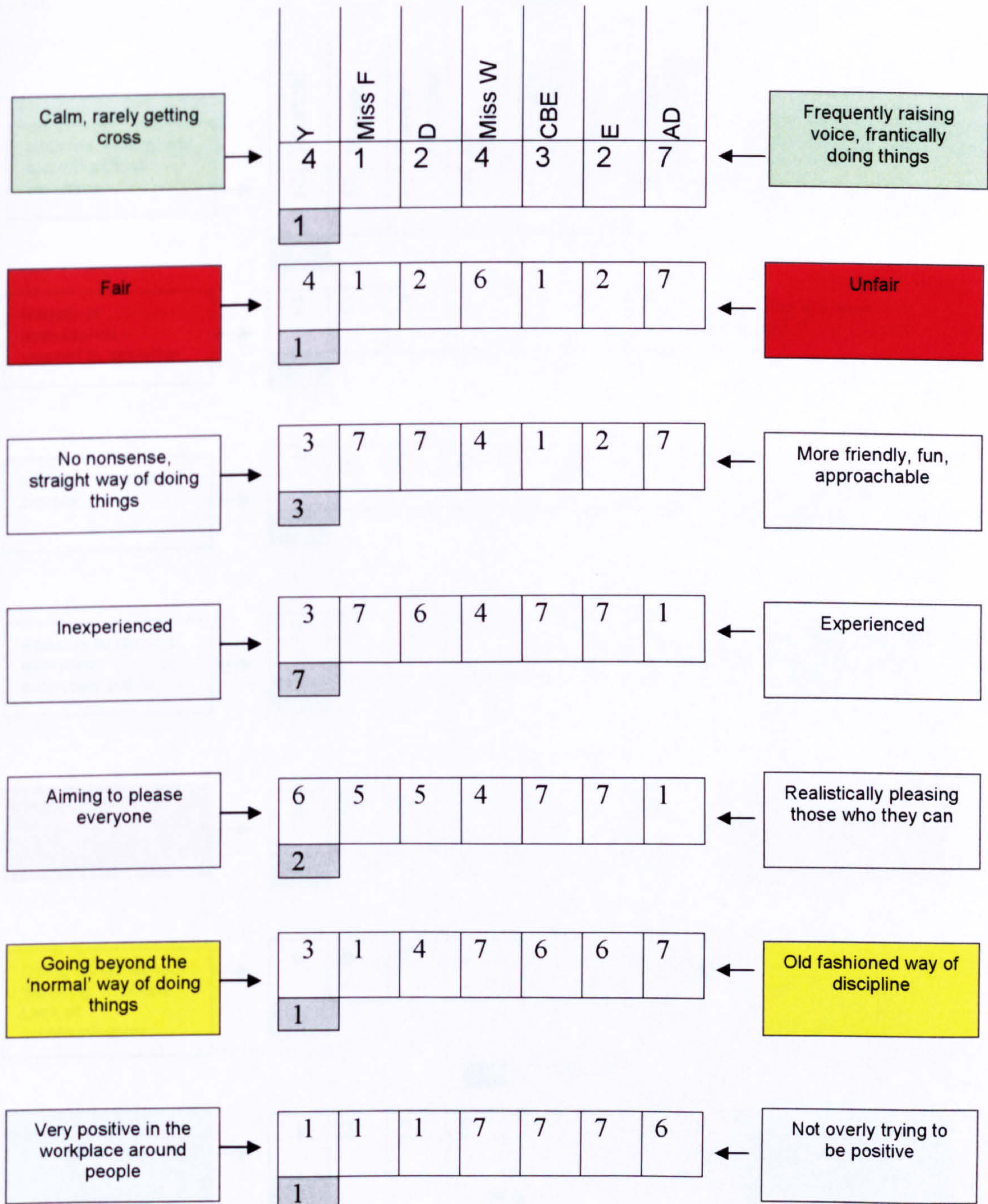
NQT 1 Grid 1: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

1. Yourself
2. A schoolteacher you remember +
3. A family member
4. A schoolteacher you remember -
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. A manager prior to your present post
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect

