

A qualitative study investigating the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs

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Abstract

A teacher's efficacy beliefs have been found to influence their professional commitment (Coladarci, 1992; Ware and Kitsantas, 2007, 2011; Klassen et al., 2013), their job satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2006, Hoigaard et al., 2012) and how resilient they are in difficult situations (Ashton and Webb, 1986), as well as influencing student achievement and teaching performance (Armor et al., 1976; Caprara et al., 2006; Klassen and Tze, 2014). Bandura (1997) has suggested that self-efficacy beliefs are formed from four sources: enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological and affective states. Considering the potential importance of developing positive teacher efficacy cognitions, there has been a lack of research investigating the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs (Henson, 2002; Klassen et al., 2011).

This study used a constructivist grounded theory method to investigate the sources of teachers' efficacy beliefs, a method that has not been employed by other researchers in this area. The use of a social constructivist framework (Charmaz, 2006), with its focus on processes and the creation of knowledge through interaction, reflected my belief that my own experiences as a teacher may influence the interpretation of the data. In this study, 18 interviews were conducted with teachers in a secondary school in Essex.

Teachers appeared to use a variety of sources to validate their efficacy beliefs. In contrast to Bandura's (1997) theory about the sources of self-efficacy beliefs suggesting mastery experiences as the most important, verbal persuasion in the form of lesson observation feedback appeared to be a particularly salient source for teachers in this study. The study suggests that this may be due to the increasing accountability culture in English schools. The study contributes to our understanding of how teacher efficacy beliefs are influenced by contextual factors, in particular the influence of government agendas, and suggests some implications for school leaders and areas for future research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Context of the research: Teachers matter

We may be facing a new crisis in the recruitment and retention of teachers in England (ASCL, 2015). It is reported that teachers embarking on initial teacher training courses are down by more than 13% in the year 2014-2015 compared to 2010-2011 (DfE, 2014). The reasons for this drop in teacher training recruitment may be attributed to a variety of factors, such as the economic upturn attracting new graduates to other careers and the new variety of teacher training routes available. For example, the introduction of School Direct training places (training led by schools) by the government in 2011 has reduced the number of training places available in Higher Education Institutions but not all the School Direct places are being filled (Bell, 2015). At the same time, it is claimed that experienced teachers are leaving teaching at an alarming rate (Cassidy and Clarke, 2015) and schools are finding it difficult to recruit teachers (Exley, 2014a, ASCL, 2015). 32% of governors surveyed by the Times Education Supplement and the National Governors Association stated they are finding it difficult to recruit classroom teachers (Exley, 2014a).

Recent research in US schools (Simon and Johnson, 2015) found that teacher turnover is mainly caused by the quality of working conditions in schools rather than other factors. It has been argued by some that the accountability regime placed on teachers in England by government targets, Ofsted inspections and the introduction of performance-based pay (a culture which Ball (2003) labels 'performativity') is contributing to experienced teachers' reluctance to apply for promotions within the profession or their exit from teaching entirely (Exley, 2014a; Cassidy and Clarke, 2015). A YouGov survey of 826 teachers commissioned by the National Union of Teachers (NUT, 2014) found that 74% of teachers felt morale had deteriorated since the last general election in 2010 and 79% perceived the current government's influence upon education as negative. A particularly telling statistic is that 81% of teachers felt not at all or rarely trusted by the government and only 3% felt valued by politicians. Although the

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sample size of this survey is small, it suggests the increasing dissatisfaction of teachers in England and the influence of government policies and values upon teachers' professional lives.

In contrast, countries such as Finland have created educational systems where being a teacher is high status, teachers are valued and there is fierce competition to train (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2012). Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) assert that the high 'professional capital' of teachers in Finland and other countries such as Singapore is underpinned by societies and governments that trust teachers to make important decisions about their work, invest in their development through providing opportunities for collaboration and innovation, and value their expertise. In Finland, teachers and schools are not compared, measured and held to account using standards-based benchmarks; schools are trusted to correct themselves and supported to do so (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2012). Such examples of varying educational philosophies illustrate how societal and political context can influence the working conditions and professional status of teachers.

The aim of governments across the globe is to create a good quality education system in which individuals can achieve their potential. However, the way in which governments try to achieve this goal differs. In their book discussing the features of particularly successful educational systems around the world, Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) explain that the effects of such differences in policy and values can be profound upon schools, teachers and students. This thesis contributes in some way to our understanding of how England's particular educational policies and systems have influenced the professional lives of teachers today. Amongst other factors, it explores how a 'performativity' culture (Ball, 2003) can permeate schools and influence teachers' perceptions of their ability, potentially impacting upon their performance.

There are a large number of potential variables that can affect the success of an individual school or educational system, but research suggests that teachers themselves are a particularly important contributor (Hattie, 2009). Thus, research that can help us to understand how to enhance teacher performance

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serves to benefit the educational outcomes of schools and nations. This thesis focuses on the sources of teachers' efficacy beliefs; how confident a teacher is in their ability to teach effectively. Positive teacher efficacy beliefs have the potential to enhance teacher wellbeing and performance. Therefore, understanding the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs may help schools and policy makers to reduce teacher attrition, plan more effective professional development opportunities and improve educational outcomes.

1.2 Theoretical context

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory stresses the importance of reciprocal interaction between behaviour, environment and personal factors (including cognitions, emotions and physiological states), rejecting deterministic notions that human actions are influenced by single factors. According to social cognitive theory any of these three factors can influence another - bidirectionality. So for example, an individual's environment can influence their behaviour but their behaviour can also influence their environment. As such, if we are to understand the cause of human actions and performance we must also understand the situational and individual factors of relevance to the individual.

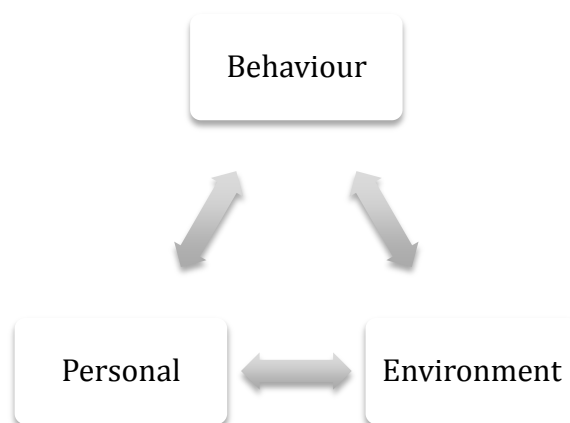


Figure 1: Triadic reciprocity of personal factors, environmental factors and behaviour.

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In social cognitive theory, an important personal variable is perceived self-efficacy:

'Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with judgements of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations.'

(Bandura, 1982, p122)

Self-efficacy beliefs are suggested to influence an individual's goals, effort, choice of activities and persistence (Bandura, 1997). Bandura suggests that self-efficacy beliefs are formed through four main sources: enactive mastery experiences (experiences of performance), vicarious experiences (observing models, comparison with others), verbal persuasion (feedback about performance) and physiological states (emotional and biological indicators). Bandura places efficacy beliefs as specific to particular domains of practice, consequently an individual can have strong efficacy beliefs for one domain and low efficacy beliefs for another. Teaching is therefore a specific domain of practice in which an individual can hold efficacy beliefs.

Ashton and Webb (1986) suggest that a teacher with low self-efficacy beliefs will not be confident that they can influence student learning and will avoid activities that they believe they are not capable of. In the face of difficulty, they will tend to give up or reduce their efforts. They describe this type of teacher as *'preoccupied with thoughts of their own inadequacies and believe their difficulties are more serious than they actually are'* (p3). This has the tendency to lead to more stress and diverts teachers' attention from teaching methods to personal competence, which may negatively affect their performance. In contrast, they suggest that a teacher high in self-efficacy believes they can influence student performance and therefore will plan challenging activities. When difficulties arise, they are even more determined to try harder and can become very focused on their teaching practice, positively affecting teaching performance. Such a description helps to characterise the types of behaviours that may result from different levels of teacher efficacy beliefs.

Research suggests that teacher efficacy beliefs can influence job satisfaction (Moe et al., 2010), the impact of job stressors (Betoret, 2009), student

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achievement (Armor et al., 1976; Bandura, 1993; Ross, 1992) and teaching effectiveness (Klassen and Durksen, 2014). Therefore, it may have relevance for two realms of interest within educational research: school improvement and effectiveness research and research into teacher wellbeing and attrition. Indeed, these two areas potentially interact, as teachers experiencing poor job satisfaction and stress are unlikely to perform at their best, contributing to less effective schools.

Bandura (1997) makes reference to the importance of contextual factors for behaviours, suggesting that barriers in an individual's environment will be perceived as insurmountable by those with low efficacy beliefs but will be tackled by those with high efficacy beliefs.

'How people perceive the structural characteristics of their environment—the impediments it erects and the opportunity structures it provides—also influences the course of human action. Those of low self-efficacy are easily convinced of the futility of effort when they come up against institutional impediments, whereas those of high self-efficacy figure out ways to surmount them.' (Bandura, 2012, p. 14)

Therefore the same contextual conditions could produce different behaviours depending on a teacher's perceptions of efficacy; efficacy beliefs act as a mediator of behaviour in particular contextual conditions. I have already pointed out that differing political and societal contexts between nations (and even schools) can have a big influence upon the success of educational systems but if Bandura's theory is upheld, nurturing positive efficacy beliefs in teachers could enable them to tackle contextual factors which otherwise may negatively impact upon their performance. Consequently, understanding what factors influence the development of high perceptions of efficacy becomes important in contexts that may otherwise be detrimental to performance.

Klassen et al. (2011) point out that only a handful of research studies have focused on the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs. With teacher efficacy beliefs potentially having an impact upon teacher wellbeing, attrition and performance,

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there is a need to investigate the source of such beliefs further, so that schools and policy makers can understand how best to nurture them.

The key research questions addressed in this thesis are:

1. What are the sources of *teacher* efficacy beliefs?
2. How do these sources compare to Bandura's (1997) theorised sources of efficacy beliefs?
3. What are the implications of understanding the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs for educational policy and teacher development?

1.3 Methodological context

At the start of this research I set out to find out what factors influence teacher efficacy beliefs with the understanding that efficacy beliefs may have a positive effect on teacher wellbeing and performance. I was not sure exactly how I would go about this, but with a first degree in psychology that was firmly biased towards quantitative methods I had not seriously considered the use of qualitative methods at all. In the first year of the EdD I learnt about a wide range of qualitative methods, many of which I had not come across before and this opened my eyes to their potential for my research topic.

Over twenty years ago, Ivor Goodson explained why it is important that teachers are a focus of educational research.

'Studying teachers' lives provides insights into the deeply intimate and personal aspects of identity.....such data could be misused by those who employ, manage, control and direct teachers.....Researching teachers' lives is an enterprise fraught with danger but the alternative is, I think, more dangerous: to continue in substantial ignorance of those people who, in spite of the many historical shifts and cycles, remain central to achievement in the educational endeavour.' (Goodson, 1992, p15-16)

Although I have not used the life history method, for which Goodson is well-known, I too take the stance that if we are to understand how we can make our educational system most effective we must take time to explore the lived

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experiences of teachers. As such, I chose to interview teachers so that I was able to understand how events and experiences have affected them; their emotions, cognitions and actions. This also seemed relevant for a study regarding the thoughts, feelings and experiences of individuals; how was I to understand the influences on their lives without personal dialogue and interaction?

As I became more versed in different types of qualitative methods and began to think about how I might analyse any data collected, grounded theory seemed to be an appropriate method. Klassen et al. (2011) suggest that Bandura's (1997) theories regarding the sources of efficacy beliefs have been relied on by researchers in the field of teacher efficacy beliefs with little challenge. In their review of the teacher efficacy belief literature they found only seven studies that specifically investigated the sources of efficacy beliefs in this domain. Although some of these studies were qualitative or mixed-methods, to my knowledge grounded theory has not been used to investigate this topic. It is possible that Bandura's four suggested sources of efficacy beliefs may not be relevant or of equal influence to the development of teacher efficacy beliefs, therefore with its focus on the emergence of theory from the data, grounded theory has the potential to generate new knowledge rather than be restricted by existing theoretical frameworks. Producing a substantive grounded theory focused on the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs may therefore enable a better understanding of the unique variables experienced in this domain.

As a teacher for the majority of the time that this Doctorate was under completion I too have experienced many of the events that the participants shared with me and can identify with their feelings and responses. Some would be critical of the researcher being so close to the data, asking how I can produce an objective analysis with such a relationship to the field. However, this could also be viewed as an advantage, giving me a greater understanding of why this topic is important and the ability to fully immerse myself in the data. From an ontological perspective, I believe that as the researcher, your own interpretations and experiences are likely to influence the research process and outcomes. As a teacher in the same school, I had so much in common with the participants that this also contributed to my decision to take a more

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constructivist approach to grounded theory. Most famously described and used by Charmaz (2006), constructivist grounded theory accepts that researchers interact with what they study and make interpretations based on their experiences, worldviews and knowledge.

'We stand within the research rather than above, before or outside of it.'
(Charmaz, 2006, p180)

Although I cannot claim that I have followed this particular grounded theory method religiously, I have attempted to apply the techniques involved in data collection and analysis as carefully as possible in order to produce a credible qualitative piece of research. Charmaz (2006) writes:

'Researchers can draw on the flexibility of grounded theory without transforming it into rigid prescriptions concerning data collection, analysis, theoretical leanings, and epistemological positions.' (Charmaz, 2006, p178)

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 begins by discussing the origins of teacher efficacy belief research, explaining how a focus on defining the concept and its measurement developed as Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory began to influence the field. The chapter also discusses the relevance of teacher efficacy beliefs for schools and policy makers, highlighting why they may be interested in fostering it in teachers. Bandura's four suggested sources of efficacy beliefs are outlined and their validity in the domain of teacher efficacy beliefs is discussed in relation to previous research. It goes on to discuss the emerging idea that context may play an important role in the formation of efficacy beliefs. The final sections of chapter 2 address the issues of teacher appraisal and accountability, how professional development activities may relate to teacher efficacy beliefs, as well as a discussion of the emerging changes in England's educational policy.

In chapter 3, the methodological underpinnings of the research are presented starting with a discussion of classic and constructivist grounded theory methods. A rationale is presented for the use of grounded theory in this study followed by

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an outline of the key features of the grounded theory method. I then describe the method I used, explaining some of the decisions and paths that were taken along the way. This chapter also discusses how ethical concerns were addressed and issues of reflexivity in grounded theory research. Finally, I summarise how a credible grounded theory may be produced and evaluated.

Chapter 4 aims to explain the various categories, concepts and codes that arose from the data analysis, discussing how they developed and presenting evidence from the interviews to support them. After a number of analytic memos to make sense of the initial and intermediate coding stages of data analysis and the use of diagrams to help me organise the categories and concepts, three key categories emerged: **aspiring for the gold standard**, **moving the goal posts** and **coping with dissonance**. These categories effectively summarise the important themes that emerged from the interviews, illustrating the dialogue about the measurement of teachers' performance and teachers' focus on achieving the label of 'outstanding' (**aspiring for the gold standard**), teachers' concerns about external agendas and changes to policies and practices (**moving the goal posts**) and their experiences of various conflicts such as the 'us and them' culture between teachers' values and management values and their responses to doubting their teaching effectiveness (**coping with dissonance**).

In chapters 5 and 6 I bring together my own categories and concepts with the theoretical frameworks that already exist in the literature, explaining how the findings relate, extend and challenge our understanding of teacher efficacy beliefs, teacher motivation and teacher development. It is suggested that schools and policymakers should consider how a culture of trust could be created in schools rather than a culture of accountability, in order to improve teachers' professional autonomy and efficacy beliefs. The impact of graded lesson observations for performance management purposes is also discussed and its salient influence upon teacher efficacy beliefs. Collaborative professional development formats such as lesson study are suggested as an alternative to ensure teachers engage in deep pedagogical dialogue and reform. In addition, the impact that moving schools has upon teacher efficacy beliefs is discussed as an area that could benefit from further research.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This literature review aims to discuss the concept of teacher efficacy beliefs and previous research related to its measurement and development. I will discuss relevant research investigating the relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs, professional development, wellbeing and performance, illustrating why the concept of teacher efficacy beliefs is important for schools and policy makers. Previous research on the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs will be analysed and a rationale presented explaining why a qualitative grounded theory study has the potential to contribute to knowledge in this area.

It should be noted that according to classic grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) the researcher should aim to be absent of preconceptions before they begin a grounded theory study. I was conscious of this, however for various reasons a complete abstinence from and lack of awareness of the literature before data collection and analysis was not possible or desirable for this research. Firstly, the requirements of an EdD meant that a research proposal had to be completed and for this it was important that I had at least a basic understanding of the substantive field I aimed to contribute to. In fact, a review of the relevant literature enabled me to identify a possible area that further research might contribute to and to begin to think about how I might address it. Although I have completed a review of the relevant literature, much of this chapter evolved as the research developed. Indeed, a lot of the work on this chapter was completed *after* the categories and concepts had been developed in the data analysis, an approach that is recommended by Charmaz (2006). Therefore, the finished chapter represents a review of the literature relevant to the beginning stages of the study but it also presents topics that later became important as the data analysis was completed. In this way, chapter 2 truly reflects the emergent nature of grounded theory.

2.1 Teacher efficacy beliefs: Concepts, definitions and measurement

2.1.1 Teacher efficacy beliefs: Construct development

The concept of teacher efficacy beliefs originated in the 1970s with studies by the RAND Corporation (such as Armor et al, 1976; Berman et al., 1977), an independent research organisation investigating the impact of education interventions. These studies used Rotter's concept of locus of control (Rotter, 1954) as the basis for their measurements of teacher efficacy beliefs (teachers were either understood as believing that they have no influence upon student achievement and motivation or that they have high control). Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998) state that the RAND researchers defined teacher efficacy beliefs as '*the extent to which teachers believed they could control the reinforcement of their actions*' (p202). According to this understanding of teacher efficacy beliefs a teacher will assess the power of the environmental factors influencing student achievement and evaluate whether teachers are able to overcome these influences.

Bandura's (1986) notion of self-efficacy as a component of social cognitive theory brought an amended view of teacher efficacy beliefs and therefore, according to Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) a second theoretical framework for understanding teacher efficacy beliefs emerged. Bandura (1997) describes perceived self-efficacy as '*concerned with judgements of personal capability*' (p11). Essentially, it is an individual's belief in how successful they are or will be at a particular task or skill. Bandura's self-efficacy construct as an element of social cognitive theory, suggests that an individual's own beliefs in their ability to achieve a task will be related to their actual success or failure in the given task.

'...different people with similar skills, or the same person under different circumstances, may perform poorly, adequately, or extraordinarily, depending on fluctuations in their beliefs of personal efficacy' (Bandura, 1997, p37)

Bandura's theory asserts that what an individual believes about their capabilities has more influence on their actions and accomplishments than their actual capabilities. He argues that perceived efficacy beliefs affect individuals'

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motivation, resilience, effort, attributions for success and failure, emotional reactions and the choices they make in life. He also suggests that perceived self-efficacy is domain specific, rather than a general trait that is consistent across different tasks and situations. Therefore, the concept of perceived efficacy beliefs specific to teaching has validity according to Bandura's theory, as the tasks involved in this role are specific to that domain. Bandura also suggests that within an activity domain there can be various subsets of efficacy where an individual differs in their efficacy beliefs (in teaching, examples could be behaviour management, ability to explain difficult concepts etc.)

Key to Bandura's social cognitive theory is the notion that individuals can influence their own success through self-reflection and adaptation of their behaviours and that there is not one direction of causation. The concept of triadic reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1986) therefore underlies Bandura's theory, suggesting that personal factors (such as cognition, emotions and physiological states), behaviour and the environment interact, rather than individuals merely being solely determined by their situation. Bandura (1997) argues that self-efficacy theory is distinct from the concept of internal-external locus of control, as the latter is focused on causal relationships between actions and outcomes (ie. the belief that an individual's behaviour can result in a particular outcome) rather than the belief an individual holds about whether this causal relationship can *actually* be achieved. So, a teacher may believe that teachers *can* override the environmental influences upon a student achievement but have little confidence in their own abilities to do so, therefore perceived self-efficacy beliefs have a stronger impact upon behaviours than locus of control.

Bandura (1997) suggests that efficacy beliefs are formed due to four influences: enactive mastery experiences (an individual's performance of tasks related to the efficacy focus), vicarious experiences (observation of others performing the task), verbal persuasion (positive discussion of the individual's ability to perform the task) and physiological and emotional states (responses to the task which are then interpreted by the individual as an indication of their efficacy). Bandura asserts that mastery experiences have the most influence on efficacy beliefs, therefore for example, a teacher who has been successful in the past at teaching

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difficult classes may as a result have stronger self-efficacy beliefs in this aspect of their role. Bandura's sources of efficacy beliefs have generally been accepted by teacher efficacy researchers, however, Klassen et al. (2011) suggest that there is only weak research support for these and they criticise the continual focus on these four sources. Therefore, further research open to a variety of different sources of efficacy beliefs may be beneficial to further our understanding of how teacher efficacy beliefs are developed. Please see section 2.3 for further analysis of Bandura's sources of efficacy beliefs.

Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) attempted to consolidate the two strands of teacher efficacy research by proposing a new model which integrated both Banduras' social cognitive theory of self-efficacy and Rotter's locus of control. Their definition of teacher efficacy is:

'.....the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organise and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context.' (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p233)

In their model (see figure 2) a teacher's interpretation of the four sources of efficacy information suggested by Bandura (1997) are given high priority along with an assessment of the context of the teaching task and one's ability to complete it. A very similar model was proposed by Goddard et al. (2000) to explain the formation of collective teacher efficacy beliefs. The 'analysis of teaching task' element can be equated to external locus of control as it includes an evaluation of the resources available (materials, technology, physical space) and the context (such as leadership, school ethos, student abilities and motivation) in order to decide how difficult the teaching task might be. Tschannen-Moran et al. argue that this factor will have more influence on efficacy beliefs for inexperienced teachers or for new tasks. The 'assessment of personal competence' relates to a teacher's belief about their *current* abilities to complete the teaching task effectively. A combination of all these three factors will then contribute to an individual's 'teacher efficacy' (beliefs) and the resulting behaviours and performance. Therefore, the context of the task is important, as different teaching tasks may produce a different assessment of personal

competence depending on a teacher's perceived skill set and consequently will have a differential impact on teacher efficacy, behaviours and performance.