Top 3 rated constructs



'Ideal self' discrepancy rating: 16



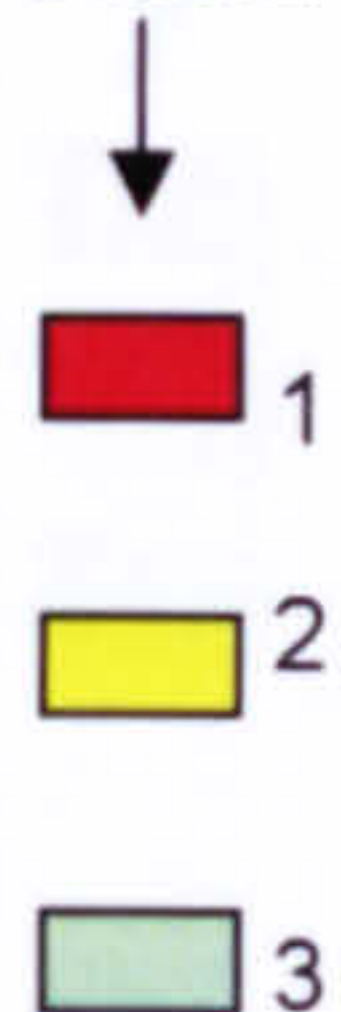
= 'ideal self'

Appendix M

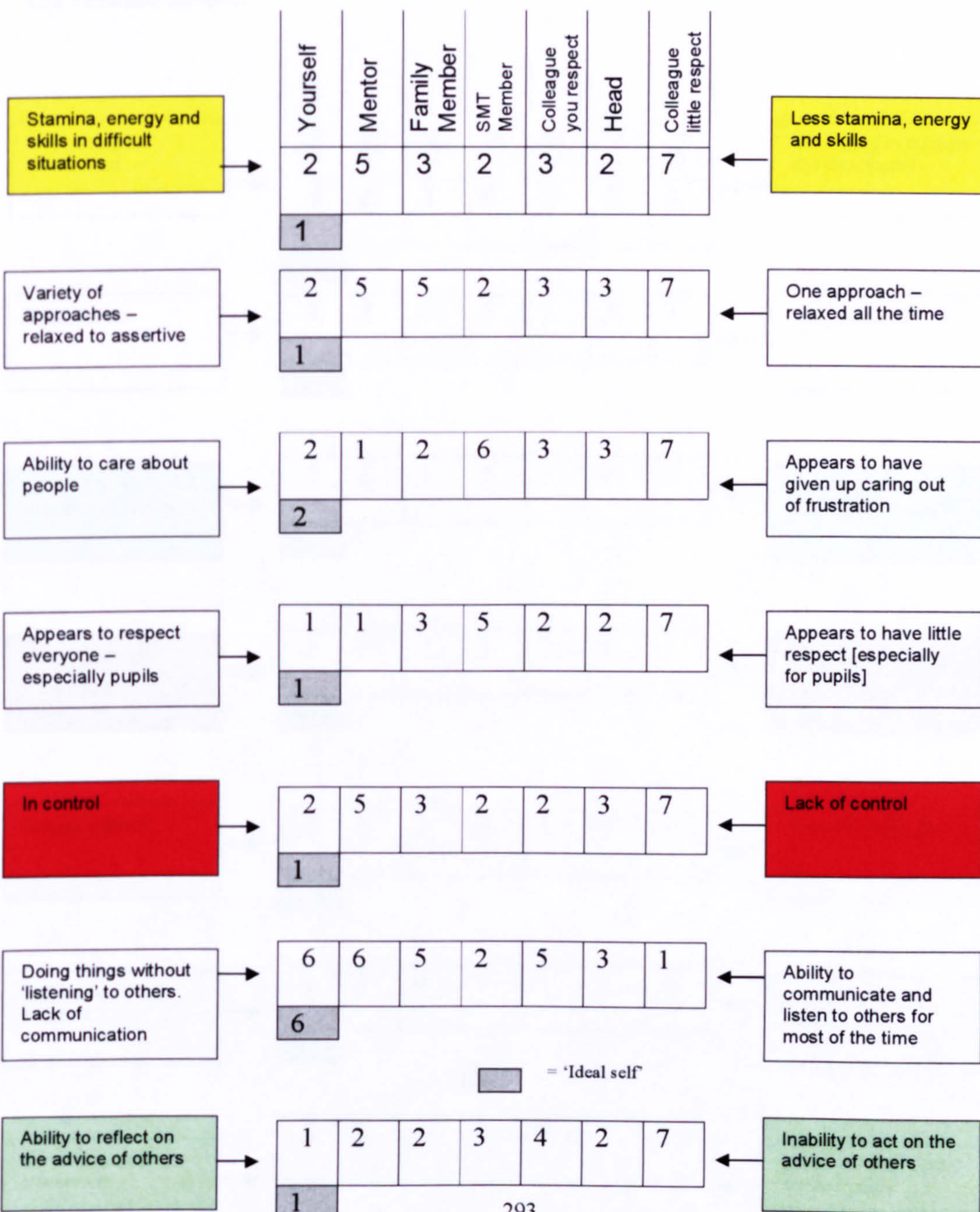
NQT 1 Grid 2: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

1. Yourself
2. Your mentor
3. A family member
4. A member of the SMT
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. The Headteacher
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect for

Top 3 rated constructs



'Ideal self'
discrepancy rating: 3
(16 in first grid)



Appendix N

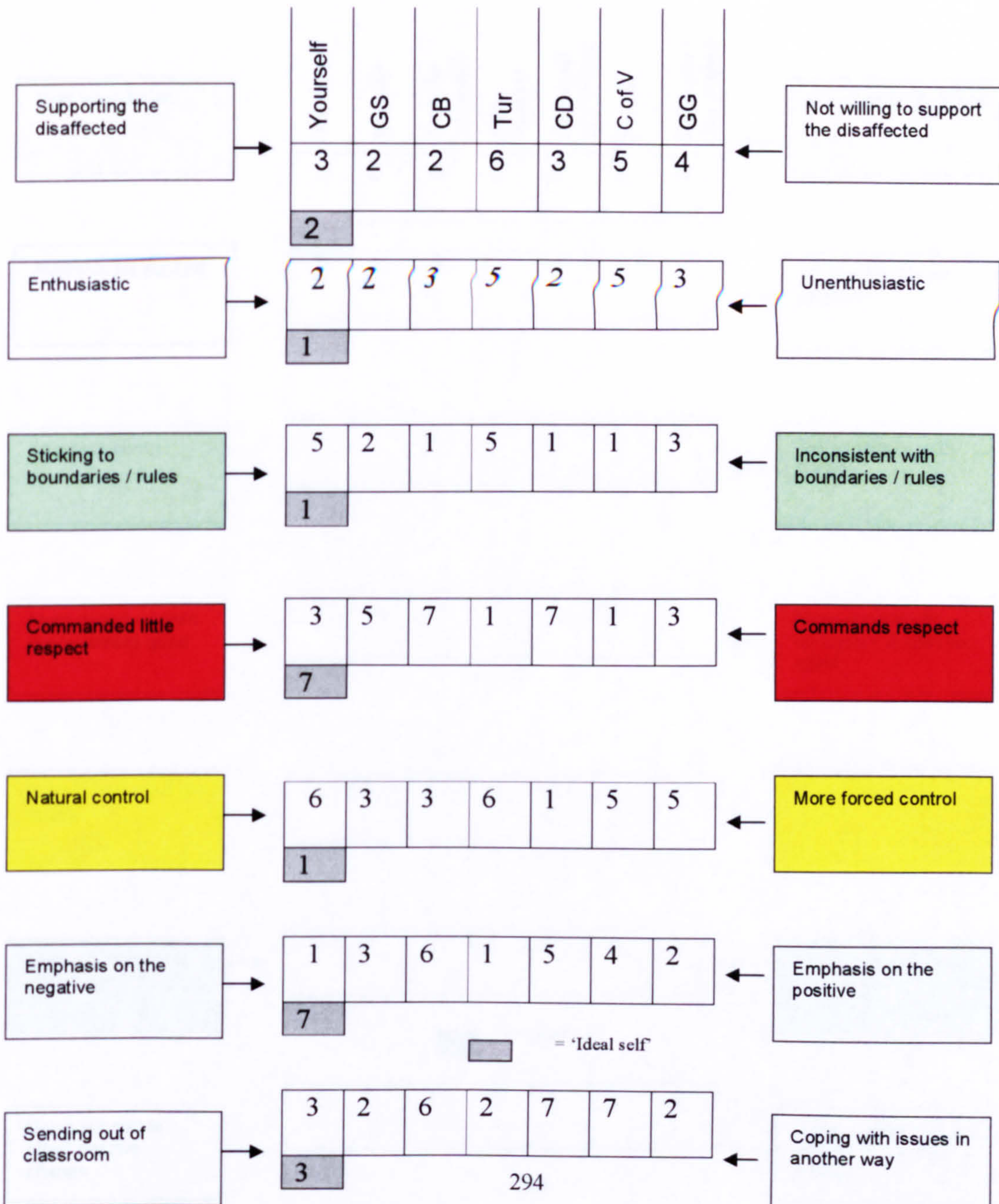
NQT 2 Grid 1: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