'It is in making explicit the judgement of personal competence in light of an analysis of the task and situation that our model improves upon previous models.' (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p233)

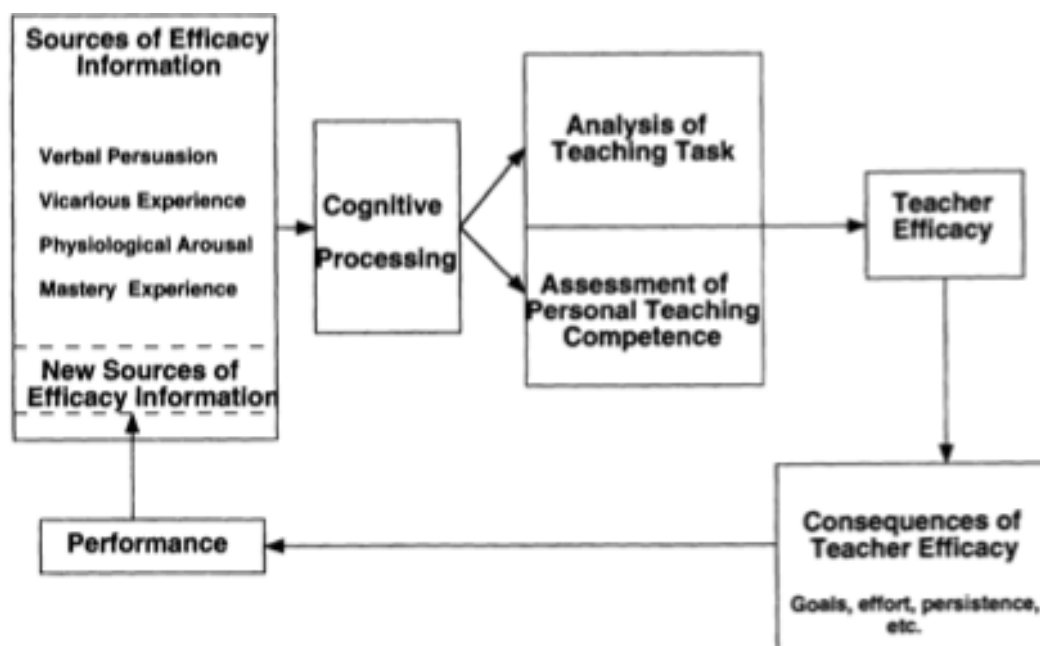


Figure 2: Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) integrated model of teacher efficacy beliefs.

2.1.2 Measurement of teacher efficacy beliefs

Ever since researchers first became interested in teacher efficacy beliefs as a possible influence upon student achievement and the success of educational interventions, a key focus has been upon the concept's measurement. The two theoretical frameworks underlying the concept of teacher efficacy beliefs (locus of control and self-efficacy theory) also led to varying ways of measuring teacher efficacy beliefs. For example the very first measure of teacher efficacy beliefs by RAND (Armor et al, 1976) consisted of two 5 point likert scale items rated from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

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Item 1: *When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her environment.*

Item 2: *If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students.*

These items clearly tap into the notion that teacher efficacy beliefs relate to a teacher's locus of control, the extent to which student achievement is influenced by external factors outside of the classroom or by the quality of the teaching (considered as internal to the teacher). The Webb efficacy scale (Ashton and Webb, 1986) and the Responsibility for Student Achievement (RSA) instrument (Guskey, 1981) also related to Rotter's concept of locus of control in the manner in which teacher efficacy beliefs were measured.

As Bandura's (1982, 1986, 1997) self-efficacy theory started to be viewed as an additional way of understanding teacher efficacy beliefs, new instruments were developed to incorporate elements of Bandura's theory. One of the most widely used was Gibson and Dembo's (1984) 30 item measure in which they identified two different factors of teacher efficacy beliefs; personal teaching efficacy (a teacher's belief that they personally can influence students' learning) and general teaching efficacy (a teacher's belief that teachers in general influence students' learning). This instrument has been used successfully to correlate teacher efficacy beliefs with teachers' persistence and willingness to try new approaches (Gibson and Dembo, 1984; Allinder, 1994) as well as students' achievement and attitudes (Woolfolk, Rosoff and Hoy, 1990). In fact, Bandura himself also created an unpublished teacher efficacy measure (cited by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) that included seven subscales (such as efficacy to enlist parental involvement, disciplinary efficacy and instructional efficacy). He was attempting to provide an instrument that would measure the different elements of teacher efficacy beliefs, as he believed that efficacy beliefs would not be similar across the different tasks a teacher has to complete.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) discuss in detail the history of teacher efficacy belief measurement, suggesting that no reliable or valid measure yet existed. They set about to develop a new teacher efficacy scale using

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Bandura's instrument as a starting point. The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) was the product of this development and they considered it to '*capture a wider range of teaching tasks*' (p801) and to be a valid and reliable assessment of teacher efficacy beliefs (established from their own initial studies). They were confident that using the scale in research could help to improve our understanding of teacher efficacy beliefs and influence the way that new teachers are trained and inducted into the profession.

'The OSTES is a promising tool for capturing this powerful construct and putting it to constructive use.' (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p803)

They discuss many potential uses such as longitudinal studies of teachers as they train and into their first years of teaching in order to compare the contextual influences upon teacher efficacy beliefs and its development over time. They also note the possible importance of leadership style in a school and suggest an exploration of the factors that may cause experienced teachers to reassess their efficacy beliefs.

However, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) fail to explain why a quantitative measure of teacher efficacy beliefs is the best method to investigate these research areas. For example, reassessing teachers each year using the OSTES starting from their training year will only tell you what elements of teacher efficacy beliefs have changed (if at all) and in what direction. Without finding out which contextual factors are present for these teachers it would be very difficult to ascertain what the cause of these changes in beliefs are. Therefore, qualitative research, making use of the interview method would also be necessary in order to explore in more detail the influences upon teacher efficacy beliefs.

Many early research studies into teacher efficacy beliefs were focused on quantitative analysis, with researchers measuring individual and collective teacher efficacy beliefs and correlating scores with other quantifiable measures such as student achievement (eg. Goddard et al., 2000). Although driven by the desire to have a better knowledge of the construct, it could be argued that just

measuring a teacher's efficacy beliefs ignores the complexity of the construct. Researchers are unlikely to be able to fully understand an individual teacher's efficacy beliefs and its relationship with other factors without speaking to them about their teaching career and current work situation. Although an ability to generalise how differing teacher efficacy beliefs impact upon student outcomes and teacher performance is tempting, ignoring the specific situations and cognitions of individual teachers may prevent research in this area from achieving its potential of influencing policy makers and schools. If positive teacher efficacy beliefs are found to be of benefit to high profile outcomes such as student achievement, the measurement of teacher efficacy beliefs itself may not help researchers to understand *how* they can be influenced. Some research in the field has started to address this concern (eg. Cheung, 2008; Milner and Woolfolk Hoy, 2003; Klassen and Durksen, 2014) often using mixed methods to explore the concept and its interactions further.

2.2 The significance of teacher efficacy beliefs for schools and policy makers

2.2.1 The relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and teacher wellbeing

In recent years there has been an increased interest in how schools can create a climate of positive wellbeing for their staff members (Buie, 2009; Wong and Zhang, 2014). An international OECD research project into teacher policy (OECD, 2005) indicates that many countries are experiencing high teacher attrition and that teachers are reporting heavy workloads, stress and poor job satisfaction. There are various negative implications of teacher attrition, such as the financial costs of training teachers that do not stay in teaching (Cockburn and Haydn, 2004) and the impact on school climate, including lack of professional trust amongst teachers (Guin, 2004). Research also indicates that teachers with good social and emotional wellbeing have positive effects on student learning through the creation of an effective classroom climate (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009). A study into teachers' health and wellbeing in Scotland (Dunlop and Macdonald, 2004) found that 44% of teachers reported their job as very or extremely

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stressful, therefore finding ways to help teachers cope with the demands of the job are important in order to reduce attrition and improve student outcomes.

A teacher's efficacy cognitions are believed to influence their professional commitment (Coladarci, 1992; Ware and Kitsantas, 2007, 2011; Klassen et al., 2013), their job satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2006, Hoigaard et al., 2012) and how resilient they are in difficult situations (Ashton and Webb, 1986).

'Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to be able to create the conditions and to promote the interpersonal networks that nourish and sustain their work satisfaction.' (Caprara et al., 2006, p485)

The positive impact of perceived efficacy beliefs upon the management of stressful situations is noted by Bandura and Locke (2003). For example, research has shown that increasing dental patients' self-efficacy beliefs has a more significant influence upon anxiety reactions and self-rated anxiety than relaxation methods and sedatives (Litt et al., 1993). If positive efficacy beliefs enable individuals to cope better with stress and anxiety it would be beneficial for schools to find ways to enhance the efficacy beliefs of teachers in order to reduce attrition and enhance performance.

In this section, previous research highlighting the relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and elements of wellbeing such as job stress and burnout will be discussed. A study of 724 primary and secondary teachers in Spain (Betoret, 2009) found that perceived self-efficacy reduced the impact of potential job stressors (such as work overload, role ambiguity, inadequate resources and pupil misbehaviour) on individuals, particularly in secondary teachers. Job stressors were also found to correlate positively with teacher burnout and have previously been found to be linked with absenteeism (Pierce and Molloy, 1990). Therefore, this evidence suggests that exploring ways to improve teacher efficacy beliefs in school teachers may bring about improvements to teacher wellbeing and attendance at work. This is likely to have a positive impact upon teacher performance, which makes research that can highlight methods to improve teacher efficacy beliefs important for schools and policy makers.

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Brouwers and Tomic (2000) describe burnout as a psychological syndrome consisting of three elements; emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation from colleagues and the people in one's care and reduced personal achievement. In a five month longitudinal study of 558 secondary teachers from 15 schools in the Netherlands they found that these three elements of burnout had different interactions with perceived self-efficacy in classroom management. Emotional exhaustion had a negative effect on perceived self-efficacy and this was explained by Brouwers and Tomic as due to teachers performing poorly when emotionally exhausted, therefore evaluating their performance negatively which reduced their perceived self-efficacy. This finding has some parallels with Sutton and Wheatley's (2003) suggestion that experiencing negative emotions reduces self-efficacy beliefs. Brouwers and Tomic also found that perceived self-efficacy in classroom management affected depersonalisation and personal accomplishment (low perceived efficacy in classroom management increased depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment). The effect of perceived self-efficacy in classroom management upon depersonalisation is suggested to be due to teachers blaming their doubt in their classroom management skills on the students, therefore developing a negative attitude towards them. Overall, the study highlights the possible effect of perceived efficacy in a particular classroom skill upon aspects of teacher burnout, therefore possibly explaining how teacher efficacy beliefs interact with teacher wellbeing. However, it is not clear if all types of teacher efficacy beliefs would have the same relationship with burnout, therefore reducing the usefulness of this research.

A recent study of primary, middle and high school teachers in Italy (Moe et al., 2010) found that high teacher efficacy and positive affect are needed in order for the teachers they surveyed to have job satisfaction. Of particular interest, is that teacher competence in pedagogy is not enough for high job satisfaction by itself; positive affect and efficacy were found to be essential factors.

'No effect, not even detrimental, on job satisfaction can be expected by improving teachers' use of good practices and praxes without complementary action on positive affect and self-efficacy. Teachers are at

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risk of becoming very able to teach, but without feeling satisfied when they lack the support of these beliefs and emotions.' (Moe et al., 2010, p1151)

This research suggests that however well meaning professional development activities may be, some teachers are not motivated in terms of their personal affect for teaching. Negative emotions such as stress and apathy may lead to increasing levels of teacher attrition and have negative affects upon the climate they create in the classroom (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009). This makes it even more important for researchers to find out what types of professional development activities have a positive impact on teacher efficacy beliefs so that schools can focus their valuable time and resources appropriately. The research also adds further weight to the argument that schools should aim to improve teacher wellbeing in order to improve performance.

In contrast to some of the other research, Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) found that in their sample of 179 elementary teachers, sense of personal teaching efficacy was not significantly related to morale (collective sense of trust, pride and support amongst colleagues). They suggested that supportive school environments may foster job satisfaction and reduce stress, but that the ability of the school to support teachers with instrumental tasks such as class management and instructional issues has more impact upon teacher efficacy beliefs. They reported that teachers with high personal efficacy beliefs perceived their colleagues to set high and achievable goals, created an orderly environment and respected academic excellence. These findings suggest that teachers are able to separate some aspects of their affective state (sense of morale) from their perceived efficacy, although they did find a positive relationship between morale and general teaching efficacy (a teacher's beliefs that teachers in general can influence student outcomes). These findings are interesting as they appear to disagree with research that reports relationships between teacher efficacy beliefs and elements of wellbeing such as burnout and stress (eg. Brouwers and Tomic, 2000; Betoret, 2009). However, I would argue that a school which is very good at supporting teachers with instrumental tasks may also be a school where morale is positive too (due to teachers feeling that they are effectively supported in their role), therefore it may be difficult to separate these two aspects

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completely. In addition, although morale can be considered an element of teacher wellbeing, Hoy and Woolfolk themselves define it as a collective state (as opposed to stress and burnout which are an individual state), therefore it is perhaps not surprising that personal teacher efficacy beliefs were not found to be related to morale but general teaching efficacy beliefs were.

In a recent longitudinal study of trainee teachers' self-efficacy and work stress levels during their final teaching placement, Klassen and Durksen (2014) used qualitative data to explain what contextual factors led to the quantitative findings observed (the key finding was that for most participants self-efficacy increased through the placement and work stress decreased but there was also much individual variation). The qualitative data came from open-ended questions on the weekly questionnaires sent to the participants. They used NVivo software to produce memos and coding nodes in order to identify key themes and categories in the data and then identified key participants who exemplified particular patterns. The addition of this qualitative element to the research enabled the researchers to explore the reasons for particular patterns of self-efficacy and stress development. For example, participants who showed increased self-efficacy and reduced work stress as the placement continued tended to show positive efficacy for influencing decisions and management in the classroom, and sources of stress tended to be due to teaching activities such as working late to complete lesson planning and assessment.

Klassen and Durksen (2014) were able to show that self-efficacy and work stress are dynamic processes that are sensitive to change during teacher training but they were not able to confirm that self-efficacy and work stress are related to each other as previous research has suggested (Betoret, 2009). Klassen and Durksen suggest that trainee teachers with high teacher efficacy beliefs are able to separate their stress reactions so that they do not influence their efficacy beliefs. The notion that high stress does not inevitably lead to low self-efficacy beliefs is perhaps reassuring, especially as teaching is considered to be a stressful career (Teacher Support Network, 2014). However, this relationship was not reported for all participants, therefore further exploration of possible mediators of the stress-efficacy beliefs relationship is required.

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2.2.2 *The relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and teacher performance*

There is no doubt that teachers are an important part of a good school and that they can have a lasting impact on the students they teach. In Hattie's book (2009) which brings together over 800 educational meta-analyses focusing on student achievement he claims that '*Teachers are among the most powerful influences on learning.*' (p238). How to improve the performance of teachers is therefore an important focus for policy makers and educational researchers, as better teachers should lead to better student outcomes.

In a meta-analysis of 114 studies, Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) reported the relationship between perceived self-efficacy and work performance to be significantly positively correlated. When the findings were compared with other meta-analyses investigating the influence of goal-setting and feedback on performance, gains for performance were much higher for self-efficacy beliefs (28% gain in performance compared to 10.39% and 13.6% respectively). This highlights the significance of the influence of self-efficacy beliefs upon work performance. As Bandura's (1997) theory argues that self-efficacy beliefs are specific to particular domains of practice, it is not unreasonable to infer that teacher efficacy beliefs may have a similar influence upon work performance.

However, how can the work performance of a teacher be measured or defined? If it is to be measured by student outcomes then as Klassen et al. (2011) points out in their review of teacher efficacy research up until 2009, there is very little research focusing on the influence of individual teacher efficacy beliefs upon student outcomes (Klassen et al. found a total of 9 studies between 1986 and 2009, with 5 of these focusing on individual efficacy beliefs as opposed to collective efficacy beliefs). A RAND study by Armor et al. (1976) found that positive teacher efficacy beliefs were one of the factors that influenced the reading progress of elementary students in an American state. Ross (1992) investigated how coaching and the perceived efficacy beliefs (measured using Gibson and Dembo's scale, 1984) of 18 history teachers in America affected student achievement, reporting that personal teaching efficacy beliefs were significantly related to student outcomes. Perhaps the most recent study of over

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2000 junior high teachers in Italy to report significant relationships between teacher efficacy beliefs and student outcomes (Caprara et al., 2006) also claimed that the relationship is likely to be reciprocal (as would be predicted by social-cognitive theory). This theory would suggest that there are gains in teachers' efficacy beliefs over time as they see students' achievements improve. Such a relationship would make sense if student outcomes are viewed as mastery experiences in which teachers experience success.

In an attempt to fill some of the gaps in the research focusing on the relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and student outcomes, Klassen and Tze (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of 43 quantitative published and unpublished studies between 1985 and 2013 that measured teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, personality characteristics and an external measure of student achievement or teaching performance (the last two being measures of teaching effectiveness). They found a small but significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and teaching effectiveness.

More research has focused upon the relationship between collective teacher efficacy beliefs and student outcomes. Bandura (1997) extended his self-efficacy construct to organisations, suggesting that shared efficacy beliefs can create collective agency (the intentional pursuit of a course of action) and therefore more successful organisations. Bandura (2000) explains that collective efficacy beliefs can influence the aims of an organisation, how well resources are used, the effort put in to the group's aims and resilience in the face of setbacks.

Goddard, Hoy and Woolfolk Hoy (2004) suggest that '*collective expectations for action*' (p9) exert a strong influence upon individual teachers' behaviours and that '*teachers' thoughts about their own capabilities will be influenced by beliefs about group capability that characterise the culture of their schools*' (p9). They argue that the relationship between individual teacher efficacy beliefs and collective efficacy beliefs are unidirectional, therefore a school with many individual teachers with positive efficacy beliefs is also likely to have positive collective efficacy beliefs. Indeed, Goddard and Goddard (2001) found that collective efficacy beliefs were a much stronger predictor of individual teacher efficacy beliefs than other school contextual factors such as school

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socioeconomic status, school size and past achievement. A meta-analysis of 8 studies by Ramos et al. (2014) supports these conclusions, with 100% of the studies reporting a moderate to strong positive correlation between collective efficacy beliefs and individual teacher efficacy beliefs. If this relationship between collective and individual efficacy beliefs is valid, then we could argue that research showing the positive influence of collective efficacy beliefs upon student outcomes may also indicate a similar relationship for individual teacher efficacy beliefs.

Klassen et al. (2011) suggest that the most successful schools tend to have positive collective efficacy beliefs.

'Whereas successful teachers are likely to possess a strong sense of their own self-efficacy, successful schools are characterised by teachers' collective beliefs in their school staff's capabilities to help students develop and learn.'

This claim is supported by previous research that has shown collective efficacy beliefs are positively correlated to student achievement. Bandura (1993) investigated the relationship between collective efficacy beliefs and student achievement, reporting that collective efficacy beliefs are significantly positively related to student achievement and that they have a greater impact upon student outcomes than student socioeconomic status. Similar relationships have been found by other researchers since (Goddard et al., 2000; Tschannen-Moran and Barr, 2004). A meta-analysis of 12 studies investigating collective efficacy beliefs and student performance between the year 2000 and 2013 found that 100% of the studies reported a positive relationship between collective efficacy beliefs and student performance (Ramos et al., 2014).

I would agree with Klassen et al's (2011) argument that more research needs to investigate the links between individual teacher efficacy beliefs and student outcomes. Much of the research has focused on relationships between teacher efficacy beliefs and elements of teacher wellbeing such as stress, burnout and job satisfaction. These types of wellbeing factors have been found to influence work performance in general (Meyer et al., 2002) so are likely to impact student outcomes by proxy. Indeed, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) argue that positive

emotions are conducive to more successful individuals in a range of areas including health and work performance. However, without plenty of direct evidence that teacher efficacy beliefs affect student outcomes policy makers are less likely to be interested in how teacher efficacy beliefs can be enhanced. This is one area that may benefit from further quantitative research, making use of reliable and valid measures of teacher efficacy beliefs and relating these to student outcomes. Perhaps longitudinal research would allow researchers to explore how individual teachers with varying perceived efficacy affect the outcomes of their students over the period of an academic year.

2.3 Bandura's suggested sources of self-efficacy beliefs

'Efficacy beliefs are the product of cognitive processing of diverse sources of efficacy information conveyed enactively, vicariously, socially and physiologically. Once formed, efficacy beliefs contribute to the quality of human functioning in diverse ways. They do so by enlisting cognitive, motivational, affective, and decisional processes through which accomplishments are realised.' (Bandura, 1997, p115)

In Bandura's book 'Self efficacy: The exercise of control' (1997) he outlines four main sources of efficacy beliefs: enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological and affective states. In this section, these four sources will be outlined, as well as a critical discussion of their possible significance for teacher efficacy beliefs and the previous literature in this area.

2.3.1 Enactive mastery experiences

Bandura (1997) states that enactive mastery experiences (experiencing successes or failures in performance) are the most salient source of efficacy beliefs, with successes generally raising personal efficacy beliefs and failures lowering them. Bandura suggests that it is not the successes or failures themselves that change efficacy beliefs, but how the individual weighs up the

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various factors that contributed to these events. In other words, the cognitive processing of the performance event is significant. Bandura asserts that the strength of existing efficacy beliefs, the task difficulty, contextual factors, the effort put into the task and biases in individuals' focus on successful or poor performances are all factors that will affect the saliency of enactive mastery experiences.

Due to the large proportion of time spent directly teaching students, a classroom teacher's most frequent mastery experience is likely to result from their performance in the classroom during everyday teaching. Therefore, their cognitive processing regarding taught lessons may be the main focus for this suggested source of efficacy beliefs. For example, a teacher may feel they have taught a good lesson where the students have made a lot of progress. The teacher could put this down to the extra planning they did for the lesson and the way in which they explained the tasks. If this class are normally more challenging to teach then the teacher may be more likely to believe that their teaching skills (and possibly the lessons they taught previously with this class too) have produced the good lesson, resulting in improved teacher efficacy beliefs. On the other hand, the teacher could attribute the good progress made by students to the fact they are normally a very receptive class, therefore the mastery experience has less impact upon the teacher's efficacy beliefs as they don't believe their teaching skills were as important to the success.

2.3.2 Vicarious experiences

Bandura's next suggested source of efficacy beliefs, vicarious experience, is based on the assertion that people judge their own capabilities in comparison to the capabilities of others.

"More often in everyday life, people compare themselves to particular associates in similar situations, such as classmates, work associates, competitors, or people in other settings engaged in similar endeavours"
(Bandura, 1997, p87)

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Therefore, according to Bandura, the targets of social comparison are particularly important. Associates with very high capabilities will be more difficult to surpass, consequently lowering an individual's efficacy beliefs, whereas if associates can be outperformed, efficacy beliefs in the individual are raised. Other factors are also significant when comparing one's capabilities to others. When observing associates (models) similar to oneself succeed, individuals can persuade themselves that they can also perform successfully (Bandura, 1982). In contrast, if a similar associate fails to perform, an individual's own efficacy beliefs tend to lower (Brown and Inouye, 1978). Most schools encourage teachers to observe their colleagues teach and it is an integral part of teacher training courses, therefore there is certainly potential for vicarious experience to be a source that influences teacher efficacy beliefs.

According to Bandura, there are many varied influences of models upon an individual's efficacy beliefs, which can include actual (such as watching a colleague) and symbolic models (such as observing somebody on television). He suggests that when aspiring to achieve particular skills, individuals will '*actively seek proficient models*' (Bandura, 1997, p88) in order to fill in any skill gaps they may have (instructive modelling). Models also serve to influence the observer by modelling attitudes to dealing with challenges, with models who show resilience encouraging higher perceived efficacy in the observers (Zimmerman and Ringle, 1981). In addition, Bandura discusses the positive impact of self-modelling upon efficacy beliefs. For example, taking videos of children completing tasks successfully then playing them back to them has been found to develop stronger beliefs in their learning capabilities compared to children who were given the same task and guidance but did not view a video of themselves completing it successfully (Schunk and Hanson, 1989).