1. Yourself
2. A schoolteacher you remember +
3. A family member
4. A schoolteacher you remember -
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. A manager prior to your present post
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect

Top three rated constructs



'Ideal self' discrepancy rating: 21

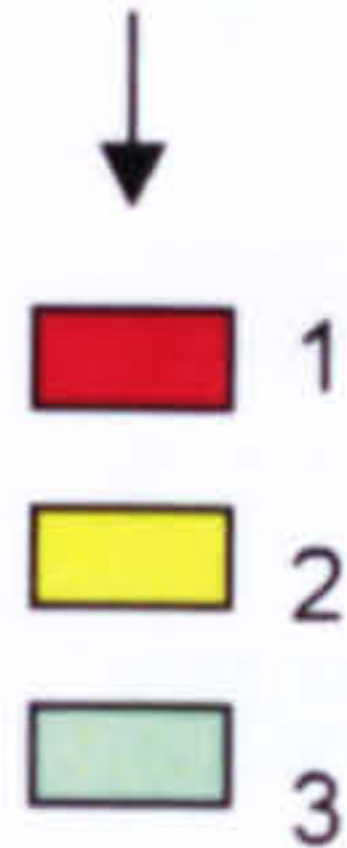


Appendix O

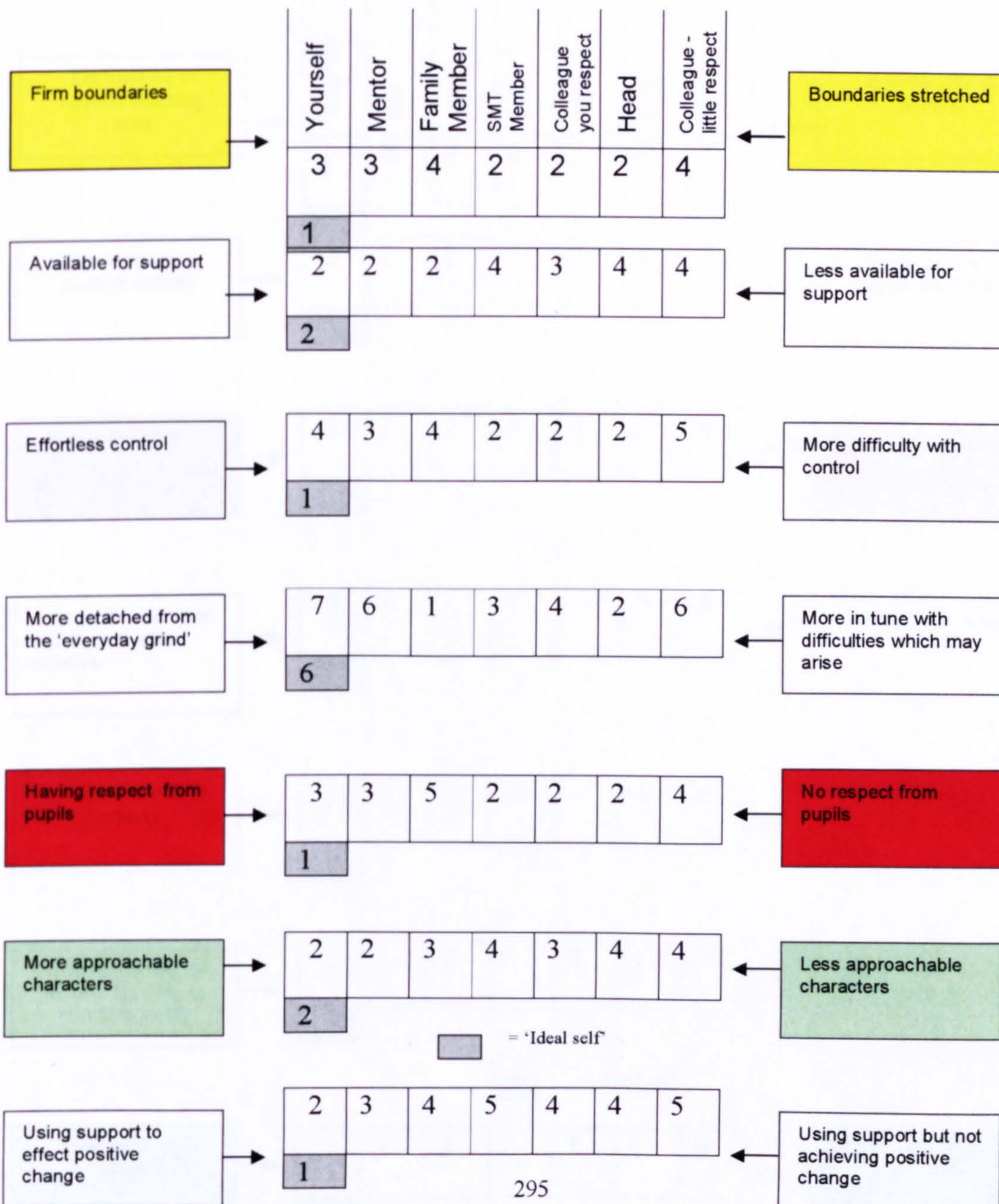
NQT 2 Grid 2: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

1. Yourself
2. Your mentor
3. A family member
4. A member of the SMT
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. The Headteacher
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect for

Top three rated constructs



'Ideal self' discrepancy 9 (21 in first grid)



Appendix P

NQT 3 Grid 1: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

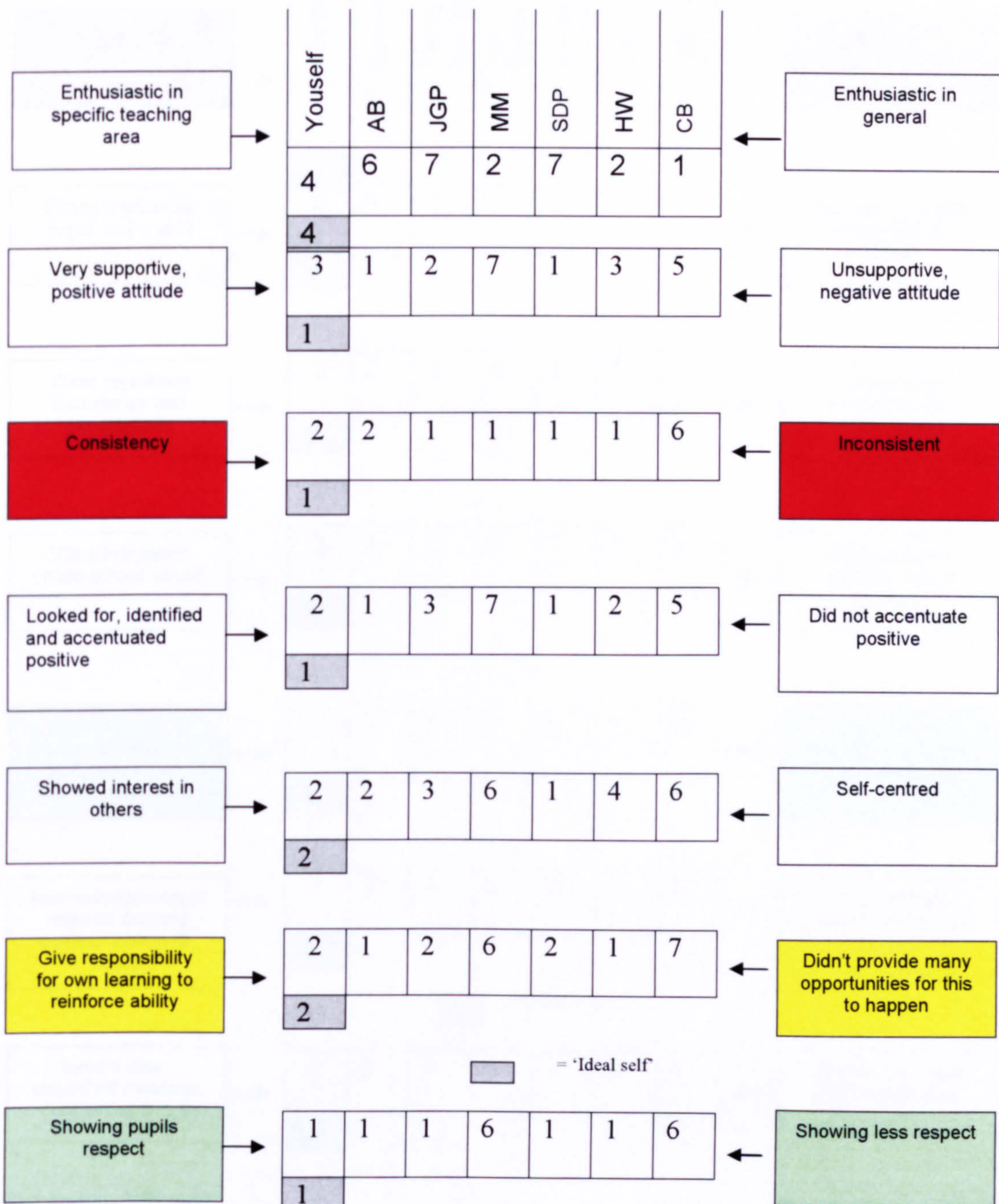
1. Yourself
2. A schoolteacher you remember +
3. A family member
4. A schoolteacher you remember -
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. A manager prior to your present post
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect