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2.3.3 Verbal persuasion

Bandura (1997) argues that:

'It is easier to sustain a sense of efficacy, especially when struggling with difficulties, if significant others express faith in one's capabilities than if they convey doubts.' (p101)

Of note here are the words '*significant others*' implying that the person delivering the persuasion needs to be of importance to the person receiving it in order for it to be most effective. Bandura suggests that people tend to believe that they know themselves better than other people do. Therefore, if social persuasion is to be effective the person receiving it must have confidence in the credibility of the persuader. It has been found that evaluative feedback about one's capabilities are more likely to be trusted when it comes from a person with skills, knowledge and experience in the area (Crundall and Foddy, 1981).

The way in which verbal persuasion is framed can also influence its effectiveness. For example, being told that you have the ability to succeed at a task because of continued effort has been found to have a lesser impact upon efficacy beliefs than being told that your progress shows ability with no reference to effort (Schunk, 1983). Framing feedback by referring to the extent to which a person has missed a goal or how much they still have to go to achieve it tends to reduce efficacy beliefs compared to objectively equivalent feedback that is framed in terms of how much progress has been made towards the goal (Jourden, 1991, cited by Bandura, 1997). Bandura comments that in everyday life '*good work is taken for granted but shortfalls bring ready criticism*' (Bandura, 1997, p103). This implies that evaluative feedback tends to be framed in a way that focuses upon what hasn't been achieved rather than what has, thus increasing the likelihood that an individual's efficacy beliefs will be negatively influenced. This is perhaps a rather anecdotal comment by Bandura, but research into the nature of feedback and how it influences efficacy beliefs in everyday life is certainly important if we are to understand how individuals can perform well.

Since Bandura's book was published in 1997 a great deal of research has taken place into the most effective feedback for students, particularly in school settings.

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For example, Dylan Wiliam and Paul Black's research reviews into assessment in schools (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Wiliam and Black, 1990) suggested that giving effective feedback to students had a significant impact on their learning and attainment and this has had a big impact upon feedback pedagogy in schools. In particular, the use of effective *formative* assessment was highlighted, such as giving written feedback that explained what had been done well and the next steps needed to improve, as well as classroom practices such as involving students in assessing their own learning. The relationship between feedback and what they called 'personal features' such as self-efficacy, self-concept and self-attribution was also discussed, with the suggestion that formative feedback with an emphasis on the importance of effort has a positive impact on self-perceptions (Black and Wiliam, 1998). In a review of feedback research, Hattie and Temperley (2007) suggest that the most effective types of feedback enable learners to understand 'where am I going?', 'how am I going?' and 'where to next?' rather than just provide a snapshot of achievement.

Bandura argues that verbal persuasion for success is most effective when the appraisal is not too far from what the individual can do already, persuading them that a bit of extra effort and better strategies will improve their performance. However, this will not work if the individual does not already have the necessary underlying skills to achieve the goal, '*social persuasion alone cannot substitute for skills development*' (Bandura, 1997, p105). Social persuasion will need to be used in combination with other strategies. Where skills are lacking, Bandura states that:

'Efficacy beliefs are best instilled by presenting the pursuit as relying on acquirable skills, raising performers' beliefs in their abilities to acquire the skills, modelling the requisite skills, structuring activities in masterable steps that ensure a high level of success, and providing explicit feedback of continued progress.' (Bandura, 1997, p105)

However, Bandura does not make reference to any research supporting this statement nor give any examples of how this might occur in a real-life context. Bandura suggests that '*skilled efficacy builders*' (p106) don't just give positive

feedback, they plan activities so that their mentees can achieve successes rather than failures, using their knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. He argues that they encourage individuals to be concerned about their own self-improvement rather than competing with others. This has some overlap with achievement goal theory (Dweck, 1999) suggesting that individuals who have mastery goals (aiming to become better at a particular skill through effort) rather than performance goals (aiming to compete with others) are more successful.

2.3.4 Physiological and affective states

Bandura (1997) suggests that the fourth main source of efficacy beliefs depends on the information people receive from somatic indicators such as physiological arousal and emotional reactions, with high arousal and negative emotions tending to indicate to a person that they are inefficacious. Bandura reminds us that, like the other three sources of efficacy beliefs, the cognitive processing of physiological and affective states is particularly important, therefore how we perceive and interpret somatic indicators may be more indicative of the consequential behaviour than the actual physiological state itself.

Bandura (1997) states that the situation we are in can affect the way in which we interpret our physiological state. For example, sweating during an interview could be interpreted as due to the room temperature or ascribed to feeling stressed or lack of confidence. Bandura also argues that pre-existing efficacy beliefs can bias the cognitive processing of physiological and affective states. So, an individual with positive views of their ability is less likely to interpret sweating in an interview as a sign of their inability to cope than an individual with a low sense of efficacy. In addition, mood can also influence the cognitive processing of an event, with positive moods tending to produce positive efficacy beliefs and negative moods reducing perceived efficacy (Forgas et al., 1990; Kavanagh and Bower, 1985).

2.3.5 How valid are Bandura's suggested sources of efficacy beliefs for teachers?

One possible criticism of Bandura's social cognitive theory about the sources of self-efficacy beliefs is the reliance on experimental studies. Much of the research he discusses to support his claims about the various sources of efficacy beliefs manipulates variables in an artificial setting. Therefore, it could be argued that the research may lack ecological validity as the findings may not be replicable in a real-life situation. For example, Forgas et al.'s (1990) research into the influence of affective states on achievement attributions made use of 'life dilemmas' in order to assess how the participants would make attributions about success and failure. The use of fake dilemmas may not necessarily reflect the actual attributions a person would make if the situation happened in real-life as participants' responses could be influenced by demand characteristics (anticipating the researchers' aims) or social desirability bias (responding in a way which would reflect positively upon them). Forgas et al. also manipulated mood by changing the instructions given to participants for a test of verbal abilities (in the positive mood condition they were told most people find the task very hard and were told their skills were well above average and in the negative mood condition they were told most people find the task very easy and were told their skills are below average) and subsequently measured mood with a self-rating 7 point scale. Although the researchers found that participants' mood assessments matched the mood condition they were given, it is questionable whether in real-life such simple dichotomies could be reproduced and measured.

However, as Bandura (2012) points out, there is now a wealth of varied research investigating the power of self-efficacy beliefs as a predictor of behaviour and performance. The fact that so many consistent findings have been reported by multiple research studies suggests that social cognitive theory and more specifically perceived self-efficacy do have construct validity. There is certainly a place for controlled experimental research, especially when establishing the exact causal determinants of behaviour. What is not clear, is whether the four sources of efficacy beliefs outlined by Bandura are actually reported in real lives.

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As the evidence Bandura cites to support his claims is not specific to teacher efficacy beliefs it is not necessarily the case that these sources of efficacy beliefs are valid in this particular domain. Perhaps there are other sources that influence the development of teacher efficacy beliefs or perhaps they could have differing powers in this domain than in others? As Klassen et al. (2011) have pointed out, there are limited studies investigating the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs but there does seem to be a certain level of agreement with the four sources predicted by Bandura (1997) in social cognitive theory.

Survey research of 86 Chinese primary teachers by Cheung (2008) asked teachers to list factors that had influenced their self-efficacy beliefs and they completed a content analysis of the responses (this open ended question was a follow up to a quantitative survey of 1400 teachers' efficacy beliefs). The researcher classified the responses into categories and found that the experience teachers gained from teaching on a daily basis was one of the most frequent categories in the data (the other frequent categories were respect and confidence placed in them by students and parents and training received from universities). They also found that the length of teaching experience related to teaching efficacy beliefs, with more experience equating to more positive efficacy beliefs. Cheung suggests that more time in the classroom gives teachers more experience dealing with different situations, leading them to critically reflect on their performance and deal with the situation differently next time, therefore increasing perceived efficacy.

Research by Cheung (2008) provides some support for mastery experiences as a source of teacher efficacy beliefs but the evidence is weak. The category produced from the content analysis of the open ended questions in the survey is quite vague, therefore it is not clear from the research exactly what types of experiences in daily teaching are influencing teachers' efficacy beliefs. Follow up interviews with the teachers would have helped to further understand how their experiences in the classroom are influencing efficacy beliefs. Of particular interest in this study is that other sources of efficacy beliefs listed by the teachers do not appear to match Bandura's suggested sources. In addition to 'daily teaching experiences' the categories identified by content analysis included

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'respect and confidence placed in them by students and parents' and 'the training they received from universities'. Consequently, the notion that the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs may differ from Bandura's theory may have some validity.

Cheung's (2008) sample consisted of Chinese primary teachers therefore there is the possibility that the same results would not be found in other cultures if the survey was repeated. As there is a lack of research investigating sources of teacher efficacy beliefs it is difficult to ascertain if the results of the study may be culturally biased. There may also be a gender bias as 1120 out of the 1400 teachers surveyed in the quantitative part of the study were female. Cheung identified from their research a significant difference between levels of efficacy beliefs, with females scoring much higher but he does not state how many of the 86 open ended follow up surveys were completed by females and males.

Poulou (2007) created the Teaching Efficacy Sources Inventory (TESI) in order to assess the sources of efficacy information for preservice teachers. The inventory was based on interviews with 32 student teachers (28 female, 4 male) and after testing its content validity and reliability it was administered to 198 preservice elementary teachers in Greece along with the Teachers Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001). Poulou reported that student teachers' personal motivation and personality characteristics such as communication with pupils and ability to organise teaching time were strong sources of efficacy information. In relation to Banduras' (1997) sources, she also found that enactive mastery experiences (placement experiences) and verbal persuasion from pupils were significant factors (verbal persuasion from colleagues was not influential) but vicarious experiences and physiological and affective states were not. Although this study is based on a fairly small sample of Greek student teachers and therefore may not represent experienced teachers in other parts of the world it does provide some support for Bandura's four sources of efficacy information as well as suggesting some other sources of efficacy information. When an adapted version of the TESI was utilised in an Australian study of 573 student teachers' efficacy for classroom management (O'Neill and Stephenson, 2012) similar findings were reported, with enactive mastery experiences and verbal persuasion (from their in school teacher mentors) being

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the most important sources and personal quality scores being the best predictor of their sense of efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2007) quantitative survey research comparing the sources of efficacy beliefs for 255 novice and experienced teachers reported that social persuasion was not significantly related to efficacy beliefs for experienced teachers but was particularly influential for novice teachers. However, the researchers did find that social persuasion had a positive influence upon experienced teachers' sense of satisfaction about their teaching performance. Another difference found between novice and experienced teachers was the influence of some contextual factors. Novice teachers' sense of efficacy was related to the availability of resources, whereas experienced teachers were not affected by this factor. In terms of support for Bandura's theory, mastery experiences were found to be the most important source of efficacy beliefs for both novice and experienced teachers (although more salient for novice teachers).

In terms of teacher efficacy beliefs and the influence of vicarious experiences, teacher colleagues may be the most likely source of modelling. Capa and Woolfolk Hoy (2005) investigated the influence of mentors upon 70 student teachers (by measuring the student teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of their mentor as a teacher and administering the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale designed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) and found that there was no significant relationship with the student teachers' efficacy beliefs. They suggest that this could be because the student teachers did not perceive the mentor as similar to themselves, therefore the vicarious experience was less powerful. Bandura (1997) suggests that if another individual has very high capabilities that are difficult to surpass then this could have the effect of lowering self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, this could be another interpretation of the findings that has not been considered. However, the study did find that the relationship with the mentor was important for efficacy beliefs, as well as the support received from the school and training provider (possibly echoing Cheung's (2008) findings regarding the influence of university training on Chinese teachers' efficacy beliefs).

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Klassen and Durksen's (2014) research investigating teacher efficacy beliefs and work stress in preservice teachers (discussed previously in section 2.2.1) also indicates that mentors may have a strong influence upon early teacher efficacy beliefs. The qualitative analyses showed that the mentor had considerable influence upon changes in efficacy beliefs and stress in the trainee teachers, both positively and negatively. This was suggested to indicate the key impact of verbal persuasion upon efficacy beliefs, but Klassen and Durksen also state that the mentor has influence in other ways such as a source of motivation and modeling good practice (vicarious experience). Moulding et al. (2014) also found that preservice elementary teachers' perceptions of support from their mentor had a significant relationship with teacher efficacy beliefs (as measured by the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), therefore vicarious experiences and verbal persuasion through the effective support of a mentor do seem to have some validity in the teacher efficacy beliefs literature.

Mulholland and Wallace (2001) conducted a 3 year longitudinal case study of a preservice elementary teacher (Katie) in Australia, investigating how the teacher's efficacy beliefs for teaching science were influenced. They found that Katie's initial lack of efficacy beliefs for teaching science was affected by the modelling of other more experienced teachers who avoided the kind of activities that Katie was trying to implement in the classroom as a trainee. As Katie's training continued she experienced success teaching science topics (mastery experiences) that strengthened her efficacy beliefs. As a qualified teacher in her first year, Katie experienced doubts in her abilities to teach science through practical group work activities. These doubts seemed to be reinforced by the more experienced teachers in her school who expressed surprise (social persuasion) when Katie talked about her plans for cooperative teaching and again avoided teaching this way themselves (vicarious modelling). However, in her training and first year of teaching Katie's efficacy beliefs were enhanced by the feedback from students who enjoyed and were enthusiastic about her science lessons (aligning with the findings from Poulou, 2007). Her efficacy beliefs for class management also appeared to be positively influenced by social

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persuasion, as by talking to other teachers she realised that her expectations needed to change and she reassessed the way that she judged her performance in this area. This research provides support for the notion that vicarious experiences are particularly influential (in this case negatively) where individuals lack experience (Bandura, 1997) and suggests that discussion of experiences with models was just as powerful as observing models. Social persuasion appeared to have negative and positive affects upon teacher efficacy beliefs. The significance of social persuasion for novice teachers is also supported by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2007) study comparing novice and experienced teachers' efficacy beliefs and Klassen and Durksen's (2014) research. As suggested by Bandura, mastery experiences were an important source of efficacy beliefs for Katie. There was also some evidence that Katie used her physiological and emotional state to judge her efficacy. For example, when she was particularly tired she interpreted this as evidence she was unable to manage her class.

Research into collective efficacy beliefs has also supported much of Bandura's (1997) theory about the sources of efficacy beliefs. For example, the positive affect of prior achievement scores on collective efficacy (Goddard, 2001) is suggested to be an example of the effect of mastery experiences on teachers (ie. the fact students are achieving well suggests to teachers they/the school are effective). It is not difficult to extrapolate this to individual teacher efficacy beliefs with the performance of individual classes acting as enactive mastery experiences. On a cautionary note, Goddard, LoGerfo and Hoy (2004) argue that if past success is too frequent and easy, the collective may be discouraged if they experience failure.

'A resilient sense of collective efficacy requires experience in overcoming difficulties through persistent effort.' (p5)

Therefore, the most resilient type of collective efficacy may be formed when a school has positive experiences of working through highs and lows in its achievement. In order to investigate these claims further, more research into the effect of overall school success and failures on efficacy beliefs is required.

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Vicarious experience as a source of collective teacher efficacy beliefs is suggested by Ross et al. (2004) to be rooted in teacher collaboration and interaction.

'.....teacher collaboration might create a climate that legitimates help seeking, joint problem solving, and instructional experimentation. By interacting with their colleagues, teachers might acquire teaching strategies that enhance their effectiveness, thereby increasing perceptions of their individual and collective success and expectations for the future.'

(Ross et al, 2004, p167)

On a similar theme, social persuasion is suggested to originate from cohesive groups of teachers and collaborations, which help to persuade members they are an effective team. This has parallels with the research on individual teacher efficacy beliefs (eg Ashton and Webb, 1986; Knoblauch and Hoy, 2008) indicating that the sources of individual and collective efficacy beliefs are similar.

Of note is that the influence of physiological and affective states have not been investigated specifically in relation to teacher efficacy beliefs. Some research (Mulholland and Wallace, 2001) has indicated how the interpretation of these states may change as teachers gain experience but the source has received relatively little attention in the literature. Ross et al. (2004) propose that emotional turmoil indicates to the members of an organisation that it lacks the ability to fulfil its aims and therefore will have a negative influence on collective efficacy beliefs. Perhaps this aspect has not been investigated in relation to collective efficacy beliefs due to the lack of qualitative research in this area, as it would be difficult to assess the effect of physiological and emotional states on efficacy beliefs without interviewing or observing teachers individually.

Although there appears to be some agreement with Bandura's (1997) suggested sources of efficacy beliefs for teachers, further research focused on the lived experiences of modern teachers is required to improve our understanding of how teachers interpret and attend to these sources. Klassen et al. (2011) conducted a review of teacher efficacy research from 1998 to 2009 and identified only seven studies that explicitly studied the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs. Klassen et al. argues that there has been insufficient research

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into the sources of teacher individual and collective efficacy and that future research should focus on how the sources form, change and develop over time. Indeed, recent research by Klassen and Durkhurst (2014) has begun to address these deficiencies in our understanding of the development of efficacy beliefs in trainee teachers.

Like Klassen et al. (2011), Henson (2002) also noted the need for research into the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs and practical ways to influence them.

‘The advancement of teacher efficacy into the next stage of its developmental life would be fostered by empirical evaluation of the sources of efficacy building information, collective teacher efficacy, and methods for impacting efficacy change in teachers’ (p147)

A focus on how the sources form, change and develop over time could be addressed by conducting qualitative interview research with teachers in which they are given the opportunity to explain and reflect on the sources of their efficacy beliefs (Henson, 2002), thus also adding more contextual information to the mainly quantitative research on teacher efficacy beliefs so far.

‘Qualitative research could explore what events and influences teachers attribute to the development of their efficacy beliefs.....Interpretative case studies and qualitative investigations are needed to refine our understanding of the process of developing efficacy.’ (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p242)

Much teacher efficacy research focuses upon trainee teachers’ efficacy beliefs. This may reflect the fact that teacher efficacy beliefs are believed to be more malleable at the start of a teacher’s career (Bandura, 1997; Henson, 2001) and the relatively easier access to trainee teachers by educational researchers (where preservice teachers complete their training at a Higher Education Institution). However, research with samples of experienced teachers is also necessary in order to help us fully understand the development of teacher efficacy beliefs and to confirm the notion that efficacy beliefs are more resistant to change the more developed they are. Career teachers will have experienced a

variety of situations, events and contextual factors that could help to provide a more nuanced theory of self-efficacy formation.

Klassen et al. (2011) sensibly suggest that reliable theories on the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs need to be established before the application of research to enhance teacher efficacy takes place (and they are critical of the continued focus on Bandura's (1997) theorised sources of efficacy beliefs). My research aims to provide further exploration of the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs through the grounded theory method, attempting to further explore the factors influencing their development. Grounded theory research, due to its focus on the emerging theories from the data, may help to provide further insight that could confirm and/or further develop the sources of efficacy beliefs initially theorised by Bandura. Moreover, qualitative research that focuses on the specific contexts of modern teachers is likely to provide rich data that can help schools and researchers to develop methods of enhancing teacher efficacy beliefs.

2.4 Sources of teacher efficacy beliefs: Does context matter?

A possible aspect that is underdeveloped in research investigating the sources of efficacy beliefs is the relevance of contextual factors in the formation of efficacy beliefs. Adams and Forsyth (2006) argue that research explaining teacher efficacy beliefs purely by focusing on Bandura's sources of efficacy beliefs may explain the cognitive development of these beliefs but fails to address how differing school conditions affect efficacy beliefs and teachers' assessments of the teaching task (the latter concept is seen in the teacher efficacy beliefs models by Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Goddard et al., 2000). Adams and Forsyth point out that Bandura's social cognitive theory does in fact take account of contextual factors as having influence upon efficacy beliefs, although the focus is upon cognition. Through triadic reciprocity, past experiences, social and emotional factors and the present environment are all considered when an individual judges their abilities to complete a task. As discussed in section 2.1.1, locus of control theory was the initial model used to explain teacher efficacy beliefs and this theory has a stronger focus upon contextual factors. Perceived efficacy

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beliefs are formed by an individual (or group in the case of collective efficacy beliefs) weighing up their abilities compared to the power of the environmental circumstances. In other words, to what extent are outcomes in the specific situation controlled by the individual or by the environment?

Both locus of control theory and social cognitive theory have been incorporated into conceptual models attempting to outline the construct of teacher efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Goddard et al., 2000) and into measures of teacher efficacy beliefs, therefore Adams and Forsyth (2006) suggest that facets of both theories should be considered when researching sources of efficacy beliefs. They redefine Bandura's (1997) four sources of efficacy beliefs (enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and affective and physiological states) as *remote* sources of efficacy and define contextual factors as *proximate* sources of efficacy.

'We do not dispute the significant influence of Bandura's efficacy sources, but we do argue for a broadening and reclassification of efficacy sources to include not only past experiences but also variables nested within the contextual environment of schools that affect the "here and the now" of teaching..... Mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and affective states occurred at some time in the past and they are called to mind in the present to influence beliefs about future performance. Contextual conditions, on the other hand, have a day in and day out influence on the teaching tasks.' (Adams and Forsyth, 2006, p630)

They suggest the following as examples of contextual conditions that could influence teachers' perceptions of the teaching task: availability of resources, student characteristics, physical condition of the school, school size, school level and bureaucratic structures. Next, I will discuss what previous research tells us about the influence of contextual factors upon teacher efficacy beliefs.

Ashton and Webb (1986) conducted an early study exploring teacher efficacy attitudes in middle and junior high school teachers; aiming to investigate the nature of teacher efficacy beliefs, factors that facilitate and inhibit the development of these beliefs, teacher behaviours associated with efficacy beliefs

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and the relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and student achievement. The research involved a variety of methods including questionnaires, informal ethnographic interviews, observation, projective measures and document analysis. This research was perhaps one of the first studies to explore contextual factors influencing teacher efficacy beliefs in depth, although it focused mainly on teachers in one middle school and one junior high school in the US limiting its generalisability.

Ashton and Webb (1986) compared the differences between teachers at schools with different organisational structures. They found that middle school teachers had much more philosophical beliefs about the importance of teaching, tending to have strong beliefs in the efficacy of their own teaching and were committed to reaching all of their students. In contrast, junior high school teachers were reported as responding to questions about teaching in an unexcited fashion. They tended to believe that schools could not do much to exceed the current abilities of the students and '*defined themselves as agents of the curriculum and not as agents of student development*' (p107). The middle school teachers' responses to the teacher efficacy questionnaires showed that they had higher efficacy belief scores, higher expectations for student progress and were more satisfied with their career compared to the junior high teachers.

Ashton and Webb (1986) suggested that the organisational features of the middle school supported the positive efficacy beliefs in the teachers. One of the features they believed contributed towards this were successful team teaching, collaboration and shared responsibility; in other words a sense of teamwork and community. Another distinctive feature was shared decision-making established by the principal compared to decision-making purely by the principal and his senior staff in the junior high school. Lastly, Ashton and Webb discuss that because the middle school was organised in multi-age groupings the staff got to know students very well over a few years so focused on long-term goals and were committed to the school's ethos of caring. Although this research is based on questionnaires, observations and interviews with teachers in only two schools it provides an insight into the possible contextual factors that may contribute to positive teacher efficacy beliefs. Ashton and Webb themselves

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recognise the limitations of comparing two individual schools and give caution to readers:

'The study of two organizationally different schools tempts researchers and readers to select one school as inherently "better" than the other.....Yet such comparisons are misleading.....Although it appears that the middle school did a better job of supporting the efficacy attitudes of teachers, it is going too far to say that the middle school is, therefore, a better school.'