Top three rated constructs



- 1
- 2
- 3

'Ideal self'
discrepancy rating: 6



Appendix Q

NQT 3 Grid 2: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

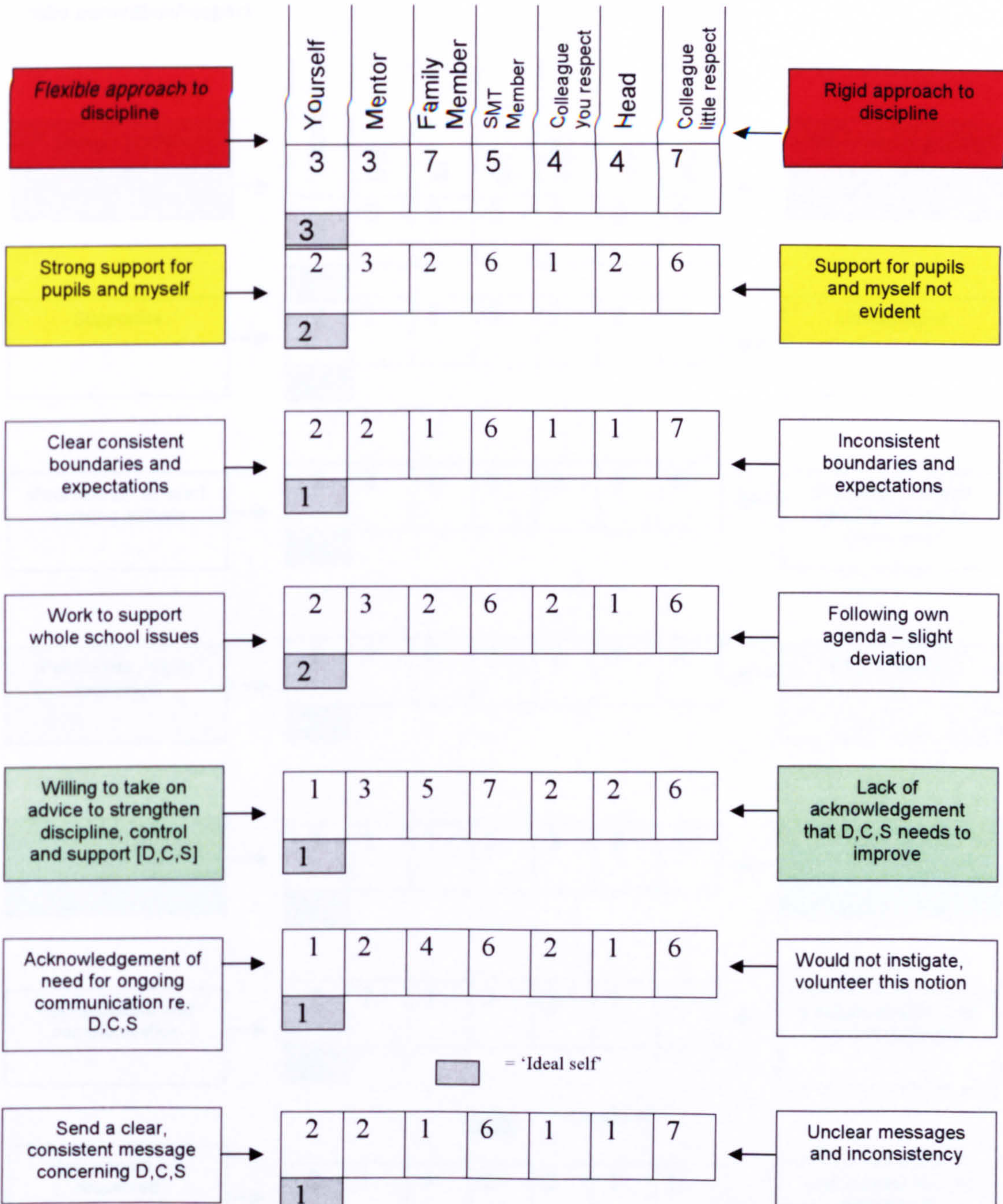
1. Yourself
2. Your mentor
3. A family member
4. A member of the SMT
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. The Headteacher
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect

Top three rated constructs



'Ideal –self' discrepancy rating: 2
(a confident 4 in first grid)

for

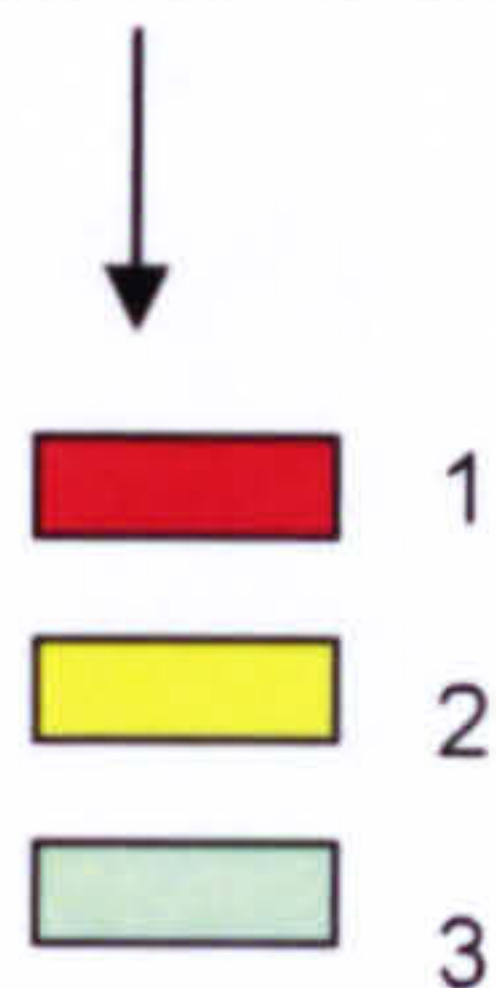


Appendix R

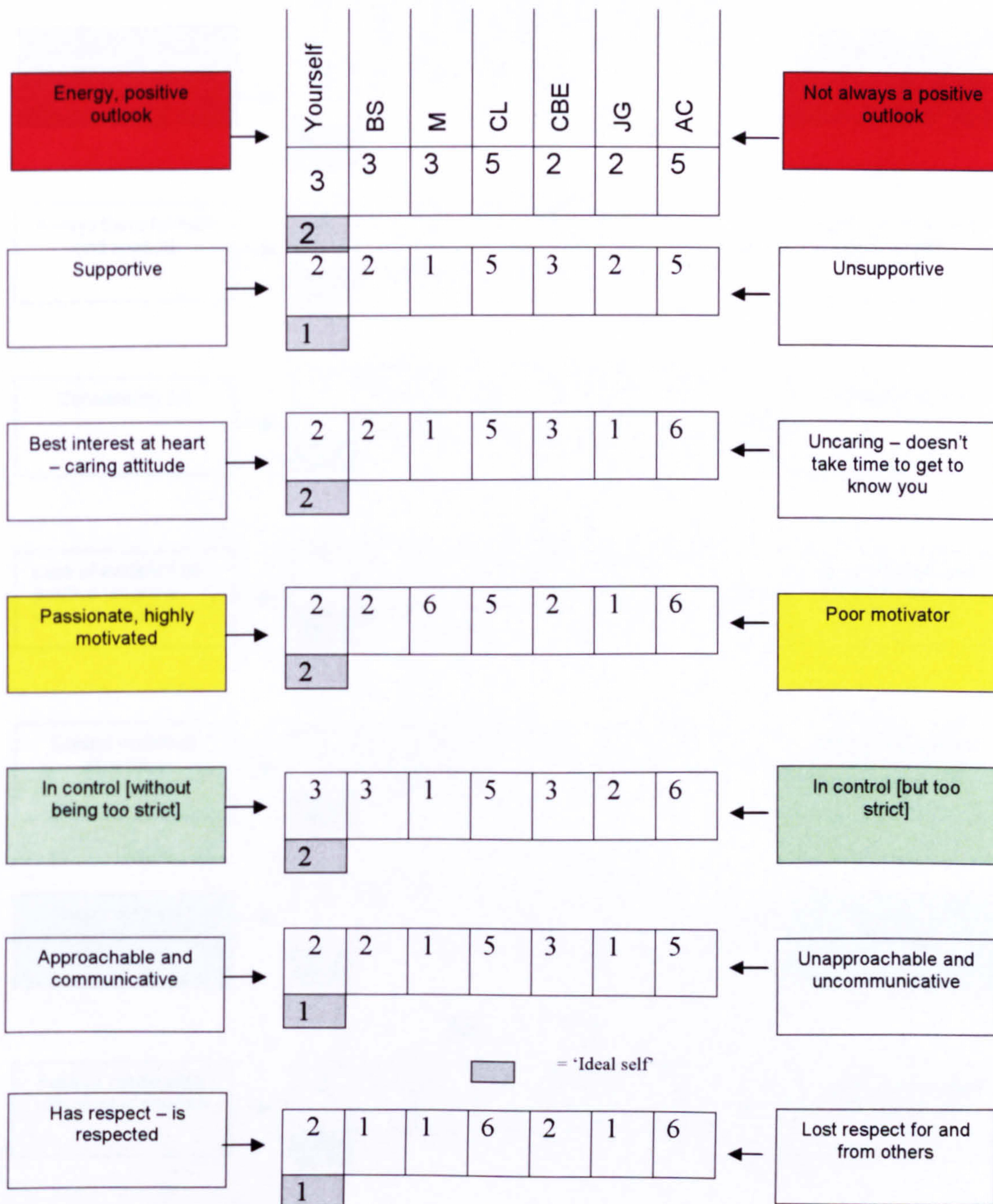
NQT 4 Grid 1: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

1. Yourself
2. A schoolteacher you remember +
3. A family member
4. A schoolteacher you remember -
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. A manager prior to your present post
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect

Top three rated constructs