(Ashton and Webb, 1986, p121-122)

They go on to argue that each school had its own strengths and weaknesses and that if the best features of each school were combined a particularly effective school may be produced. This highlights the difficulties of studying individual cases in educational research, as it is not always easy to make generalisations that would be effective in all schools. However, Ashton and Webb (1986) have shown that a detailed ethnographic study of individual schools can provide insight into the complicated contextual factors that affect teacher efficacy beliefs.

Research into the effect of contextual factors on student teachers' efficacy beliefs by Knoblauch and Hoy (2008) found that the setting of the school (urban or non-urban) had no significant effect upon personal teacher efficacy. This corresponds with research findings reported by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007). Knoblauch and Hoy surveyed 102 student teachers in a variety of school contexts in America. Their findings were contrary to the researchers' expectations and it was suggested that this was either due to student teachers being placed in relatively well-organised and supportive urban schools or due to student teachers attributing any challenges they faced as due to external factors out of their control (eg. poor facilities) rather than their own skill. However, the setting of the school did have a significant effect upon student teachers' perceived collective teacher efficacy, with student teachers in urban schools exhibiting significantly lower scores in this element. The finding was attributed to those teachers in urban schools observing more inexperienced teachers in their placements and the large size of urban schools contributing to less group cohesion. A more recent study (Knoblauch and Chase, 2015) of 368 student

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teachers' efficacy beliefs in rural, suburban and urban school placements did find that student teachers in urban settings had lower teacher efficacy scores than those in suburban settings at the end of the placement. However, the researchers admit that the evidence is weak as they did not have as much pre-student teaching data for the teachers in this group as the other groups, therefore they cannot be sure that prior experiences did not influence the findings.

Qualitative research addressing the same research questions may help to explore whether school context does contribute to trainee teachers' efficacy beliefs. Indeed, Knoblauch and Chase (2015) discuss the lack of observations, interviews and reflective journaling as a limitation of their research. Furthermore, the assumption that all urban or non-urban schools share the same contextual factors and therefore can be contrasted so easily is likely to be invalid because of the large variation between school management, organisation and ethos in all types of schools. Qualitative research (or indeed a combination of qualitative and quantitative as conducted by Ashton and Webb, 1986) has the potential to explore individual sources of efficacy beliefs in a school and to tease apart the complexities of these sources. In particular, interview research, with its focus on the individual's unique experiences may allow researchers to compare the experiences of different individuals and therefore make conclusions about the interactions between personal variables and school variables.

Research by Pas, Bradshaw and Hershfeldt (2012) aimed to investigate factors that predict teacher efficacy beliefs and burnout using a longitudinal multilevel modeling approach based on self-report measures. A large sample of 600 teachers at 31 elementary schools in the US took part over two years. Overall, teacher efficacy beliefs and levels of burnout increased over time. The study investigated a large number of factors split into two groups: teacher level factors (such as teacher demographics, teacher experience, teacher preparedness, teacher perceptions of the school environment including teacher affiliation, parent involvement, collegial leadership) and school level contextual factors (such as organisational health, student suspension rate and principal turnover). Overall, teacher level factors (in particular teacher preparedness and

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perceptions of teacher affiliation and collegial leadership) had a greater influence on teacher efficacy and burnout than broad school level contextual factors. These findings add further support to Knoblauch and Hoy's (2008) research and Woolfolk's assertion (Shaughnessy, 2004), suggesting that broad school level contextual factors do not significantly influence teacher efficacy beliefs. They also support Ashton and Webb's (1986) findings that collegial leadership and teacher affiliation relate positively to teacher efficacy beliefs.

Knoblauch and Hoy's (2008) findings do suggest that a focus on improving teacher preparedness (to cope with classroom management issues and different pedagogical techniques) and improving staff relationships and leadership support may improve teacher efficacy beliefs. Research into collective efficacy beliefs by Ross et al. (2004) also supports these findings, reporting that shared goals, school-wide collaboration and empowering school leadership were a larger contributor to collective efficacy beliefs than student achievement. These factors are in-school contextual factors that largely are not affected by the type of school or where it is placed geographically. The more malleable nature of these factors is promising as it suggests that school leadership and organisation can impact on teacher efficacy beliefs if the right methods are employed. Although Knoblauch and Hoy's research is purely quantitative and conducted over a small period of time, the large sample and wide range of factors examined helps to further our understanding of potential sources of teacher efficacy beliefs.

Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) conducted survey research of 179 elementary teachers in the US, finding that factors such as institutional integrity (the school's ability to protect teachers from unreasonable community and parental demands), principal influence (the principal's ability to influence senior staff) and academic emphasis (high but achievable goals set for students, an orderly learning environment and students' respect for academic excellence) were important for positive teacher efficacy beliefs. Again, these are all factors that could potentially be changed and nurtured, therefore adding weight to the argument that in-school contextual factors make a difference to teacher efficacy beliefs.

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In a case study of four teachers in an urban school in the US, Takahashi (2011) uses a sociocultural perspective to explain the development of teachers' efficacy beliefs. She examined how teachers taking part in evidence-based decision-making practices such as examining student work and data in order to discuss pedagogical improvements, appeared to collectively negotiate understandings about the meaning and purpose of their work and their efficacy beliefs. Takahashi argues that the social cognitive framework that has dominated teacher efficacy belief research does not take account the potential for individuals to co-construct meaning when part of a group. Social cognitive theory places individuals as separate to their environment, with contextual information filtered and processed by the individual in order to make a judgement about their own efficacy, whereas sociocultural theory sees the environment as constructed by individuals. The findings of the study suggest that teacher efficacy beliefs may be more than just a product of contextual factors but actually negotiated and co-constructed with colleagues within a community of practice. I would argue that if this assertion is true, then understanding the influence of contextual factors becomes even more important for teacher efficacy beliefs research. If teachers negotiate and co-construct meanings of what it is to be a successful teacher within their own specific departments or schools then researchers must attempt to explore what conditions foster positive constructions of teacher efficacy.

Although I have reviewed a variety of research on sources of efficacy beliefs, including contextual factors in this section and section 2.3, the literature on teacher efficacy beliefs was initially dominated by quantitative research fixated upon measuring teacher efficacy beliefs. The limited research investigating the sources of efficacy beliefs tends to focus upon Bandura's (1997) four sources of efficacy beliefs. Therefore the influence of contextual factors upon efficacy beliefs needs exploring further. Labone (2004) suggests that quantitative methods have been successful at discovering the power of teacher efficacy beliefs but less successful at exploring our understandings of the *development* of efficacy beliefs (personal or collective) and the role of teacher efficacy beliefs in different social contexts. Indeed, Henson (2001) has pointed out that context (including school

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climate and the impact of interventions) has been a particularly neglected factor in teacher efficacy research.

'...because an efficacy judgment is a result of an individual's filtering of internal and external factors, the context surrounding a person's judgment is very relevant to the study of teacher efficacy...' (p147)

Schunk and Pajares (2005) suggest that researchers should:

'...continue to explore how self-efficacy develops, what factors contribute to strong and positive teaching self-efficacy in varied domains, and how teacher education programs can help preservice teachers develop high efficacy.....It should prove insightful to discover how teachers make the connection between belief and action, and under what conditions similar teacher self-efficacy perceptions result in differing performances.' (p99)

Grounded theory research focused upon exploring the lived experiences of teachers has the potential to improve our understanding of how malleable school contextual factors such as school leadership, collaboration and staff relationships influence teacher efficacy beliefs. In-depth qualitative interviews with research participants can provide richer detail about teachers' everyday experiences and their interpretations of contextual factors than quantitative research can provide. Indeed, as grounded theory focuses upon the development of theory rather than testing of theory, it is possible that such research may illuminate new influences upon teacher efficacy beliefs not previously noted in previous research.

Furthermore, much of the research investigating teacher efficacy beliefs has not sampled teachers in the UK or England, with a large proportion of research focusing upon US teachers. Considering the big differences between education systems across the world, it is of value to explore the significance of contextual factors (which may be specific to teachers in England) in English schools if useful context-dependant applications are to be extrapolated.

2.5 Assessing the 'effective' teacher: Appraisal, accountability and accreditation

An individual teacher's understanding of what makes an effective teacher is likely to have an impact upon their teacher efficacy beliefs. A teacher that does not meet the criteria they believe are necessary to be a good teacher may have reduced teacher efficacy beliefs. In addition, the school and government's perception of what makes an effective teacher may also impact upon a teacher's efficacy beliefs, particularly in the current appraisal system where teachers are annually judged against a series of competency criteria.

There are two contrasting ways of conceptualising the notion of teacher effectiveness. One way is to view teaching in a positivist framework, with key competencies that can be assessed and measured. The other is to view teaching as an art that is too complex to break down into measurable components. Viewing teaching as an art is also associated with the notion that teachers are born not made. The positivist view tends to be the approach taken by government who wish to provide clear methods for measuring teacher performance and ensuring the accountability of teachers. This can most recently be seen in the 2012 Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012), which contains a list of eight key performance areas for teachers (in Part One), as well as statements relating to personal and professional conduct (Part Two). These standards apply to all teachers, whether they are experienced, in training or completing their induction year as a newly qualified teacher.

There has been some criticism of competency based systems for evaluating teacher performance as some have argued that under these systems good teachers are simplified as those who are able to 'perform' competencies in a ritualised way (Ball, 2003; Ingvarson, 2001) rather than embrace the complexities and contextual nature of teaching. Another criticism relates to the fact that the Teachers' Standards were commissioned by policymakers and therefore teachers have had limited influence over their development, possibly putting into question their validity and usefulness. As Ingvarson (2001) says:

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'...schemes often fail to enlist teacher ownership through their involvement in the development of standards and assessment procedures. They fail to build mechanisms whereby responsibility for the teacher evaluation system is shared with the profession.' (Ingvarson, 2001, p163)

O'Leary (2014) states that:

'Successive governments have missed out on an opportunity to empower teachers to take responsibility for defining standards in the profession and to create a workable framework for assessing teacher performance. However, some might argue that this is no accident but reflects the continuing stranglehold of central government in what teachers do and how their work is measured.' (O'Leary, 2014, p99)

The debate about the validity of competency based systems of teacher performance also relates to teachers' professionalism in that it could be argued that reducing teaching to a list of simplified competencies created by policymakers undermines the professionalism of teachers. The impact on professionalism is hinted at in the quote above from O'Leary (2014) in his comment that the central government are increasingly becoming involved in the nature of teachers' work. However, in many countries including England, competency based systems are integral to teacher appraisal processes including the accreditation of teachers. For example in England, in order for a trainee teacher to be awarded Qualified Teacher Status they must meet all of the Teachers' Standards to a level expected of a trainee and newly qualified teachers also provide evidence they have met these standards in order to pass their induction. Experienced teachers must also show they have met the Teachers' Standards each year as part of the appraisal process. The extent to which competency criteria and professionalism are intertwined is exemplified by the trialling of professional re-accreditation in Scotland. 'Professional updates' are an opportunity for the school to review if a teacher should keep their registration as a teacher (with the General Teaching Council of Scotland, GTCS), by reviewing their progress against the GTCS standards (there are three versions of these standards according to whether you are a teacher in training/newly qualified, an

experienced teacher or a leader/manager). Watson and Fox (2015) argue that professional updates have been carefully introduced by the GTCS in order to ensure that teachers buy into its use as a professional development tool rather than as a way to 'remove' underperforming teachers.

One principle of a positivist, standards based system of teacher accreditation and appraisal is that by formally assessing teachers' level of competence in each area, teachers are given the opportunity to improve and to gain new skills. If a teacher is assessed as lacking skills in one particular area then they know what standards they need to address in order to develop their skills. However, for this principal to work there must also be appropriate professional development opportunities and support available for teachers. It is not useful to point out *what* standards need improving without explaining *how* and giving appropriate support for the actions. In the next section, I will discuss how professional development activities relate to teacher performance and teacher efficacy beliefs.

2.6 Professional development activities and teacher efficacy beliefs

Whole school professional development activities are one way that schools can attempt to influence the collective and individual efficacy beliefs of teachers.

'Thoughtfully designed staff development activities and action research projects,.....are ways school administrators might provide efficacy-building mastery experiences.' (Goddard et al., 2000, p502)

High personal teacher efficacy has been found to correlate with the tendency to try out new approaches, self-regulate and participate in informal interaction (Stein and Wang, 1988; Van Daal et al, 2014) It could be argued that in schools where teacher efficacy beliefs are high, teachers are more likely to experiment with new techniques and reflect on their performance, therefore teachers can be a vehicle for educational change and improvement in a school.

A review of research and case studies into teacher attrition in America concluded that mentoring and induction programmes, as well as good professional development opportunities are a powerful method of reducing attrition in teaching (Brill and McCartney, 2008). In their discussion of continuing

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professional development for experienced teachers, Cockburn and Haydn (2004) state that:

'Teachers must feel inspired and challenged by these ventures so that not only are they motivated to stay in the profession but that they also return to their classrooms ready to educate their pupils in as effective and successful a manner as possible'. (p100)

Professional development activities essentially aim to improve the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom and consequently improve student outcomes. In a best evidence synthesis, Robinson et al. (2009) found that the most effective school leaders (for improving student outcomes) promote and participate in teacher development. Professional learning can also be viewed as a method of improving teachers' perceptions of their efficacy, which in turn is suggested to improve teacher performance (Armor et al., 1976; Bandura, 1993; Caprara et al., 2006). Ross and Bruce (2007) recommend that qualitative studies into the effects of professional development on teacher efficacy beliefs are needed. They suggest a focus on the extent to which professional development influences teacher choices about the sources of efficacy information they attend to and how they process efficacy information. They propose that professional development that addresses sources of efficacy may produce more confident teachers. In this final section of the literature review, I will analyse relevant research investigating professional development and efficacy beliefs and discuss why further research in this area is important.

2.6.1 Efficacy doubts: Are they important for teacher change?

Wheatley (2002), in his discussion of previous teacher efficacy research, goes against the commonly held assumption that low efficacy leads to negative outcomes by suggesting that efficacy doubts are actually required in order for teachers to be motivated to make changes to their practice. In essence, a disparity between a teacher's current and future efficacy needs to be realised for teacher learning to take place.

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'In brief, teacher efficacy doubts may aid reform by fostering teacher learning in many ways: inducing disequilibrium and change, fostering teacher reflection, supporting motivation to learn and responsiveness to diversity, and promoting productive collaboration.' (Wheatley, 2002, p16)

Wheatley places emphasis on the benefits of specific teacher efficacy doubts (such as a lack of confidence in teaching a particular skill) rather than global teacher efficacy doubts which he argues can lead to problematic teacher behavior such as entirely avoiding an area of the curriculum or a teaching method. The theory is of particular interest as it could suggest that teachers with very positive efficacy beliefs may learn less from professional development activities as they may see less need to reflect on their teaching or change their methods. It also challenges the assertion that positive teacher efficacy beliefs are always necessary for positive outcomes in teacher behavior, contradicting Tschannen-Moran et al.s' (1998) well regarded cyclical model of teacher efficacy beliefs which implies that poor efficacy beliefs lead to less effort, which leads to lower performance and consequentially even lower efficacy beliefs.

Wheatley (2002) suggests that for efficacy doubts to be beneficial the teacher must feel that they have some means of learning how to be more effective. Professional development activities therefore need to be of high quality in order for the benefits of teacher efficacy doubts to be utilised effectively to induce change.

'A teacher who is aware of deficits in his or her capabilities in a certain circumstance but has a belief about how those deficits can be addressed will have a resilient sense of teacher efficacy.' (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p233)

This comment by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) suggests the importance of professional development activities for building *resilient* efficacy beliefs. They assert that in order for a teacher to be consistently confident in their abilities they also need to know where they are lacking and what can be done to improve. In other words, they need a realistic understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, with the knowledge that they *can* do something about the

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weaknesses. Professional development activities therefore have relevance here, because Tschannen-Moran et al.'s comment also implies that whether a teacher is confident that their school will be able to help them address their weaknesses is important. I would argue that this point could be developed even further. Instead of stating that teachers need a 'belief' about how the weaknesses can be addressed, they need confidence that they and/or the school have the resources to make this happen.

Wheatley (2002) also suggests that efficacy doubts may prevent teacher burnout and refers to McDonald's article (1991) in which McDonald concludes that experienced teachers could develop a false sense of certainty that allows them to be more at risk of disillusionment and burnout. Wheatley goes on to suggest that the high attrition rate in the first five years of teaching is perhaps due to the *'.....naïve optimism of beginning teachers. This optimism has not been sufficiently challenged and strengthened by the kind of doubts that are an integral part of full-time teaching.'* (p12). This 'naïve optimism' is reported in research into beginning science teachers by Settlage et al. (2009) who write about their concerns as they discovered that trainee teachers' efficacy beliefs for teaching science were very high before they trained and were maintained throughout despite their actual teaching efficacy.

'...they held extraordinarily high levels of science teaching efficacy prior to their methods course—and these were preserved throughout their student teaching. However, rather than teaching confidence grounded in multiple and rich firsthand experiences in diverse settings, the participants held exaggerated self-efficacy incongruous with their abilities. In effect, their confidence blinded them to the self-doubt that might advance them professionally.' (p119)

Wheatley argues that if teachers are given some doubt and uncertainty and given experience in how to cope with these in the first few years of teaching, they may be inoculated against burnout. This is an interesting suggestion but I am unconvinced that most beginning teachers do not experience some sort of efficacy doubts or uncertainty. In the UK, most training providers actively

encourage trainee teachers to reflect on their teaching and work with their mentors to explore areas and methods for improvement. This is also a part of a newly qualified teachers induction program and an increasingly important aspect of professional development activities for experienced teachers too. Indeed, Standard 4 of the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012) states that teachers should '*reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching*'. However, if further evidence for his theory were provided, it would help schools and teacher training institutions to plan appropriate methods of training teachers to cope with doubt, therefore maybe preventing early burnout and attrition.

2.6.2 Lesson observation: A form of accountability or professional development?

Lesson observations can be viewed as potential sources for the development of efficacy beliefs, with the lesson itself producing a mastery experience and the feedback from the observer acting as a form of social persuasion. The way in which lesson observations are utilised by schools and other organisations will effect whether it is considered a professional development activity or a method of ensuring teachers are accountable for their performance. It is these contrasting perspectives that seem to have divided the education sector in England in recent years, with government pushing forward the idea that lesson observations allow insight into the effectiveness of an individual teacher, and therefore should be used to feed into performance management systems (DfE, 2012). On the other hand, some argue that lesson observations also have a place as a professional development activity, allowing teachers to understand their strengths and areas for development (O'Leary, 2014; Wragg, 2012).

O'Leary (2014) suggests that in schools and Further Education colleges, lesson observations have become increasingly focused upon measuring and improving teacher performance through appraisal systems, whereas in the Higher Education sector they have remained a method of '*stimulating critical reflection and professional dialogue about practice among peers*' (p28). He also notes that lesson observations had always been a part of initial teacher training (in order to allow trainee teachers to learn from more experienced colleagues) but their use

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as a method of accountability began in the 1980s and 1990s when quality of teaching began to emerge as a key concern for policy makers.

Despite the increasing use of lesson observations for performance management purposes, their use as a development tool is also evident in schools, particularly where the professional learning of teachers is given equal value to assessing teacher quality. Where lesson observations are used to support professional learning the emphasis is often on collaborative professional development with colleagues. Often termed 'peer observation' such lesson observations allow teachers to observe colleagues, share good practice, give and receive constructive feedback in a non-judgemental framework. O'Leary (2014) states that:

'The purpose of many peer observation schemes is essentially developmental. An underlying principle of a developmental model of peer observation is that it is intended to be supportive rather than evaluative.'
(p121)

Some countries in the Far East such as Japan have been focusing on a special type of collaborative peer activity called the lesson study for decades and it is now starting to become popular in the UK (Times Educational Supplement, 2014). Lesson study involves a cycle of lessons in which teachers collaboratively plan the lessons together, observe them being taught, discuss and make improvements to the lessons and then teach the improved lessons. The cycle continues and can go on for six to nine weeks. As such, lesson study is an example of a sustained and collaborative professional development activity. It aims to avoid using an isolated lesson observation as the focus, instead concentrating on how the teaching of a unit of the curriculum can be improved using an action research model. Lieberman (2009) argues that participating in lesson study can help teachers to redevelop their professional identity to include '*norms of openness, collaboration and experimentation*' (p96). Such an identity helps teachers to see themselves not as technicians, but as professionals who can interpret new theory and practice using their previous experiences and

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principles. According to Lieberman, lesson study helps teachers to reflect on their practice, accept uncertainty and increases teacher agency.

Chong and Kong (2012) conducted qualitative research (including recordings and field observations of the lesson study meetings, journal reflections written by the teacher participants and team interviews conducted by the senior teacher who facilitated each group) into lesson study programs taking place in a girls' high school in Singapore. They found various benefits to the lesson study program such as an improvement in content knowledge and application of new pedagogies, which also improved participants' self-reported confidence in their teaching. They also reported that teachers' observation skills were improved and this assisted keener critical thinking and a readiness to be innovative. In reference to teacher efficacy beliefs, they found that lesson study enabled teachers to get hands on mastery experiences in successful jointly planned lessons, therefore participants said that they felt more confident when delivering the lesson and evaluating it. Chong and Kong argue that the teachers had a stronger sense of personal control due to the opportunity to observe colleagues (vicarious experiences), see new perspectives, take risks and learn new skills in a supportive environment. This study highlights the possible benefits for teacher efficacy beliefs of working in small, supportive, collaborative peer groups and supports Henson's (2001) claims that longer-term professional development activities improve teacher efficacy beliefs. However, no direct comparison was made with short-term professional development activities therefore it may be difficult to state from this research that lesson study provides *better* improvements in teacher efficacy beliefs than shorter-term professional development activities.

In a rare investigation of the use of lesson study in the UK, Cajkler et al. (2014) reported that the four mathematics teachers involved benefited from the collaboration in a number of ways. They were willing to take risks in their teaching, engaged in deeper pedagogic dialogue, understood their students better, developed less teacher-centred approaches and felt a stronger sense of teacher community. Norwich and Ylonen (2013) conducted a larger research investigation of 29 secondary schools trialling lesson study and found that lesson

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study improved teachers' confidence to try new approaches and gave them more insight into their students' needs. As there have only been a small number of research studies focusing on lesson study in a UK context it is uncertain whether the benefits reported in countries like Japan where lesson study is almost institutionalised will always be the case in an educational system where such collaborative professional development is rare. Certainly the research carried out so far seems to indicate that lesson study in the UK *does* produce the same benefits. However, the structural and cultural differences in UK schools compared to schools in the Far East has been highlighted as an issue in terms of organising time for lesson study and ensuring that its value is appreciated by teaching staff.

2.6.3 Collaborative professional development

In a recent survey of 1126 primary and secondary teachers in England (Opfer and Pedder, 2011a) it was found that teachers in less successful schools tend to take part in professional development activities which have been shown to be ineffective. Those teachers in the most successful schools reported more involvement with professional learning of longer duration (over a month and less than a year), were more active and involved higher levels of collaboration and sharing of practice. The higher performing schools also created better social capital conditions and provided support for collaboration and networking. Indeed, Jones and Harris (2014) argue that collaborative professional learning holds the key to school improvement as it develops shared leadership and social capital (good quality relationships amongst staff). Therefore, research suggests that the types of professional development activities employed by schools may impact on school performance, highlighting the importance of choosing the right professional learning activities in schools. However, Opfer and Pedder (2011a) in their survey of 1126 teachers found that teachers placed low importance on collaborative professional development activities, possibly suggesting that not all teachers value collaboration (although they also found that collaborative

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activities were practised less often too so the low value placed on collaboration could be due to lack of experience with this format).

Henson (2001), conducting a mixed method quantitative and qualitative year-long study, found that 11 teachers in an alternative education school involved in collaboration when implementing and developing new interventions (participatory teacher research), experienced enhanced efficacy beliefs. Henson also investigated a number of other elements such as empowerment and perceptions of school climate and did not find such a significant effect. Of note here, is that more experienced teachers reported a smaller change in their self-efficacy (through qualitative interviews) than newer teachers. The relative stability of teacher efficacy in experienced teachers is also reported in other studies of teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

'Personal teaching efficacy appears to be particularly difficult to impact in experienced teachers since it is an internally held belief about oneself that solidifies with experience and time. As such, positively impacting teachers' efficacy beliefs is unlikely outside of longer-term professional development that compels teachers to think critically about their classrooms and behave actively in instructional improvement.' (Henson, 2001, p831)

This implies that professional development activities aiming to improve teacher efficacy beliefs and performance should occur early on in a teacher's career when efficacy beliefs are more malleable. It also suggests that it could be beneficial to focus research on the impact of professional development activities run over the course of a term or year; where teachers are encouraged to reflect and make practical changes to their teaching methods. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) agree with the importance of sustained professional learning, arguing that teachers who are not given the opportunity to engage in meaningful long-term professional development will produce episodic innovations that are not valued by leaders or colleagues and become isolated in their classrooms. Research which explores the development of efficacy beliefs in teachers at a variety of stages in their careers and in those teachers taking part in reflective, long-term professional development activities (such as peer coaching) would

therefore be helpful in order to investigate further their impact upon teacher performance and efficacy beliefs.

Mixed-methods research of 46 elementary schools in Canada (Bruce et al., 2010) found that sustained, collaborative and classroom-embedded professional learning programmes in problem-based mathematics teaching produced gains in teaching quality and student achievement. They also discovered that this type of professional development significantly improved teacher efficacy beliefs in colleagues who were not completely new to the techniques. These teachers were able to learn more from observing each other teach (vicarious learning) and benefited from mastery experiences as they discussed their progress with colleagues and realised their instructional practices were successful. This study is therefore evidence of a link between types of professional development activities, teacher efficacy and teaching quality, in particular illustrating the positive impact of long-term collaboration. A particularly interesting aspect to the study is Bruce et al.s' explanation for one district's response to the professional learning program (teachers in district B had less steep learning gains and increases in teacher efficacy beliefs than district A). The researchers believed that teachers from district B had high efficacy beliefs (based on untested self-appraisal) before they started the professional learning program and had experienced far less reflective, collaborative professional development than district A before the intervention. This meant that district B teachers did not already recognise their practice was lacking in problem-based mathematics teaching and therefore did not see a reason to change their practice, whereas district A fully embraced the methods due to this awareness. This finding seems to provide evidence for Wheatley's (2002) assertion that teacher efficacy doubts are actually necessary for teachers to be motivated to take significant action to improve their practice, to feel the full benefit of professional development activities and to experience noticeable gains in their efficacy beliefs.

Coaching models are an increasingly popular method of professional development in UK schools (Lofthouse et al., 2010), and appear to fit the longer-term professional development model that Henson (2001) suggests will be more effective at improving efficacy beliefs. Coaching, when used correctly, is different

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to the didactic model of lesson observations often employed by senior leaders and inspectors as it is based on the assumption that the individual themselves holds the key to their success (Thomas and Smith, 2009). The role of the coach is to help the coachee to identify their strengths, areas of development and methods to achieve their goals, with limited input from the coach in terms of ideas. As such, it can be viewed as a more collaborative type of professional development activity. In their research investigating coaching practices in UK schools, Lofthouse et al. (2010) reported that some teachers were who were particularly enthusiastic about coaching saw it as an:

'...epitome of a positive culture in which teachers exercise trust, have deep professional conversations.....and through which social capital develops.' (p34)

However, Lofthouse et al., (2010) warn that the hierarchical structures of schools often lead to coaching being used as a tool for performance management rather than as a genuine opportunity to engage teachers in professional learning. This highlights the importance of teachers having ownership over coaching and professional learning rather than a coaching model led by senior management.

Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) conducted a quasi-experimental survey study of 93 primary school teachers across nine schools with the aim of investigating the impact of four different professional development formats on teacher efficacy beliefs. They found that just telling teachers about new teaching strategies without exposure to coaching had a significant negative impact on the teachers' self-reported efficacy beliefs for the new strategy.

'It seems that the awareness of a new instructional strategy that is shown to have an impact on struggling readers caused some teachers to reassess their definition of good teaching and to provoke a recalibration of their own self-efficacy beliefs against this new standard. Without coaching to assist teachers in the implementation of the new skill, a significant proportion of teachers were left feeling more inadequate than they had before.'

(Tschannen-Moran and McMaster, 2009, p241)

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This study supports Henson's (2001) view that long term professional learning is more beneficial than short term inputs and indeed suggests that short term inputs could damage teacher efficacy beliefs. When combined with Wheatley's (2002) theory about the importance of efficacy doubts for promoting teacher change, the findings suggest that just making teachers aware of these doubts is not helpful. Effective, collaborative professional learning must follow.

In Tschannen-Moran and McMaster's study (2009) teachers were not interviewed about their experiences of the professional development programmes and therefore although coaching was found to have a positive impact on efficacy it is not clear why. It is possible that certain elements of the coaching model used were effective rather than coaching as a whole. Again, this returns us to the investigation of sources of teacher efficacy beliefs. What specific factors influence teacher efficacy beliefs?

'Researchers would do well to renew their focus on understanding how teacher efficacy is fostered by teacher education programs, the study of which requires a focus on the sources of teacher efficacy and a clearer understanding of how efficacy beliefs change over time' (Klassen et al., 2011, p40)

It is likely that the answer to the above question is not a simple one. Opfer and Pedder (2011b) argue that research into the professional development of teachers has been too simplistic, failing to take into account the many overlapping factors that contribute to teacher learning, in particular the importance of contextual factors.

'...we believe that teacher learning must be conceptualized as a complex system rather than as an event.....Complex systems thinking assumes that there are various dynamics at work in social behavior and these interact and combine in different ways such that even the simplest decisions can have multiple causal pathways'. (p378)

Thus, if teacher learning is complex (as is any type of learning) it may be a challenge to ascertain the most effective forms of professional learning, as these may be different for different teachers in different schools and in different stages

of their careers. Nonetheless, if the complexity of teacher learning is accepted, investigating the impact of contextual factors upon teacher learning may help researchers to identify some best practice for particular contexts.

2.7 The 'fourth way'

2.7.1 Professional learning communities and professional capital

Hattie (2009) believes that in order for student achievement to be at its highest, teachers and schools need to be open with each other and have dialogues about what works best in their school and for the different groups of students they have. He states that:

'This would require a caring, supportive staffroom, a tolerance of errors, and for learning from other teachers, a peer culture among teachers of engagement, trust, shared passion and so on. It is the same attributes that work for student learning that also work for teachers' learning.' (p240)

The features needed for a successful school (as measured by student achievement) identified by Hattie have some parallels to the contextual factors found to be associated with positive teacher efficacy beliefs in section 2.4 (eg. Ross et al., 2004, Hoy and Woolfolk, 1993). They also appear to describe the concept of a 'professional learning community', a community where teachers and leaders work together to make pedagogical improvements and are encouraged to take responsibility for the outcomes. Lieberman and Miller (2008) state that professional learning communities are '*collegial cultures where teachers develop the capacity to engage in honest talk*' (p18). A collegial culture encourages trust, reflection, challenge and responsibility without blame. In contrast, congenial cultures may place blame on outside forces and resist challenging each other or analysing problems too deeply.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009, 2012) outline global trends in educational change since the 1960s and argue that starting in the 1980s, the 'second way' of government pressure to perform with little support to do so, resulted in a crisis in teacher retention and recruitment. This was followed by the 'third way' in the late 1990s in which governments attempted to reinvigorate teacher

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professionalism, emphasising responsibilities, rights and market competition (in the form of published school league tables). The 'third way' still involved imposed data driven targets for schools but there was increased training and support for teachers to achieve these targets (eg. the national literacy and numeracy hours supported by extensive teaching resources in the UK). Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) argue that Anglo-American education systems are still stuck in the 'third way' and suggest they consider a 'fourth way' of education change in which:

- System targets are replaced by collectively decided targets based on shared moral purposes of education.
- Education extends beyond the basics of literacy and numeracy.
- Data informs teaching rather than driving it.
- High-stakes testing is replaced by sampling of achievement.
- Teachers collaborate to produce an engaging curriculum.
- Leadership moves away from the '*delivery of imposed reforms*' (p9) to distributed and shared leadership.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) identify the capacity for professional learning communities to influence education in the 'fourth way' of educational change. This 'fourth way' is a vision for educational systems which Hargreaves and Shirley argue is more likely to produce '*prosperous and competitive knowledge societies*' (p72), to improve justice and inequality, to restore professionalism and to develop more successful and unified communities than previous 'ways' of education. However, they caution an approach in which professional learning communities are only utilised to achieve externally set aims such as improved test results. They describe the 'fourth way' as:

'a way of inspiration and innovation, of responsibility and sustainability.....it brings together government policy, professional involvement, and public engagement around an inspiring social and educational vision of prosperity, opportunity and creativity' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009, p71)

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A key notion of the 'fourth way' is the significance of purpose and partnership in sustainable educational change. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) argue that teachers are at the centre of educational change and therefore great care should be taken to ensure they are happy. They suggest that happiness arises from clear purposes, empowerment and positive relationships with colleagues and students. Dunlop and Macdonald (2004) identified the top ten sources of stress for teachers, identifying relationships with colleagues and senior management team as the third highest. This aspect of stress has perhaps the strongest link with aspects of professional learning communities, which aim to increase collegiality amongst staff.

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) suggest that highly effective school systems such as those in Finland, Singapore and Canada are characterised by the nurture of 'professional capital', a strategy in which there is investment in high quality, able teachers (human capital), teachers are highly committed, prepared, developed and well networked (social capital) and use all their abilities and experience to make effective judgements (decisional capital). According to Hargreaves and Fullan, governments can create climates that encourage professional capital by praising teachers, increasing resources for schools and trusting teachers, but professional capital is also something that must be developed by teachers themselves. So, professional capital could be viewed as an overarching strategy of an educational system as well as individual institutions. It is not difficult to see the overlaps between professional capital and professional learning communities but I would argue that the latter would probably not exist without the former.

The features of a professional learning community in the 'fourth way' such as clear purpose, empowerment, positive relationships and trust (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009) and the social capital and decisional capital elements of professional capital (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012) are essentially the same as the in-school contextual factors identified as positive influences upon teacher efficacy beliefs in section 2.4 (eg. Ashton and Webb, 1986; Knoblauch and Hoy, 2008; Ross et al., 2004; Hoy and Woolfolk, 1993). There is therefore potential for teacher efficacy beliefs to be nurtured in educational systems where there is

investment in professional capital and where schools are characterised as professional learning communities. In such educational systems, the benefits are likely to embrace teachers, students and communities alike.

2.7.2 The changing picture of teacher professional development in England

In 2011, the government introduced the Teaching Schools initiative, with the aim of encouraging schools to take more responsibility for teacher training and CPD. Under this initiative, outstanding schools can apply to set up a Teaching School Alliance in collaboration with other local schools if they wish. The government expects Teaching Schools to deliver 6 key outcomes (NCTL, 2015):

1. School-led initial teacher training
2. Continuing professional development
3. Supporting other schools
4. Identifying and developing leadership potential
5. Specialist leaders of education (outstanding middle and senior leaders who support individuals or teams in other schools)
6. Research and development

Teaching Schools also include strategic partners such as local teacher training providers and local authorities but the initiative aims to encourage schools themselves to become more actively involved in their own development and improvement. The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL, 2015) states that Teaching Schools:

'.....are part of the government's plan to give schools a central role in raising standards by developing a self-improving and sustainable school-led system.'

Although the Teaching Schools initiative is fairly young there are already around 400 schools signed up with a government target of 600 by 2016. The focus upon school based training and development is changing the national picture for teacher learning with the potential for schools to take more control over what and how professional development is delivered. With research suggesting that

collaborative professional development may have a positive influence upon teacher efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran and McMaster, 2009; Chong and Kong, 2012) it is perhaps now the responsibility of Teaching Schools to ensure that professional development programmes are planned to take into account such findings. One might also hope that Teaching Schools have the potential to deliver the characteristics of a professional learning community and build professional capital. However, without the investment from government in the key elements of professional capital (human capital, social capital and decisional capital) it will be more difficult for individual schools and Teaching School alliances to genuinely deliver professional capital and to achieve organisational success.

2.9 Rationale for this research

Research into the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs has the potential to help schools identify methods of enhancing teacher wellbeing, reduce attrition, plan effective professional development and enhance school performance. Klassen et al. (2011) in their review of teacher efficacy belief research, found only seven studies specifically investigating the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs and there has been little research completed since. The sources of efficacy beliefs suggested by Bandura (1997) are therefore not confirmed for the specific domain of teaching. Without a detailed understanding of the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs it is unlikely that school leaders and policy makers will be able or willing to make the changes necessary for these beliefs to be nurtured. In addition, there is potential for the impact of school contextual factors upon teacher efficacy beliefs to be investigated further and to be considered as proximate sources of efficacy beliefs as opposed to Bandura's remote sources (Adams and Forsyth, 2006). Research suggests that malleable factors such as collegiality and empowering school leadership have a positive effect on teacher efficacy beliefs (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Ross et al, 2004) and they are also features of effective professional learning communities where teachers are encouraged to take risks and take part in collaborative professional learning.

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Much of the early research into teacher efficacy beliefs utilised a quantitative approach, preferring to measure levels of teacher efficacy beliefs and other teacher level factors and compare with measures such as school achievement. However, as Labone (2004) points out, quantitative methods have helped us to understand the power of teacher efficacy beliefs but have been less helpful at expanding our knowledge of how they can be nurtured and developed. This gap is beginning to be addressed by qualitative and mixed methods research in this research domain (Cheung, 2008; Klassen and Durksen, 2014; Milner and Woolfolk Hoy, 2003; Mulholland and Wallace, 2001). Anita Woolfolk stated in an interview about her work on teacher efficacy beliefs:

'I believe that qualitative methods are appropriate for an exploration of factors that mediate efficacy development and cultural influences on the construction of efficacy beliefs.' (Shaughnessy, 2004, p155)

Qualitative research allows for the lived experiences of participants to be explored and for researchers to gain rich details that may be missed in a quantitative study. Qualitative research focused on the teachers in an English school therefore has the potential to help us understand how teacher efficacy beliefs are influenced by the everyday experiences and contextual factors specific to this setting.

Although Bandura (1997) has suggested four key sources of efficacy beliefs there is limited research confirming these theories for the specific domain of teaching. The grounded theory method, with its focus on the generation of new theory is therefore a suitable way of exploring how teacher efficacy beliefs are influenced and developed without the restraint of testing previous theories. Some of the research investigating sources of efficacy beliefs has taken a case study qualitative approach (Mulholland and Wallace, 2001) or a mixed methods approach (Cheung, 2008; Klassen and Durksen, 2014) but to my knowledge grounded theory has not been applied to this particular research area. In Chapter 2, the methodology for this study will be explained and justified in more detail.

Furthermore, much of the research into teacher efficacy beliefs (in particular the sources of these beliefs) has focused on primary schools, possibly limiting our

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understanding of this important topic (Bruce et al., 2010; Cheung, 2008; Hoy and Woolfolk, 1993; Moulding et al., 2014; Mulholland and Wallace, 2001; Pas et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran and McMaster, 2009). Primary schools may create very different contexts for efficacy beliefs to be developed and teachers of this age range may respond differently to these factors than secondary school teachers. Consequently research that can increase the evidence for the development of efficacy beliefs in secondary school teachers is required. In addition, much of the research into teacher efficacy beliefs has focused on US teachers. Considering that educational systems are very different across the world and the potential influence of contextual factors upon teacher efficacy beliefs identified in previous research, investigating the specific context of English schools may allow further insight into the features of the English educational system that contribute towards the formation of these beliefs.

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3.1 The history of grounded theory methods: Philosophical assumptions and worldviews.

Research design will be influenced by the philosophical assumptions made by the researcher and their own worldviews. Creswell (2007) states that there are five philosophical assumptions to be considered: ontology (what is the nature of reality?), epistemology (how does knowledge come to be known?), axiology (how do values influence the research?), rhetorical (what language and terminology is appropriate?) and methodology (justification of the methods used). Carter and Little (2007, p1317) describe epistemology as '*justification of knowledge*'. Epistemology relates to what a researcher believes are the nature, sources and limits of knowledge, and their chosen method is likely to reflect their epistemological stance. The philosophical assumptions made by a researcher will reflect a set of beliefs (worldview) that the researcher holds (Creswell 2007).

The most relevant worldviews for the discussion of grounded theory methods are post-positivism and social constructivism. A researcher with a post-positivism worldview will conduct research that tends to be characterised by features of the empirical method: objectivity and an emphasis on cause and effect. A social constructivist worldview seeks to understand the meanings that individuals develop about situations and their experiences. These subjective meanings are believed to be constructed through interactions with other people and their situation, therefore constructivists will tend to focus on processes and contexts in their analyses. Researchers with a social constructivist worldview acknowledge that the situation of the researcher influences their interpretation of the data. In section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, I will explore how epistemological assumptions and worldview paradigms have influenced grounded theory methods.

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3.1.1. *Classic grounded theory: Opposing the quantitative orthodoxy?*

Grounded theory is an approach that first originated from the sociologists Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) as they researched the social organisation and temporal order of dying. At a time when qualitative research was seen as biased, anecdotal and unsystematic, Glaser and Strauss proposed a type of qualitative analysis that they argued could be systematic and credible. According to Bryant and Charmaz, (2010a), they positioned themselves in opposition to the '*quantitative orthodoxy*' (p33), arguing that qualitative data could be as valid as numerical data when supporting theories. In their book, *Discovering Grounded Theory: Strategies for qualitative research* (1967) Glaser and Strauss state that:

'there is no fundamental clash between the purposes and capacities of qualitative and quantitative methods or data. What clash there is concerns the primacy of emphasis on verification or generation of theory.....We believe that each form of data is useful for both verification and generation of theory, whatever the primacy of emphasis.....' (p17-18).

This suggests that Glaser and Strauss were not necessarily placing themselves in opposition to quantitative methods per se. Their book reflects a concern with the rapid speed at which researchers were adopting quantitative methods in order to *verify* theories, therefore bypassing the *generation* of theory as a valid form of research.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) were careful to explain how grounded theory method should be carried out in explicit detail, thus hoping to show that qualitative research could be rigorous, valid and reliable. Consequently, this has seen grounded theory methods accepted by some quantitative researchers using mixed methods and the increasing adoption of the method by qualitative researchers (Charmaz, 2006).

'A key strength, and one still central to GTM, is that it offers a foundation for rendering the processes and procedures of qualitative investigation visible, comprehensible, and replicable.' (Bryant and Charmaz, 2010a, p33)

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On the other hand, with the researcher as neutral observer, maintaining an '*informed detachment*' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p226) from the social world he is observing, the '*systemization of the collection, coding and analysis of qualitative data*' (p18), the focus on data and the use of specialised language and detailed procedural guidelines, classic grounded theory method has actually been placed in the (positivist) paradigm it was attempting to move away from.

'.....stressing the role of data to generate the ultimate theory which should be understandable (acceptable) to virtually 'anybody', can be said to be 'empiricist'. It suggests that data speak a unified language, understandable by a general, or one might say, commonsense audience.' (Ten Have, 2003, p138).

However, Bryant and Charmaz (2010a) believe that this positivist view of classic grounded theory misses some important epistemological perspectives. They suggest that the apparent positivist orientation adopted by grounded theory in the 1960s was due to Glaser's rigorous training in positivist methods at Columbia University and the fact that qualitative researchers were keen to show the validity of their methods. They argue that Strauss in particular showed a pragmatist perspective even in his early writings, intimating that a person's point of view can affect how they interpret the world around them. Pragmatism is a worldview in which there is no fixed philosophical system or reality and where researchers choose whatever methods best suit their research aims. In later writings (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) this worldview is illustrated by an acknowledgement that qualitative research involves a balance between art and science.

The notion that classic grounded theory can be considered 'positivist' is rejected by Gibson and Hartman (2014), who argue that this construction '*can be confusing and somewhat unnecessary*' (p63). They suggest that classic grounded theory 'appeared' to take on an objectivist stance because it was written about in later years as a general qualitative method and therefore the sociological principles and context behind it were essentially lost.

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'Strauss and Corbin (1990) deliberately wrote about grounded theory as a general qualitative method and, as such, it became increasingly associated with techniques and procedures rather than a way of thinking.....The sociological imagination was dropped.' (Gibson and Hartman, 2014, p239)

Gibson and Hartman point out that classic grounded theory was developed at a time when positivism was in decline and that the objectivist appearance of classic grounded theory in later writings should not be confused with the original method.

Holton (2010) suggests that the confusion surrounding the epistemology of grounded theory lies in the fact that classic grounded theory actually does not fit into existing research paradigms.

'...classic grounded theory transcends the specific boundaries of established paradigms to accommodate any type of data sourced and expressed through any epistemological lens.....the methodology is epistemologically and ontologically neutral' (Holton, 2010, p268)

Holton argues that classic grounded theory does not need to associate itself with any particular epistemology as the main aim is to produce conceptually abstract theory. No meaning or descriptive detail is required, therefore it does not matter if the data is viewed as interpretative or objectivist. Charmaz (2006) agrees with this point:

'must grounded theory methods be tied to a single epistemology? I think not.We can use the tools of grounded theory methods without subscribing to a prescribed theory of knowledge or view of reality.' (p178)

Indeed, Birks and Mills (2011) comment that first generation grounded theorists (such as Glaser and Strauss, 1967) only wrote about the techniques and procedures involved rather than the philosophical and methodological background. However, this does not necessarily mean that Glaser and Strauss believed grounded theory to be *'epistemologically and ontologically neutral'* nor does it mean that grounded theory was not influenced by epistemology.

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Carter and Little (2007) argue that a researcher's chosen method will clearly reflect their methodology and epistemology.

'It is through methods that methodology and epistemology become visible.'
(p1325)

This suggests that a researcher will not be able to choose a method or justify it (methodology) without at first considering their epistemological stance. Based on this notion, it should be unlikely that Glaser and Strauss were separated from their epistemological perspectives when creating grounded theory. However, the fact that the epistemological basis of grounded theory is contested indicates the possible error in Carter and Little's suggestion that epistemology is always visible through choice of method and methodology.