'Ideal -self'
discrepancy rating: 5

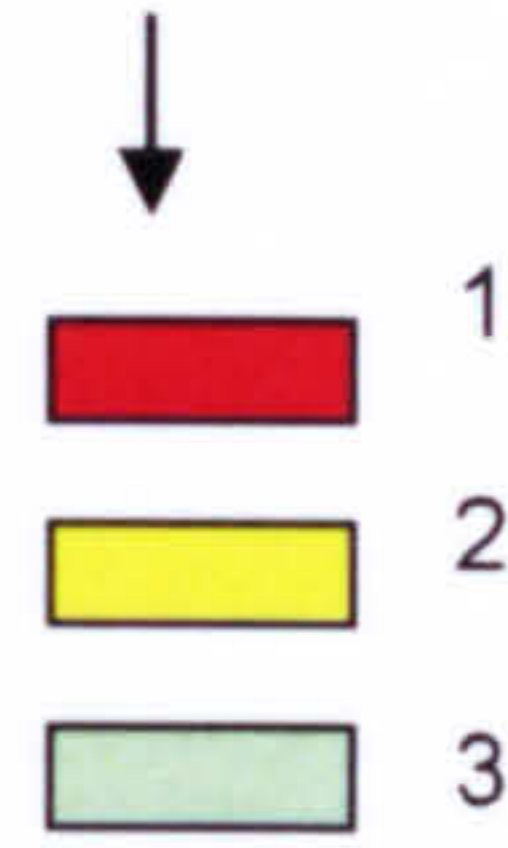


Appendix S

NQT 4 Grid 2: Notions of Discipline, Control and Support

1. Yourself
2. Your mentor
3. A family member
4. A member of the SMT
5. A colleague you admire/respect
6. The Headteacher
7. A colleague you have little admiration/respect for

Top three rated constructs



'Ideal –self' discrepancy rating: 11
(5 in first grid. Increased discrepancy rating related to nature of constructs and her increasingly high standards rather than lack of confidence)