3.1.2 Constructivist grounded theory

Strauss's background with the Chicago School may have led to grounded theory being influenced by philosophy of pragmatism and symbolic interactionism (Bryant and Charmaz, 2010b).

'Pragmatism informed symbolic interactionism, a theoretical perspective that assumes society, reality, and self are constructed through interaction and thus rely on language and communication.' (Charmaz, 2006, p7)

The philosophy of pragmatism is interested in processes and the development of collective knowledge, believing that knowledge is created through action and interaction. Symbolic interactionism assumes that we act as individuals and collectively and that we interpret other peoples' actions rather than just reacting to them. Language and communication are important due to the constructed nature of society, reality and self. Bryant and Charmaz (2010b, p21) state that:

'Symbolic interactionism and grounded theory have strong compatibilities.....The symbolic interactionist emphasis on meaning and action complements the question grounded theorists pose in the empirical world: What is happening? (Glaser, 1978)'

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In the desire to be objective, it could be argued that some methodologies ignore the role that personal experience and beliefs may have in the research process. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008) this could lead to an under-appreciation of the constructed nature of reality and knowledge.

'..they may firmly rule out personal experience from inquiry in the name of "objectivity." Then, too, they may undervalue, from our standpoint, the importance of self-reflection both in its relation to what reality "is" and to its role in "knowing it"..... The nature of human responses creates conditions that impact upon, restrict, limit, and contribute toward restructuring the variety of action/interaction that can be noted in societies. In turn, humans also shape their institutions; they create and change the world around them through action/interaction.' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p5-6)

Modern constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) takes an interactionist stance and places the researcher themselves within the research rather than as an objective, neutral observer (the position taken by Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

'I assume that neither data nor theories are discovered.....we are part of the world we study and the data we collect. We construct our grounded theory through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices' (Charmaz, 2006, p10).

Essentially, people (ie. research participants) try to make sense of events that happen to them and therefore the researcher is constructing concepts from these meanings. This combination of constructions is then called 'knowledge' (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Constructivists focus on collecting detailed data with an appreciation of the unique situations that create the data (including the influence of the researcher themselves).

'The end point of your journey emerges from where you start, where you go, and with whom you interact, what you see and hear, and how you learn and think. In short, the finished work is a construction -yours' (Charmaz, 2006, pxi)

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Charmaz (2006) suggests that a key benefit of a constructivist approach to grounded theory is that the researcher is acutely aware of their own influence on the theory. Therefore, other researchers and policy-makers can ascertain how useful the grounded theory will be for their own situations and where they might want to adapt it. She also argues that an emphasis on meaning and action can prevent the researcher from merely reporting on the events in the social worlds they are studying. They become open to the social world as viewed by the participants themselves and thus the research will be useful and have resonance for the participants as well as for researchers and policy-makers.

On the other hand, Gibson and Hartman (2014) have suggested that constructivist grounded theory removes some of the openness necessary for grounded theory research. By starting with a belief that the researcher always affects the research or that meaning is particularly important, the researcher may 'force' (Glaser, 1992) certain ideas into the grounded theory or ignore parts of the data that don't fit these ideas. They also argue that doing constructivist grounded theory research '*involves the extra burden of checking how the researchers' interests may or may not be acting to shape their interpretation of participants' perspectives*' (p59). However, I would suggest that for a researcher committed to the ontology of constructivist grounded theory, such a task would be seen as an important part of the research process rather than a burden.

3.2 Rationale: Why grounded theory?

Klassen et al. (2011) argue that reliable theories of the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs need to be established in order to allow the application of theory to practice. Creswell (2007) argues that grounded theory is appropriate if there is a lack of theory available to explain a process or if available theories were based on irrelevant samples and populations. Bandura's (1997) theories about the sources of self-efficacy beliefs (see chapter 2, section 2.3) are generalised and not specific to the particular domain of teacher efficacy beliefs. Therefore, the focus on the development of new theory specific to the context of school teachers, makes grounded theory method very suited to research into sources of teacher

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efficacy beliefs. Creswell (2007) also states that grounded theory is appropriate to investigate how individuals experience a *process* with the identification of steps in the process. The development of teacher efficacy beliefs over time is most definitely a process, thus focusing on the sources of efficacy beliefs would seem a suitable research area for grounded theory methods.

Klassen et al. (2011) suggest that objective, quantitative measures of the sources of efficacy beliefs are required, such as through large scale surveys in order to develop reliable theories. However, it could be argued that this type of quantitative inquiry is reductionist, failing to appreciate the complexity of teacher efficacy beliefs. Creswell (2007) states that qualitative research procedures will focus on collecting data from a natural setting in a sensitive manner and that data analysis will be inductive, with a focus on looking for patterns and themes. When finished, the research will include '*the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem*' (Creswell, 2007, p37). I believe that if conducted carefully, grounded theory is an equally credible method for developing reliable theories about the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs. To my knowledge, there has been no qualitative study that has used grounded theory to investigate the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs.

In section 3.1 the epistemological history of grounded theory was outlined, discussing some of the differences between the more objective classic grounded theory method (eg. Glaser and Strauss 1967) and the later social constructivist grounded theory method (eg. Charmaz 2006). Carter and Little (2007) suggest that a researcher considering using a qualitative method must have a good understanding of the various theoretical and disciplinary influences on the method in order to use the method confidently and modify it appropriately. In terms of my own research, I have taken a social constructivist perspective on grounded theory. I believe that knowledge is constructed and that my own experience as a teacher and the relationships I have with the participants of the study will influence the interpretation of the data and the construction of theory. Creswell (2007) argues that modern qualitative research is more focused upon interpretative inquiry in which the context of the researcher, participants and

readers will contribute to multiple views of a research problem. Therefore, to reflect changes to the focus of qualitative research, the social constructivist paradigm seems a more appropriate version of the grounded theory method for the purposes of my research.

3.3 What is grounded theory method?

Classic grounded theory positions itself as a method of generating theory rather than verifying and applying existing theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory does not take a linear approach to research. Data collection and analysis take place simultaneously and often in a cyclical nature and it is this which sets grounded theory apart from other interpretive research methods (Birks and Mills, 2011). Glaser and Strauss (1967, p43) state that: *'Joint collection, coding, and analysis of data is the underlying operation. The generation of theory, coupled with the notion of theory as process, requires that all three operations be done together as much as possible.'* The notion of theory as process assumes that theory is always in development and should be presented in a discussional format to reflect this.

The purpose of grounded theory is to construct new theory from collected data and there are number of unique features that contribute to this aim:

- ✓ Simultaneous data collection, coding and analysis
- ✓ The use of analytic memo and comparative methods
- ✓ Theoretical sampling

3.3.1 Coding the data

Charmaz (2006) argues that grounded theory is a craft in which practitioners may vary slightly in their emphasis but as a whole they share common practices. Coding is one of these common practices, although the way in which grounded theorists conduct coding may vary.

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'Coding is the core process in classic grounded theory methodology. It is through coding that the conceptual abstraction of data and its reintegration as theory takes place.' (Holton, 2010, p265)

The coding of data takes places in stages. Holton (2010) states that there are two main types of coding: substantive and theoretical coding. Substantive coding (also called 'initial coding' or 'open coding') comes from the raw data, a process in which the researcher often uses the language of the data itself to identify core concepts and processes. Methods such as line-by-line coding are often used at this stage. Constant comparison of data and incidents takes place, that may then lead to the development of higher level concepts called categories. Theoretical coding occurs when a core category is emerging. It is at this point that more advanced coding methods may be used and the researcher will begin to explain the relationships between concepts.

Most grounded theory researchers would also consider there to be an intermediate stage of coding. Charmaz (2006) calls this focused coding, a stage at which the researcher analyses the frequent codes that have emerged from initial coding and decides how well these fit the data. It involves revisiting codes and comparing instances so that you can create codes that are a true reflection of the data. However, intermediate coding may not necessarily occur straight after initial coding, as with all grounded theory methods it is likely to occur simultaneously with other stages of analysis. Initial coding of one section of data may lead to intermediate coding as you start to compare data instances (Charmaz, 2006). Indeed, Corbin and Strauss (2008) agree that the first stages of coding (which they call 'open coding') cannot validly be separated from the intermediate stages of coding (which they call 'axial coding') because the two processes often occur at the same time as the researcher naturally makes connections between data instances. Corbin and Strauss state that axial coding occurs when the researcher relates concepts and categories to each other. On the face of it, this would appear the same as Charmaz's account of focused coding. However, she treats axial coding as a separate process, a '*third type of coding*' (Charmaz, 2006 p60) in which the researcher begins to describe the properties and dimensions of categories and link them together.

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3.3.2 *'Thinking' about the data: The use of analytic memos*

'Thinking is the heart and soul of doing qualitative analysis. Thinking is the engine that drives the process and brings the researcher into the analytic process' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p163)

The quote above illustrates the important role that analytic memos should play in the coding process of grounded theory. In essence, they allow the researcher to make their ideas and thoughts explicit as they interpret the data. The very act of writing a memo encourages the researcher to think about their data differently, to make comparisons and explore the properties of their categories further as their research develops.

'They record an idiosyncratic and creative process of theory development.'
(Lempert, 2010, p249)

They are more than just description of the data. Analytic memos are active participants in the research process, helping the researcher to organise and explore the characteristics of potential concepts and categories.

'...memos.....are more than just repositories of thought. They are working and living documents.' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p118)

Analytic memos are essential if a researcher is to uphold the processes of data collection and analysis in parallel. They occur throughout the grounded theory process in a cyclical nature (see Figure 3). For example, after initial data collection and coding, memos will be written to explore the codes and develop them into categories. This will lead to more data collection through theoretical sampling (discussed in section 3.3.3), focused coding and advanced memos. The intermediate stages of coding and analysis through memos can be repeated as many times as necessary. As categories and concepts emerge and are filled out in more depth by memos, they will eventually be refined and theoretical integration will occur.

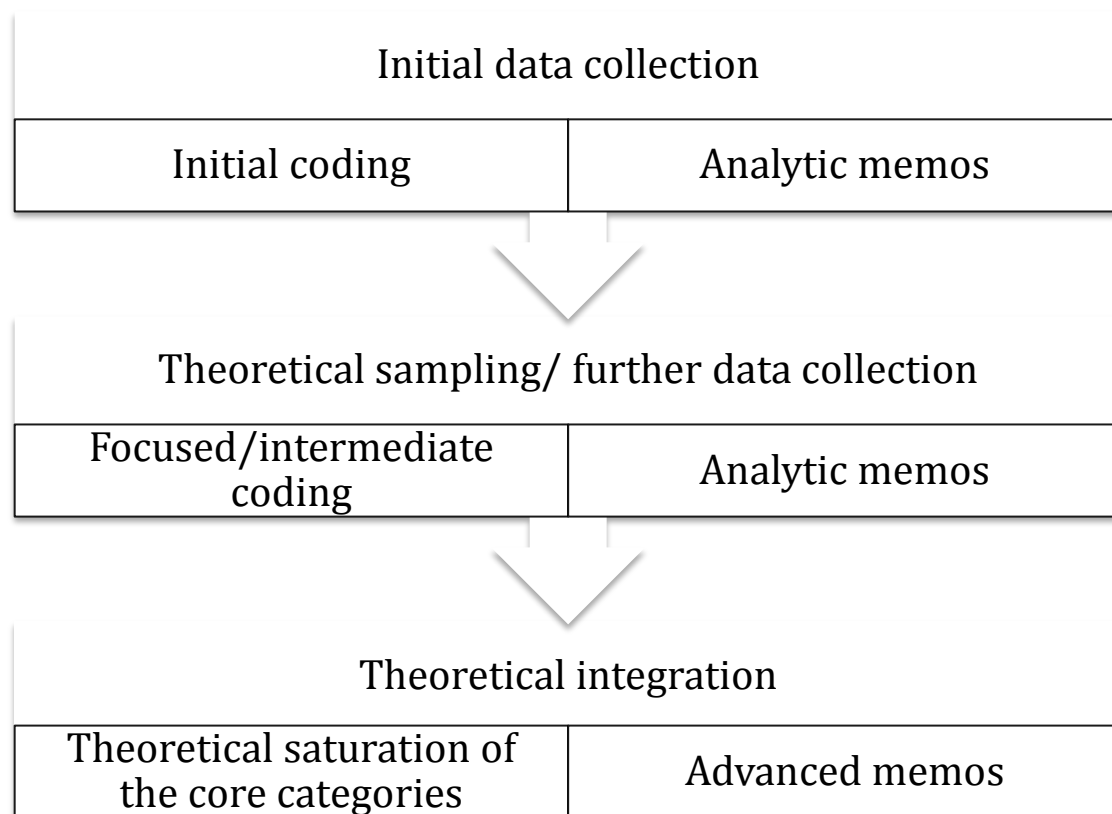


Figure 3. The grounded theory process.

Analytic memos have a variety of uses and the researcher is likely to have their own preferred methods. Charmaz (2006) suggests that they could be used to define the properties of codes and categories, ask questions of these developing codes and categories, provide evidence for the codes and categories (for example by presenting raw data) and check for gaps in the analysis. An emphasis on comparisons is a common feature of analytic memos. Comparative analysis is a method used throughout the grounded theory process to help fill out the details of the categories and concepts as they develop. Glaser and Strauss (1967) discuss various uses of comparative analysis when generating theory, but the main premise is that the researcher should compare incidents in the data, codes and categories in order to understand the patterns present in the data. By making comparisons between incidents in the data, new categories may emerge and existing categories can be developed in further detail. Charmaz (2006) argues that comparative analysis helps the researcher *'tease out distinctions that sharpen your treatment of the material.....you distinguish between major and minor categories and delineate how they are related'* (p84-85). Comparative

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analysis is such an important aspect of grounded theory research that Charmaz (2006) lists it as a criterion for the achievement of credible grounded theory work.

Credible research relies on techniques and procedures carried out carefully and the presentation of a logical theory clearly related to the data. It could be argued that a researcher that has kept conscientious analytic memos throughout the analysis of their grounded theory is more likely to be able to achieve a logical theory related to the data. As Mills and Birks (2011) state, memos are '*the most significant factor in ensuring quality in grounded theory*' (p40).

3.3.3 Theoretical sampling and theoretical integration

Theoretical sampling is a unique aspect of grounded theory that Charmaz and Bryant (2011) argue can give more credibility to this form of research. The technique involves going back to the research setting and selecting certain types of data that allows the researcher to explore any emerging concepts in more detail. Data collection and analysis must occur simultaneously for true theoretical sampling to occur because each analysis will lead to new directions for the next set of data collection. Corbin and Strauss (2008) describe theoretical sampling as '*responsive to the data*' (p144). For example, after some initial interviews, further interviews with the same participant will include adapted questions used to further investigate particular lines of enquiry. This could be viewed as internal 'cumulation', whereby each interview provides further detail and insights into the emerging concepts. Alternatively, interview participants are selected to fit the emerging categories developing from the codes. It is a method in which the researcher aims to look for variation in their emerging concepts so that they can describe and adapt their properties and dimensions in as much detail as possible.

Cycles of initial coding, intermediate coding and theoretical sampling can continue until eventually the researcher will reach 'saturation' point, where all concepts and categories have been described and explained as fully as possible. As the research develops, theoretical sampling will become more specific as the

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detail of the concepts are filled out and theoretical integration occurs. Birks and Mills (2011) suggest that theoretical integration requires three factors: a core category must be identified, the major categories must have achieved theoretical saturation (a point at which no new information about the category is emerging from the data) and there must be a large collection of analytic memos. Corbin and Strauss (2008) point out that it may not be possible for every category and concept to be completely explained and developed, therefore the researcher must be happy the concept is adequately developed for the purposes of the study. Researchers must however, be careful not to conclude their study too early and risk leaving gaps where concepts have been explored too briefly. Theoretical sampling is therefore an important tool to allow the researcher to answer any questions they may have about categories and concepts before theoretical integration can occur.

3.4 Method

3.4.1 Participants

The interview participants were sampled from an average-sized secondary comprehensive school in a fairly rural part of Essex (pseudonym Leaford School), serving a community of mixed socio-economic status. Leaford School has approximately 960 students (150 in the sixth form) and employs around 80 teachers. I interviewed teachers across a range of subject departments and with a wide range of teaching experience. Participants were initially voluntary participants as they responded to a request for teachers to take part in my research. I sent an email to all teaching staff with a link to an online survey monkey questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The questions on this survey aimed to gauge teachers' views of professional development activities in order to help decide relevant areas of enquiry for the interviews. Only one question relating to teacher efficacy beliefs was included in this survey as although I had decided to conduct research on this research topic, I initially decided to start by exploring professional development as a potential source (see Appendix 1). It was not until I started interviewing teachers using the grounded theory technique of

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theoretical sampling that the repertoire of potential sources widened. At the end of the survey, teachers were invited to add their name if they would be happy to be interviewed for my research. This resulted in 9 volunteer participants who were interviewed over the course of the spring and summer term (round 1). Three of the initial participants (Jill, Suzy and Harriet) were interviewed again in the autumn and spring terms of the next academic year in order to follow up on categories emerging from the data. Some of the participants moved to new schools and therefore the opportunity to interview them again was lost. A further 6 participants were interviewed in round 2, which followed the analysis of the data collected from the round 1 interviews. The round 2 interviews took place in the autumn and spring term of the next academic year. The round 2 participants were selected through theoretical sampling (please see section 3.4.4 for an explanation of how this was carried out).

Stage 1 participants Summer term 2012	Stage 2 participants Autumn term 2012/ spring term 2013
Jill	Jill
Suzy	Suzy
Harriet	Harriet
George	Adrian
Catherine	Annie
Simon	Lottie
Alex	Gary
Louise	Holly
	Dominic
	Shelley

Table 1. Summary of interview participants in each stage.

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Please see Appendix 6 for a summary of each participants' length of service, subject and position in the school.

3.4.2 Collection of data

Interviews were chosen as the main data gathering method, providing an opportunity to gain a richer data set relating to teacher efficacy beliefs. Rubin and Rubin (1995) describe qualitative interviewing as a philosophy in which people are encouraged to '*describe their worlds in their own terms*' (p2). It is through asking teachers about their experiences that the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs and the cognitive processes involved in the efficacy judgement can be investigated further.

Henson (2002) suggests that in depth study of teachers is required in order to fully understand the relationships between sources of efficacy information, the meanings attached by teachers to this information and the effect of efficacy beliefs. Henson argues that teachers could be asked to reflect upon their sources of efficacy beliefs and how these impact on their behaviors.

'Researchers may consider context more directly via observation or attempt to evaluate teacher cognition by conducting "think alouds," in which teachers can elaborate on why they responded the way they did and generate examples.' (Henson, 2002, p147)

The interview method, with its focus on the participants' own experiences, therefore seems a suitable method for eliciting such information from teachers about their thought processes and their perceptions of the effect of contextual factors on efficacy. The detailed qualitative data that results from interview data is also very appropriate for the purposes of grounded theory. The ethical issues arising from the use of interviews are discussed later in section 3.5.

An 'animated' interview (as described by Holstein and Gubrium, 2011) encourages participants to use narratives to link the topic to real experiences. The researcher takes into account how the participant chooses to present their experiences because this can further reveal what they mean. Holstein and

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Gubrium suggest that active interviewers should not be encouraging preferred responses to their questions, but should suggest links and interpretations that may be relevant to their own experiences.

'..the objective is not to dictate an interpretative frame... but to provide an environment conducive to the production of the range and complexity of narratives that might develop' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011, p158)

As I am also a teacher and have experienced many of the same events as the people I interviewed, the idea of the interview as an active process seemed appropriate to me, as it is likely the interviewee will respond differently because of our shared experiences. It allowed me to develop the narrative of the interview if I felt there were connections I would like the interviewee to explore further. This type of interview, with its appreciation of the researcher's influence on the research process also fits well with the interactionist perspective on grounded theory method advocated by recent researchers (eg Corbin and Strauss 2008; Charmaz, 2006) as this perspective appreciates the importance of recognising how the researcher interacts with the data.

3.4.3 Interview schedule

Interviews took place at a time and place convenient to the participant. This was often after school in the participant's classroom. Interview durations were from approximately 20 to 40 minutes and each one was recorded on a digital voice recorder. I used a semi-structured interview schedule, with some pre-prepared topics and questions (see Appendix 2) as this allowed me to adapt to the interviewee's responses accordingly. I had a different interview schedule for participants who were interviewed in the second round selected through theoretical sampling based on the emerging themes that I had identified in previous interviews (see an example in Appendix 2). I found that the interviews became less structured as the research progressed because I had a better understanding of the concepts and categories emerging from the data and was more confident following the narrative of the interview. I also adapted my questions to make them more relevant to the participant's experiences. For

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example, only asking experienced colleagues about the impact of mentoring on their teaching. Essentially, the interviews became concept based rather than using the same questions every time in the same order.

3.4.4 Theoretical sampling

I described in section 2.3.3 the main premises of theoretical sampling (selecting participants and asking questions on the basis of analysis of previous data, in order to explore concepts and categories in more depth). Due to time limitations, theoretical sampling did not occur as frequently as I would have liked. It was often the case that I needed to conduct two or three interviews in one week, as this was when participants were available. This meant that I did not have time to transcribe and code each interview before completing the next. However, I did ensure that once I had completed some analysis of a group of interviews, that I adapted my interview questions and topics for the next participants. Therefore, a cyclical system of initial coding, analytic memos and theoretical sampling did occur.

As well as theoretical sampling influencing the topics explored in the interviews, it also had an impact upon the participants approached to take part in round 2 of the interviewing. I wanted to follow up on concepts such as 'moving the goal posts', 'transitions', 'crisis point' and 'practice what you preach'. I therefore approached some participants with many years experience in order to explore these concepts as they were mainly relevant to this group of teachers.

Another type of theoretical sampling that I used was returning to earlier data to revisit concepts that had arisen in later interviews. This is a method discussed by Corbin and Strauss (2008):

'Sometimes, in order to sample theoretically, a researcher has to collect more data and sometimes the researcher can return to data that have already been collected.' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p151)

I found that in some cases I had missed data in earlier interviews that helped me understand a concept in more detail.

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Corbin and Strauss (2008) argue that one of the most beneficial aspects of theoretical sampling is that it allows researchers to take advantage of sudden opportunities that arise and explore concepts in more depth. They caution that researchers must ensure these opportunities are still explored with the focus of the study in mind and use them to look for variations in order to add properties and dimensions to their concepts. This has relevance for my research as an Ofsted inspection occurred in the middle of my data collection period. After the event, I was able to explore with participants if the inspection had impacted upon their teacher efficacy beliefs.

Each interview was transcribed by myself, word for word as soon as possible (see Appendix 3 for an example). This was to allow me to code the data and for this coding to inform the next interview (through theoretical sampling). It was not always possible for me to transcribe and code the interviews before the next interview, however I noted down any ideas I had after each one so that I could follow up on these themes in the next interviews. This often resulted in post-it notes stuck to the interview schedule ready for the next interview.

3.4.5 Analysis of data

Corbin and Strauss (2008) argue that qualitative analysis should be flexible and dynamic. They believe that analysis should be '*driven by insight gained through interaction with data rather than being overly structured and based only on procedures*' (p12). To them, qualitative analysis can only be '*learned by doing*' (p16) and requires a great deal of self-reflection and intuition. These are principles that I certainly agree with. Although I had a reasonable understanding of qualitative analysis before conducting the research and had obviously read about how to conduct grounded theory, it was the process of completing the research itself that enabled me to have a deeper understanding of the method.

After transcribing each interview I conducted initial coding processes using the line-by-line method (Glaser 1978) where codes are used to describe the concepts outlined by the participants in each line of the transcript. The benefits of the line-by-line method are that it allows the researcher to look at the tiny details in their

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data and to ask questions about them at an early stage of analysis (Mills and Birks, 2011). Initial coding aims to produce codes that are *'provisional, comparative and grounded in the data'* (Charmaz 2006, p48). Codes may well change as the research process progresses and the researcher starts comparing data. The primary goal was to digest the raw data and begin to assimilate it to identify common emerging concepts. The main coding methods I used were *in vivo* coding and *process* coding. Please see Appendix 4 for an example of the initial coding of an interview transcript.

In vivo codes are ones that use the language of the data. For example, using short phrases or words from interview transcripts. Charmaz (2006) states that *in vivo* codes *'help us to preserve participants' meanings of their views and actions in the coding itself'* (p55). *In vivo* coding can be useful in order to extract terms that are unique to a particular group of people and therefore allow the researcher insight into their world. Charmaz (2006) suggests two other types of *in vivo* codes; general terms that everybody knows and of which we have a common understanding of meaning and terms unique to the participant that illustrate a particular meaning or experience.

Process codes use *'gerunds'* (noun forms of verbs such as *'experiencing'*) to summarise the processes present in each line of the data. These process codes may use some of the words directly from the data but more often originate from the researcher's understanding of the concepts. Codes that originate from the researcher require abstract thought and intuition in order to apply the right words to truly describe the meaning of the data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). As I became more familiar with the data, process codes became more abstract. I returned to many of the original codes to change the wording or to raise them to abstract codes and categories.

After initial coding of the interviews I wrote analytic memos to capture my thoughts about the emerging codes and concepts (see Appendix 5 for examples). These helped me to clarify and describe the codes, and to make comparisons between cases. Comparison is an important part of grounded theory method and a technique I found very useful as it often helped me to make links between

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codes or to fill out the properties of a code or category. As described in section 3.4.4, I could then decide on interview topics or particular participants to talk to next in the intermediate stages of analysis (theoretical sampling). Once I had completed the initial coding process for all interviews (along with associated analytic memos) I developed diagrams to visually illustrate the connections between codes, concepts and categories. This was very beneficial as it allowed me to further my thinking about the main categories that had emerged from the interviews and to write advanced analytic memos. As such, the diagrams were part of the intermediate and advanced coding stages of analysis. Please see Appendices 9, 10 and 11 for the diagrams related to the three main categories.

3.5 Ethics

Creswell (2007) argues that being sensitive to ethical issues is of particular importance in qualitative research due to the proximity to the field site and the amount of time and emotional openness participants provide. In this section I will explain how I approached some of the key ethical issues in my grounded theory research.

3.5.1 Informed consent

For this ethical guideline to be met, research participants should know they are part of research, have a full understanding of the nature of the research and be able to withdraw their consent at any time. The British Educational Research Association's (BERA) ethical guidelines (BERA, 2004) state that consent should be given without any duress and should occur prior to the research commencing. BERA also states that participants should understand how the research will be used and whom it will be reported to. I gained written consent from the individuals I interviewed (Appendix 7) and the Headteacher of the school (Appendix 8). The consent forms made the research aims clear, explained how the data would be used, explained confidentiality and that participants could withdraw at any point.

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3.5.2 Confidentiality

Generally, this issue considers the protection of participants' personal identity and the location of the research. Anonymising the school was important as if the location of the research were to be divulged it is very likely that the identities of the participants could be easily revealed. In addition, protecting the school's identity may prevent any possibility of harming its reputation. My multiple role as teacher, colleague and researcher may also cause some additional issues regarding confidentiality. BERA ethical guidelines (2004) state that:

'Researchers engaged in action research must consider the extent to which their own reflective research impinges on others, for example in the case of the dual role of teacher and researcher and the impact on students and colleagues. Dual roles may also introduce explicit tensions in areas such as confidentiality and must be addressed accordingly.' (BERA, 2004, p6)

It is possible that colleagues would not want the content of the interviews to be divulged to other people, especially if they frame themselves or the school in a negative light. They might feel that their opinions, thoughts and behaviours could affect their chances of promotion or cause senior leaders to question their competency. This is especially relevant for a thesis on teacher efficacy beliefs where participants' may not want colleagues to know if they have low efficacy beliefs. I therefore reassured participants of their anonymity and used pseudonyms when writing up the research. Even with this assurance, participants may regard what they say as public and therefore speak very differently about events than they would if I were not completing a piece of research. I also ensured that I asked participants' permission to record the interview. The recordings will be destroyed a year after the thesis has been submitted.

3.5.3 Trust

The quotation in section 3.5.2 of the BERA (2004) ethical guidelines also discusses the issue of exploitation by the researcher and therefore implies the issue of trust. The researcher could be viewed as gaining much more from the research than the participants themselves and therefore may be resented, producing an imbalance in the costs and benefits of the research. I needed to be careful that the participants did not feel as if they have been used solely for the purposes of my research and thus have exploited them in some way. Although the participants were my colleagues in school, my status as Advanced Skills Teacher could have made it difficult to avoid being seen as powerful compared to the participants. However, the outcomes of the research could be beneficial for the school's professional development systems and therefore there was potential to encourage the participants to become part of the research process itself. I explained to participants that I intended to feedback any relevant findings to senior leaders (whilst keeping participants anonymous) in order that the school management could reflect on practices. Creswell (2007, p44) argues that '*Giving back to participants for their time and efforts in our projects –reciprocity– is important, and we need to review how participants gain from our studies.*' I also intend to send participants a summary of the research once it has been submitted.

3.6 'All is data': Issues of reflexivity in grounded theory research

One criticism of classic grounded theory is Glaser's (1978) apparent relentless focus upon the 'data' in descriptions of grounded theory. It has been suggested (Bryant and Charmaz, 2010a) that this 'all is data' mantra could lead one to believe that the *quality* of the data is not important. Carter and Little (2007) state that data quality is essential whatever epistemic position a researcher takes. Bryant and Charmaz also argue that researchers could focus too much on the role of data rather than the reflexive nature of the grounded theory method. They argue that the interpretation and interaction of the researcher is ultimately as important as the data itself.

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However, the focus on 'all is data' does not necessarily lead all researchers to ignore the interactionist elements of grounded theory. The quote below illustrates how the perspective of the researcher themselves may influence how they interpret the 'all is data' mantra in their work.

'For me, the beauty of the method lies in its everything-is-data characteristic; that is to say, everything I see, hear, smell, and feel about the target, as well as what I already know from my studies and my life experience, are data. I act as interpreter of the scene I observe, and as such I make it come to life for the reader. I grow it.' (Stern, 2010, p115)

Classic grounded theory according to Glaser (1978) relies on generating theory from the raw data alone and being open and flexible to all possibilities, a concept he called 'theoretical sensitivity'. Therefore, it could be argued that any preconceived influence from professional experience, values or literature threatens the integrity of the theory. In practice, it may be very difficult to conduct grounded theory method without being influenced by these factors.

'To remain truly open to the emergence of theory is among the most challenging issues confronting those new to grounded theory'. (Holton, 2010, p269)

Indeed, a researcher using grounded theory method for a university degree will likely be expected to have an awareness of the relevant literature in their research area before conducting their study.

Gibson and Hartman (2014) argue that the notion of theoretical sensitivity has been misunderstood. They suggest that the concept of theoretical sensitivity is more complex than just attempting to ignore prior assumptions and ideas, it involves the researcher being aware of '*what a theory is, what possibilities there might be for a theory in any given area, and how a theory can be developed and applied*' (p109). Clearly, an understanding of the existing literature is needed if these aspects of theoretical sensitivity are to be achieved. Researchers should also be open to variation and flexibility in the construction and development of their theory. In Gibson and Hartman's reanalysis of the original classic grounded theory texts (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978) they claim that Glaser does

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not suggest researchers should have an 'empty head' when doing grounded theory research. Glaser merely suggests that any preconceived ideas should not be forced upon the data during data analysis. Returning to the literature once core categories have been established is then encouraged in order to draw out similarities and differences between the grounded theory and the existing literature.

If we consider grounded theory from the interactionist viewpoint discussed by Corbin and Strauss (2008) then it is inevitable that the researcher's views, experiences and knowledge of the research area will influence the grounded theory. Ten Have (2003) argues that '*analysis always involves a creative confrontation of already present 'theoretical' ideas and newly produced or considered evidence.....*' (p140), suggesting a constructive process of theory production rather than a focus on the 'discovery' of theory independent from outside influence. Although classic grounded theory as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) does acknowledge the influence of the researcher's knowledge and experience, this tends to be only to warn of the possible problems of subjectivity on the emergence of theory. Corbin (writing in Corbin and Strauss 2008) believes that researchers must reflect on how they influence the research and how it influences them. She argues that even though concepts are interpretations of data, they can still be valid insights as they enable us to share our understanding.

'I believe that we share a common culture out of which common constructions are arrived at through discourse' (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p12)

Therefore, it could be argued that it is valid for grounded theories to be influenced by the researcher as long as the researcher is aware of and reports on how they have interacted with the data and theory construction.

Gibson and Hartman (2014) argue that grounded theory researchers should attempt to analyse their own preconceptions and prior interests and use them productively. For example, a researcher's prior interests can be used productively to plan the nature, focus and methodology of the research and to

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ensure the findings are relevant to the area of enquiry. However, care should be taken that prior interests do not influence the development of concepts and categories during data analysis. On the other hand, preconceptions are more difficult to use productively as they are beliefs and ideas we may be unaware of. Gibson and Hartman suggest that researchers should initially think carefully about their research question in order to ensure their research does not preconceive particular issues. For example, the research question 'What professional development activities have the most positive influence upon student achievement?' assumes that professional development activities do indeed have a positive effect on student achievement. Gibson and Hartman also reiterate Glaser's (1978) suggestion that in order to reduce the influence of preconceptions, researchers should avoid using professional and theoretical concepts when analysing the data.

3.7 Judging the quality of grounded theory research

Bryant and Charmaz (2010b) state that grounded theory method is a 'contested concept' but that this has led to a development and improvement in qualitative methods.

'...the method has redrawn the methods map, brought to the fore some of the central practical and philosophical methods issues, and initiated a flourishing interest in methods enhancement and development.' (Bryant and Charmaz, 2010b, p4)

As well as aiding the expansion of understanding and debate into the *nature* of qualitative research, grounded theory has also contributed to debate into the *evaluation* of qualitative research.

Empirical, positivist research aspires for objectivity through high control, validity and reliability. If the same criteria are used to evaluate qualitative research it is likely not to meet them and therefore to be viewed as lacking rigour. As Birks and Mills (2011) point out, grounded theory was initially developed in order to help qualitative research to be seen as a more rigorous methodology.

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Even though grounded theory was developed with explicit processes and procedures in mind this does not mean that we should judge its quality by the same criteria as empirical, quantitative research.

Carter and Little (2007) suggest that all qualitative research should be judged on whether it has taken an internally consistent and systematic approach to the reporting of epistemology, method and methodology. In this way, all forms of qualitative research could be judged for rigour and quality without prescribing a rigid framework for the reporting of such research. Creswell (2007) is more specific in the features he thinks are necessary for high quality qualitative research. He emphasises rigorous data collection procedures (multiple forms and with an adequate amount of time in the field), an evolving rather than fixed design, a focus on participants' views, use of a recognised paradigm, detailed account of the methods used, validation of the accuracy of the data, persuasive and engaging writing, sensitivity to ethical considerations and that the researcher is clear about their position within the research. Some of these features such as the validation of data accuracy and multiple forms of data are more akin to positivist evaluation of research, however they provide a useful tool for the consideration of how to conduct and report on qualitative research effectively.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) described their own criteria for evaluating grounded theory research which is often labelled as 'classic criteria'. These criteria include:

- ✓ **Fit.** The theory must fit the substantive area being researched.
- ✓ **Understandable** by laypersons within this substantive area.
- ✓ **General.** It should be possible to apply the theory to a range of situations within the substantive area.
- ✓ **Control.** The theory must provide a range of understandable concepts for the user who can then go on to manipulate variables in order to produce change. Glaser and Strauss argue that these controllable variables should have explanatory power and therefore exert a large influence on the situation.

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For Glaser and Strauss (1967), the fundamental measure of a grounded theory's credibility should be its application in context. The theory should fit well within the field it is being applied to and should be understandable by practitioners within that field. The application of grounded theory has remained a central tenet of most evaluation criteria for this method. For example, Charmaz's (2006) criteria of 'usefulness' focuses upon whether the grounded theory suggests interpretations that can be used in everyday life and can be used to improve people's lives. Her criteria of 'resonance' includes the implication that the grounded theory should '*make sense*' (p183) to the participants or similar persons.

The parallel processes of data collection, coding and analysis in repeated cycles using theoretical sampling could also be seen as a sign of rigour if completed effectively. Carter and Little (2007) argue that these cycles '*better support the integrity, focus, and explanatory power of continuing analysis and, thus, the final product*' (p1325) in qualitative research. Therefore, it should be clear in a good quality grounded theory, how the final theory emerged from these iterative cycles.

Despite the existence of various criteria for assessing quality in grounded theory research (eg. Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006), there is still not a definite consensus on what these criteria should be. This somewhat reflects the general debate in qualitative research about how research should be evaluated and whether evaluation criteria should be the same for all types of qualitative research (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Corbin (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) suggests that quality qualitative research:

'...resonates with readers' and participants' life experiences.....is interesting, clear, logical.....gives insight, shows sensitivity...' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p302)

She cautions the use of general criterion for evaluating qualitative research and suggests that we will often know 'quality' when we see it. Corbin (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) brings together many criteria from different sources to define her own set of criteria for grounded theory as follows:

1. **Fit.** To what extent do the findings resonate with the participants and professionals in the research area?
2. **Applicability.** To what extent are the findings useful? Do they add new knowledge and can they be used to change practices?
3. **Concepts.** The findings should be organised into concepts that can be commonly understood and shared by professionals.
4. **Contextualisation of concepts.** It should be clear how the context influenced the findings.
5. **Logic.** The methodology should be made clear and there should be no gaps in the flow of ideas that leave the reader confused.
6. **Depth.** There should be substantive, descriptive detail of the findings.
7. **Variation.** To what extent have examples that don't fit the pattern been used to show dimensions and properties of categories and concepts?
8. **Creativity.** The research should present new understandings or new ideas.
9. **Sensitivity.** The research should be driven by the analysis rather than preconceived ideas or concepts.
10. **Evidence of memos.** Corbin (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) believes this to be one of the most important criteria, as without memos a researcher will have been unable to recall all of the necessary thoughts and analysis that take place during grounded theory research.

Although the evaluation criteria set out by Corbin (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) are clear and relevant for grounded theory research, some elements may be more difficult for the researcher themselves to assess. For example, the criteria of 'fit' and 'logic' are more easily identified by readers of the research. Therefore, the criteria may be more useful for external assessments of quality than they are for the researcher. Nonetheless, the criteria provide a useful framework for researchers to consider when planning and conducting grounded theory research. I will come back to these criteria when evaluating the quality and limitations of my research in chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Analysis of the data

In this chapter, I will write about the major categories that emerged from the analysis of the interview data in my analytic memos. I will describe and elaborate the core categories and concepts related to them, illustrating how my interpretations of the interview transcripts contributed to the key themes that emerged from initial, intermediate and advanced coding stages. Both interview rounds are presented in this chapter, because the key categories emerged from an analysis of both the round 1 and round 2 interviews. For the purposes of anonymity, I have replaced the names of the teachers interviewed with pseudonyms.

I have purposefully not included any discussion of the literature in this chapter, in order to focus on the interpretations of the participants' views and the key themes (Watts, 2014). Birks and Mills (2011) describe how the use of storyline can help researchers to explain the relationships between categories and concepts, explore variance in their properties and show how the theory is grounded in the data. This should help the researcher formulate the final theory and allow the theory to be communicated to the reader. In this chapter I aim to provide a descriptive, analytic and explanatory tour of the categories, codes and concepts that emerged from the analytic memos of the interview data.

The use of bold terms indicates a category or code that has been assigned during the analysis of my data (by initial coding and analytic memos). A discussion of the core category **aspiring for the gold standard** and its associated concepts (**measuring efficacy, validating efficacy, proving efficacy**) will be followed by the core categories of **coping with dissonance** (related concepts: **efficacy doubts, fighting the system, equilibrium**) and **moving the goal posts** (related concepts: **coping with transitions, powerlessness**). Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings.

Please see Appendices 9, 10 and 11 for diagrams illustrating the various concepts and codes linked to the core categories of **aspiring for the gold standard, coping with dissonance** and **moving the goal posts**. These diagrams

were constructed in the intermediate and advanced coding stages of the analysis as I sorted through the analytic memos in order to identify and organise key categories and concepts.

4.1 Aspiring for the gold standard

Throughout the interviews with teachers there was evidence that they were keen to do their best and to improve their teaching skills, although the scale of their desire to improve varied. This was a pervasive theme that was highlighted time and time again as they talked about their experiences in the classroom. In this way, the teachers interviewed were showing that the majority were highly motivated to improve their effectiveness in the classroom.

'...my aim is to be what I would call a good classroom teacher, respected, motivate students to deliver' (Dominic, lines 65-66)

'...you want somebody to watch you teach and have a good impression. You know, you never set out to not do your best.' (Louise, lines 128-130)

I labelled this major category **aspiring for the gold standard** because of the frequent reference by teachers to wanting to be judged as 'outstanding' by those who observe them.

'I haven't had a lesson that's been graded outstanding at all. I've only ever had good with outstanding features and those outstanding features change. It's not always the same ones. It makes me more determined that the next time that happens right I'm going to take on board those things and try and take it forward.' (Louise, lines 134-138)

The judgement of outstanding is one of the grades that can be attributed to an observed lesson by Ofsted, the body that inspects and regulates schools, based on a set of criteria. At the time the research was carried out, Ofsted would feedback the grade for the lesson to the observed teacher, but this practice has since 2014 been discontinued. The grades ranged from unsatisfactory, requires improvement, good to outstanding, therefore a lesson that is judged as

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outstanding achieves the 'gold standard' (although at the time of the interviews, the grade 'requires improvement' was actually labelled 'satisfactory' by Ofsted). These grades are also increasingly used by school management as a way of measuring and monitoring actual teaching efficacy in the classroom (**measuring efficacy**). Indeed, this practice still goes on despite the removal of individual lesson observation grades during Ofsted inspections. What is particularly interesting is that the teachers did not appear to solely attribute the lesson judgement label to the lesson observed, but perceived it as an overall judgement of their teaching abilities. Therefore, the aspiration to have a lesson observed as outstanding saw the transfer of the outstanding label from lesson to teacher. The observation judgement was viewed as a judgement of the teacher.

4.1.1 Measuring efficacy

The concept of **measuring efficacy** relates to the process of a teacher being judged on their efficacy in the classroom and measured against a criterion scale. This concept originally started off as the code **being judged**, with measuring efficacy as a separate code. However, as my analytic memos developed I began to realise that when teachers talked about being judged they were discussing their experiences of lesson observations in which they perceived their efficacy was being measured. However, there was a tension here, because although many teachers believed that lesson observations were used by management to **measure teacher efficacy**, many did not believe that this was a valid way of measuring their overall effectiveness.

The notion of the lesson judgement being transferred to judge the teacher as a whole and therefore **measure efficacy**, is illustrated by Holly's comments below, in which she displays some anxiety about observations not showing her true competency in the classroom. Holly is a teacher of 6 years experience with a head of department role.

'...I think what was so stressful was wanting to show all the good work that I had done all year in that tiny space of time.....and actually being

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incorrectly judged for a whole careers worth of work from a 20 minute observation with one class.....' (Holly, lines 69-72)

This implies that a lot of weight is being placed on lesson observations as a measure of a teacher's general effectiveness rather than as a measure of the quality of the particular lesson observed. The lesson observation is **taking a snapshot** of the teacher's performance in a small slice of time and generalising this performance to other lessons. This could explain some of the apprehension and tension surrounding the topic of lesson observations I noticed when conducting the interviews. For example, Suzy (an Advanced Skills Teacher who has been teaching for 9 years) was visibly emotional and physically affected when describing the effect of a lesson observation on her.

'Yeah, even now, how many years down the line. If somebody walks into my room planned or unplanned...I get like a (beats hand on chest)...stress feeling....you know like the flutters and go red....and I don't think that will change...I'm going red now thinking about it!' (Suzy, interview 1, lines 95-98)

This clearly shows how seriously teachers take lesson observations and the emotional and physical strain it may have on them. However, although Suzy felt trepidation about lesson observations she viewed them as a necessary evil; teachers have to be judged somehow.

'I think having someone in the room knowing they are judging you ...and that's what it is.... We're always ...talking about being non-judgemental....and.....you know it's not, you're having somebody in judge you. And quite right because we need to be held to account for what we're doing....' (Suzy, interview 1, lines 98-101)

In contrast to some of the teachers interviewed, Gary (a teacher for 9 years with previous experience in unrelated careers) initially appeared less influenced by lesson observation judgements, suggesting that you can't judge the overall effectiveness of a teacher on one lesson.

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'...other people they're absolutely terrified. I think that's wrong. Because of one bad observation. Does that make them a bad teacher? No. In my eyes. They can be slated for that....and I think that's wrong.' (Gary, lines 48-51)

Gary has seen the negative effect of poor observation ratings on others and suggests they (the teacher and management) are using this to label a teacher as 'bad' or ineffective. Gary believes that lesson observations are **taking a snapshot** view of the teacher's performance and therefore are not a valid way of **measuring efficacy**.

'....We all hit at that particular moment in time a pinnacle on that particular day. And that's what makes judgements so stupid..... so it's like a window.....' (Gary, lines 133-138).

The comparison of a lesson observation with a window reflects the idea that a lesson observation shows part of what a teacher does but cannot show the whole picture. Even though Gary believes that lesson observations should not be used to judge a teacher's efficacy as a whole, he still valued the positive judgements he had received, remembering them as special events. When asked to talk about a time he has felt valued as a teacher he chose to reflect on a lesson that was described as 'outstanding'. It is almost as if a teacher cannot help using a lesson observation judgement as a reference point for their ability, as a method of **measuring** and **validating efficacy**, even if they question its validity. This then leads us to ask the question as to where this state of mind has come from. Perhaps it is a result of the culture or ethos of the school, or as a result of government influence upon the teaching profession as a whole?

Even for middle managers such as head of departments who had to observe other teachers in their department as part of appraisal procedures, the use of lesson observations as a way of measuring teacher effectiveness was viewed as questionable. In particular, they were not happy giving a judgement or grading for the lesson. Jill and Holly felt that the lesson judgement could influence a teacher's confidence and serve to demotivate them.

'I suppose having been on the other side and having to give that feedback to someone else I could see it wouldn't be helpful at all. Especially if you were struggling in some aspect and you were trying to get better.... a number all the time chucked at you might not be helpful.....' (Holly, lines 29-33)

'I find observations very difficult. To say to someone you should be doing this when actually I've enjoyed what I've seen and I've actually thought that the lesson was good but they haven't met the requirements of the modern lesson plan. And you know I'm very conscious that I don't want to rock their confidence when they've prepared something in good faith and think it's going to be successful. ' (Jill, first interview, lines 62-67)

Jill's comment about the 'modern lesson plan' illustrates the shifting nature of teaching pedagogy (**moving the goal posts**). What is deemed acceptable pedagogy one year is viewed as unacceptable the next. She appears to feel conflicted, feeling she should be encouraging teachers to plan their lessons the 'modern' way as management expect, but acknowledging that a lesson may be successful despite not adhering to the pedagogy set out by management.

Positive lesson judgements and feedback were discussed as a source of **boosting efficacy beliefs**. For example, Holly stated that:

'...If you have an observation and it goes really well and you get really good feedback you kind of feel quite pleased with that and feel more confident doing it again or doing something similar' (Holly, lines 3-5)

This suggests that the positive feedback serves to promote even more good practice in the future, giving the teacher confidence that they are doing the right things (according to the observer) in their lessons. It is easy to see how frequent or sequential positive feedback can therefore promote the development of positive teacher efficacy beliefs over time. On the other hand, Holly's comments below highlight that even one poor lesson judgement is likely to 'demoralise' the teacher in the short-term.

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'...I've had pretty good ones for quite a while so if I was now to be observed and get a satisfactory I would probably go home quite shattered by it. Even if I knew deep down it was a bit of a rubbish lesson I would probably go home in a bit of a mess and it wouldn't do me any good at all.....' (Holly, lines 28-31)

Of note here is that Holly states *'even if I knew deep down it was a bit of a rubbish lesson'*, implying that it is the feedback itself which causes her to be upset rather than the lesson going badly. This could support the notion that lesson judgements are seen as a measure of a teacher's overall effectiveness rather than just the effectiveness of that particular lesson. The start of the quote also indicates that Holly has received positive feedback in the past and that she uses this as a benchmark for herself in terms of achievement. So, receiving a judgement that is not in line with previous lesson judgements (and possibly therefore her teacher efficacy beliefs) causes Holly to be upset and to doubt her abilities as a teacher (**efficacy doubts**).

Another source of **measuring efficacy** talked about by teachers was the use of exam results. At this secondary school, like many other schools, the students in exam classes are given a target for their exam results based on statistical tools such as Fischer trust data. Teachers' exam classes are expected to reach these targets and the proportion of students that do are used as a measure of a teacher's effectiveness in the previous academic year. Gary did not agree with the use of exam results and target setting as a measure of teacher efficacy.

'...if you don't meet those targets i.e. 80% people think you're a bad teacher and I don't believe that. I think there is more than meeting targets for teaching. I believe that creating a nice human being is part of.....' (Gary, lines 3-6)

Gary clearly believed that teaching should not just be about making sure your students achieve the exam results they are predicted. He is aiming to contribute something more to society by helping to guide students how to succeed in life in general. I labelled this view **beyond the bind of results**, attempting to describe

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the tensions of the results culture as teachers try to strive to do what they believe teaching is 'really' about.

Holly has learnt not to worry about the targets she has been prescribed by management as she believes her students cannot reach them. She perceives the targets as unrealistic, therefore the pressure to reach them is lessened. There is a **dissonance** between the targets and what she believes the students are capable of.

'...They're not going to get an A and I know from day one that they're not going to get that A but that's a pressure that I've just got used to and I suppose in my head I've accepted well it's there in the background and I do my best, coz I do anyway. But it won't go anyway and I don't agree with it but you kind of go along with it because you have to.' (Holly, lines 87-91)

What Holly sees as unrealistic target setting could be used by management to suggest she is not getting the students the grades they should get, and therefore her effectiveness as a teacher could be questioned. However, because she doesn't agree with the methods used to set the targets she appears to be **buffering** herself from the potential reduction in efficacy beliefs. Is this **buffering** due to her 6 years experience in the job? It is possible that newer entrants to the profession would not be able to buffer their efficacy beliefs if they don't have the understanding of how targets are set. Other examples of **buffering** come from Gary's interview because he acts **passively** (getting on with his job without protest) and does things asked of him even though he doesn't agree. The knowledge he has and the confidence in his own views allows him to protect himself from potential efficacy reducing events such as observations in which only a **snapshot** of his teaching is viewed. One thing Holly and Gary have in common is that they have not experienced what could be considered 'negative' observations (i.e. they haven't received an unsatisfactory grading), therefore they may have confidence in their skills as a teacher despite not meeting other **measures of efficacy** such as exam result targets.

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4.1.2 Validating and proving efficacy

Key concepts associated with **aspiring for the gold standard** were the perception of a good or outstanding lesson judgement as a method of **validating** and **proving** efficacy. I will start by outlining the concept of **proving efficacy**. For example, Lottie (a teacher for 5 years with a pastoral management role) stated '*I'm really trying to fight for that outstandingI just want to say I've had one...*' (lines 164-167) indicating that the outstanding judgement of a lesson is a label given by others, but also implying that this label is a tool she can use to sell herself as a teacher, to show other teachers she is competent. It is a way of **proving efficacy** to other teachers. The grade of 'satisfactory' is not good enough for many of the teachers I interviewed, hence their aspiration to achieve the gold standard of 'outstanding' and to be seen by colleagues to have achieved it. Indeed, since 2013 Ofsted now label a 'satisfactory' lesson as 'requires improvement', which perhaps reflects how teachers already perceived the judgement. The concept of **proving efficacy** could be seen as a motivator for teachers to continually develop and improve.

There were differences in the attitudes teachers had towards being observed. Louise (a teacher for 11 years with a pastoral management role) had a very positive attitude towards observation, viewing it as an essential professional development activity. She argued that although it can make you nervous and worry about things you wouldn't normally, it motivated you to **up your game**. In other words, it forced you to reflect on your teaching and to make positive improvements to your practice.

'...I believe anything like that just forces you to up your game. You're going to be more motivated because you want somebody to watch you teach and have a good impression. You know, you never set out to not do your best. Erm, so yeah I think that process of observing and being observed helps everybody to improve.' (Louise, lines 127-130)

Louise states that she wants the observer to have a '*good impression*', implying that she is using the feedback opportunity to prove that she is a good teacher (**proving efficacy**). Louise also used the feedback gained from observations to

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improve her teaching, using the observation feedback as a guide to what she does well and what she needs to improve, suggesting that she saw the feedback as an accurate reflection of her actual effectiveness in the classroom (**measuring efficacy**).

'...I've only ever had good with outstanding features and those outstanding features change. It's not always the same ones. It makes me more determined that the next time that happens right I'm going to take on board those things and try and take it forward.....' (Louise, lines 134-138)

However, it is interesting that Louise says *'I've only ever'*, suggesting that she has high expectations for herself and is aiming for outstanding. The feedback she receives makes her *'determined'* to improve. She says she feels *'stuck in that place'*, suggesting she hasn't improved (based on the Ofsted criteria). Therefore, being judged using lesson observation criteria may serve to demoralise teachers who never seem to improve on the observation judgement they received previously.

Other teachers such as Jill (a teacher for 25 years who is now head of department and has had other leadership roles in the past) and Annie (also a head of department) also shared the aspirational mind-set to achieve an outstanding lesson shown by Lottie and Louise, and this appeared to be linked to their management roles. They perceived that as they were in a position of responsibility they should be **proving** their efficacy to other colleagues because they should **practice what they preach**. In other words, they should be practising pedagogy in the classroom that they expect their colleagues to use. In her discussion of how being in a leadership position has affected her practice, Louise (pastoral leader) illustrates this concept clearly.

'.....and I suppose taking ownership for what happens in my classroom if I am pushing forward that we need to be doing these things I need to be doing it in my own practice.' (Louise, lines 96-100)

So, Louise feels a responsibility to model the practice she expects from her colleagues. The use of the word *'ownership'* implies that Louise believes she cannot ignore poor practice, she must identify it and take steps to improve it. Jill

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in particular seemed to put a lot of pressure on herself to succeed and be the best, partly due to the perceived responsibility to do so as head of a department, but also admitting to a general competitive nature.

'...as head of department they look at you because you should be setting the tone for the department.....'(Jill, lines 4-5)

'...the thing is as head of department you've got to try and be as good as the people you're observing at least and that's my motivation. I don't want to be, I don't want to have a lesser grading than other people. And actually I think that would push most heads of department. But I'm interested in it, I'm interested in how people learn. And I'm competitive, I don't want other people to be better than me.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 80-84)

Jill's explanation for wanting to **practice what she preaches** is slightly different to Annie's, who appears to be concerned about being perceived as a good teacher by her colleagues rather than wanting to be the best for competitive reasons. Although she mentions that the pressure comes from herself, there is an implied sense of concern around her status as head of department being threatened by poor practice.

'...in terms of my lessons there's greater expectations..... that I've got to produce really good lessons and I put that pressure on myself..... I find more pressure on myself, everyone in my department's looking at me, I can't have rubbish lessons.' (Annie, lines 170-174)

So, it could be that pushing yourself to achieve outstanding is a part of the status of responsibility in a school, but there also appears to be a link with personality features such as competitiveness. The **practice what you preach** element to **proving efficacy** was seen in many of the teachers with positions of responsibility (Annie, Jill, Louise, Suzy), implying that a motivation for outstanding practice is associated with the status of responsibility. It may be that **practising what you preach** is important for a teacher with responsibility so that they feel they have the credibility to lead colleagues, and therefore their efficacy beliefs for their management role are enhanced. This then leads to an

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improvement in efficacy beliefs for classroom practice too, resulting in a positive feedback style loop. This idea is shown in Louise's comments below.

'.....my experience from doing those jobs has fed back into my teaching. So I think my classroom management and my discipline is certainly better as a result of being director of learning because I know more about the strategies of how to get the challenging ones to behave.....' (Louise, lines 92-95)

Middle leaders may also be under more pressure from senior management to model good practice, although this did not appear in the comments from the teachers I interviewed.

In contrast, Sophie did not appear too concerned about **proving her efficacy** to other members of her department, although she was concerned about **practising what she preached**. This may be because her department (of two) is very small and she felt less pressure to outperform her colleague (who is also in a position of responsibility), or it may be that she has a more secure efficacy beliefs than Jill and Annie.

'Having people, like student teachers come in to teach you feel you must be a good example, but there is another member of the department who's also in a position of responsibility who also wants to be seen to be doing what they should be doing. I don't necessarily have to really prove myself to the members of my department, having said that I've now got people who are PE specialists, art's their second subject, teaching in art. I've always said lead by example so if I'm asking them to do something I would do it myself, so I suppose in that's sense you do but you don't really think about it that much.' (Sophie, lines 161-169)

Validating efficacy is slightly different to **proving efficacy** as it relates to the process of *confirming to yourself* that you are an effective teacher. So, a teacher who believed they were a good teacher would have this belief validated by a positive lesson judgement in which the skills they thought they were capable of

were highlighted. This could also happen vice versa, if you believed you were not a good teacher and received feedback that confirmed this from a lesson observation. From the interviews, it appears that **validating efficacy** could be split into **direct** and **indirect** sources. Direct sources include lesson observation feedback, colleague and student feedback, in which the teacher is given specific communications about their effectiveness. Indirect sources include management methods, professional dialogue and exam results, in which the teacher interprets the information available in order to infer how this relates to their efficacy.

4.1.3 Direct sources of efficacy validation

Much of the discussion that teachers had about their efficacy beliefs came from their experiences of lesson observations and the associated feedback. As mentioned earlier, lesson observations are used increasingly by school management as a way of **measuring efficacy** in the classroom and so for a teacher it is one of the most salient and direct sources they have access to when **validating** their efficacy beliefs and seemed to also be used to **prove efficacy**. Indeed, it was the most frequently mentioned direct source in the interviews I conducted.

Gary, like Louise, is fairly positive about observations, viewing them as an opportunity to improve his practice through '*constructive criticism*'. Like others I interviewed, it is clear that he is keen to do his best (**aspiring for the gold standard**) and that the label of outstanding is of particular importance to him. The labels given to a lesson after observation appear to be used to **validate** his efficacy in the classroom. In addition, Gary says '*what I'd like to know is am I doing it right?*'. This again suggests that Gary is looking for **validation** of his teaching efficacy from observation feedback.

'.....I don't mind being observed. I welcome observations. Yeah, I get nervous at observations but what I'd like to know is am I doing it right? Everyone likes to have constructive criticism... Most of my lessons have been rated as good...I've never actually got the outstanding which is something I'm striving for.' (Gary, lines 42-47)

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Jill, a teacher of over 25 years disagrees with some of the methods that the school management are *'imposing'* on her.

'.....I didn't, I couldn't, I haven't been able to follow quite the scheme that's been imposed on us.....' (Jill, interview 2, lines 16-17)

'I've got age and experience on my side so I feel that I've got more confidence to do what I feel is right and it might not be exactly what I've been told to do.' (Jill, interview 2, lines 46-48)

Jill appeared to trust her own instincts about what makes a good lesson (**following instincts**) and was confident enough in these to go astray from the guidance she was given by management for an Ofsted visit. So, Jill anticipated what management would be looking for in her lessons but chose to practice according to her own beliefs (which were **dissonant** to the methods management were advising her to use). This shows that perhaps Jill has very positive efficacy beliefs, as she is confident enough to do this. When Ofsted did observe her, Jill was rated as outstanding and she perceived this as **validation** that she was doing the right thing rather than following what management expected her to do which she didn't agree with.

'It made me feel comfortable that what I was doing.....well it wasn't a one-off lesson,.....it but it made me feel comfortable that what I was doing was alright.So, I thought I actually know what she's aiming at. She also said I didn't do too much assessment for learning which I'd felt a little bit uncomfortable with' (Jill, interview 2, lines 26-32).

Another source of direct efficacy validation was student feedback. The effect of student feedback appeared to have two dimensions. It can be used to **validate** your pre-existing efficacy beliefs or it can lead you to question your efficacy beliefs if the student feedback and your own efficacy beliefs are **dissonant** (see section 4.2.1 for further discussion of the effect of dissonant student feedback on teacher efficacy beliefs). In response to the question of whether contradictory feedback from different lesson observations (i.e. one observer advising her to do

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one thing and another observer advising her to do something very different) demoralised her, Sophie replied:

'No, because the feedback I get from the students and because the results you get are good I don't then think, oh, I'm doing something wrong, I need to improve upon this.....' (Sophie, lines 102-104)

In this way, Sophie is illustrating that she has very strong efficacy beliefs and that when faced with contradictory evidence of her abilities in the classroom from observers, she is able to **maintain** her efficacy beliefs by **validating** them with other sources such as student feedback (and with exam results, which will be discussed in section 4.1.4).

Informal feedback and discussion with colleagues also served as a method of **validating** efficacy beliefs, particularly when they came from colleagues that the teacher respected. Lottie (a teacher with 6 years experience in a newly appointed pastoral role) discussed the impact that her line manager had upon her confidence in a new pastoral role.

'...she just made me realise that what I was doing was right, and that me getting stressed about it was a clear indicative why I was in pastoral.'
(Lottie, lines 44-45)

'...without the support from (line manager) I don't think I would have applied for the job, because it was so stressful (as temporary head of year). She just reaffirmed in me that I actually can do it.' (Lottie, lines 79-81).

It appears that the reassurance and support from her line manager who acted like a mentor, allowed Lottie to feel comfortable that her actions and behaviours were justified and that they were actually signs that she was doing a good job. Lottie also talked about the good practice that was shared helping to give her the ideas and strategies needed to be successful in her new role.

'.....she would constantly reassure me and back me up with every decision I made. And she have me the mechanisms to formulate a sanction, a decision rather than just do it for me. So she gave me the training and sort of case study wise...' (Lottie. Lines 48-51)

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Lottie's efficacy beliefs were (in her own words) '*reaffirmed*' by a supportive line manager whom she had a positive relationship with. Without the support from this colleague Lottie may not have applied for the job, therefore informal feedback from colleagues may be an important source for **validating efficacy** beliefs.

Another aspect of working with colleagues that served as a source of efficacy validation was coded **inspired by experts**, to describe the phenomenon of respected colleagues helping to shape and reinforce teachers' confidence through their own successful practice. To some extent this was illustrated in the example above, as Lottie clearly respected her line manager and her guidance had helped to reinforce Lottie's beliefs she could be successful in her role. Alex, a fairly new teacher appeared to have been profoundly influenced by her 'mentor' as an unqualified teacher.

'.....the lady who was then the HOD, who I then took over from, was the best resource I think that I've ever had. We started team teaching, we did a whole term teaching together. And for me that's the best most useful thing I've done full stop in my teaching qualifications. That's it. I think the most useful thing. I don't know whether it's because drama's quite a practical subject – you need to see someone do it – you can't just read about the theory. So for me that was the most useful thing for me and she'd been doing it for like 40 years. She was amazing.' (Alex, lines 13-20)

Clearly, Alex had a lot of respect for this teacher and working closely with her had helped to develop confidence in her teaching. In fact, the quote above illustrates that Alex felt that working with this teacher was of more benefit than any other type of experience as a trainee teacher. Later in the interview, Alex talked about imitating the pedagogy that she had seen, suggesting that her own teaching style was directly affected by the strategies she had seen successfully used by this teacher.

'I saw how successful she was in her teaching, and the results that she got, and the environment she created in the classroom. And that made me think I want to create that. And in a way there was an element of copying. I took

on her style, her approach her ...you know.. I still teach...most of my lessons are based on things I learnt in that year.' (Alex, lines 30-34)

Other teachers also discussed the benefits of observing other teachers while training. Simon felt that it showed him what success looked like but at the same time he was reluctant to use these strategies as he found them 'tedious'; suggesting that the code **inspired by experts** may not apply in this case.

'For me the most useful thing has been observing a really strong teacher at the school I did my teaching practice' (Simon, lines 4-5)

'So that happened fairly early on, do you feel that that's had an impact on your teaching since?

Yes, in a way. I believe I know HOW to do it. I'm much less certain that I WANT to do it. So when I have to I can get classrooms under reasonable control. Like most teachers I don't like them to be quiet, I like them to be animated.....err...and sometimes they get out of hand. I know how to behave to make it happen but I find that quite tedious so I don't do it as much as I should.' (Simon, lines 25-29)

So, for Simon, seeing a successful teacher at work helped him to identify what strategies work but didn't necessarily motivate him to use them in his own classroom. This illustrates how the outcomes of working with a successful teacher can be very different. Simon's priorities appeared to be elsewhere, therefore what he saw as successful practice was not incorporated into his own teaching repertoire. It is not as clear from Simon's interview as it was from Alex's whether the experience of observing more experienced teachers had influenced his efficacy beliefs.

The other factor that may differentiate the two teachers' responses to their experiences with expert practitioners is the longer-term mentoring type relationship that the teacher had with Alex in comparison to the shorter-term

observation of good practice experience that Simon had. Like Lottie, Alex appeared to benefit from the professional dialogue she had with her mentor, indicating that perhaps this element is important for contact with expert practitioners to have impact on a teachers' practice and efficacy beliefs.

4.1.4 Indirect sources of efficacy validation

One potential **indirect** source for **validating efficacy** appeared to come from senior leaders' management styles and practices. Sophie discusses the positive impact that knowing management (in the past) **trusted** the decisions she made as a new head of department had on her.

'..I said I wanted a wall built at the bottom of this room, which was done, and it was done within a matter of a few weeks when you requested something. So, it was like we've employed you because we think you're the person for the job, you've made some suggestions, we've actually listened to them straight away and acted upon them immediately. It was very positive.'
(Sophie, lines 152-157)

Sophie perceived that management believed in her abilities through their actions rather than them directly telling her she was a good teacher/head of department. The implied sense of **trust** from management is shown by the fact they listened to Sophie's ideas without question and took action on them quickly. Therefore, **trust** could be a property of **validating efficacy**, as its presence suggests that the teacher is skilled and should be allowed to make decisions independently. A teacher that does not feel **trusted** to make decisions about how they teach or manage colleagues may feel as if their efficacy is being questioned. In contrast, some of the teachers felt that the current school management did not trust them. The quote below highlights how Dominic perceived management to overlook the unique contributions of their staff and to have a lack of faith in their abilities.

'We have groups of very intelligent people that shouldn't be treated like a number and be told what to do.' (Dominic, lines 54-55)

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Another **indirect** source of **validating efficacy** identified from the data was through **professional dialogue** with colleagues and **comparing colleagues**. In particular, a feeling that your practice is being reinforced as positive when you realise other colleagues may not be doing it like that yet or believe that a particular practice that you already do is important. Sophie says that,

'...people start talking about particular issues and you've given your opinion and you think well actually that's something that I've been doing for a long time and it's been reinforced....' (Sophie, lines 3-5).

Being part of a small department seemed to encourage Sophie to compare herself to colleagues even more when she was taking part in whole school CPD. She felt that she did not have the opportunity to hear conflicting opinions in her department, therefore she valued it when she could.

Another type of **professional dialogue** that appeared to influence efficacy beliefs was when working with trainee or newly experienced teachers. The quote from Suzy below illustrates how helping less experienced colleagues to reflect on their practice engaged Suzy in the same process. It seems that this may have helped to fine tune her reflection techniques and the comparison with others may have helped her to realise that her own teaching was better than she thought.

'...over the years I've worked with NQTs and trainee teachers and I think that's maybe helped to improve my confidence, in terms of I can reflect on their practice,...and analyse what they're doing well and what they're not doing well and that in turn makes me analyse what I'm doing well and what I'm not doing well, so that's helped improve my confidence.' (Suzy, interview 1, lines 108-113)

The use of exam results as a method of **validating efficacy** arose from the interview with Sophie in which she commented that she knew she was a good teacher and was doing the right things from the fact her students were getting good results. This is an **indirect source** of efficacy validation because the

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teacher in this case was not being told directly that she was a good teacher but was inferring it from the fact that her students performed well.

'No, because the feedback I get from the students and because the results you get are good I don't then think, oh, I'm doing something wrong, I need to improve upon this.....' (Sophie, lines 102-104)

However, Sophie was head of a department that had consistently performed very well in exams for a number of years. Consequently, she is likely to have been praised for excellent exam results directly by management in the past and this may have resulted in a perception that good exam results are due to good teaching. So in this case, what appears as an **indirect** source of **efficacy validation** now may in fact be due to **direct** sources of **efficacy validation** in the past.

Simon, with a long previous career in industry and now a maths teacher near to retirement, when asked how he knew he was a good teacher stated that:

'I think the main reason that I will claim to be good is that I seem to be able with most but not all students to provide them with tactics to allow them to do much better than they otherwise would..... Like I spent a little time working with ___ who was retaking her GCSE Maths exam after goodness knows how many times.....and all it took was just a pointer at where she could score and where she couldn't. So she passed.' (Simon, lines 136-142)

This illustrates **indirect efficacy validation** in that his intervention with the student appeared to cause exam success.

When other teachers discussed exam results it was often in a less positive nature, with many viewing their students' exam results as pressure on them to teach their best. If we go back to Gary's comment about targets for teachers it is clear that he doesn't believe that exam results should be used for **measuring efficacy** by government and that a good teacher does not need to look at the exam results of their students to view themselves as a good teacher. Essentially, he would not use exam results as a source of **efficacy validation**, unlike his colleague Sophie above.

'I certainly think there are pressures. I think basically that the most pressure is government insisted. These are the targets that you have to make. Basically...if you don't meet those targets ie 80% people think you're a bad teacher and I don't believe that.' (Gary, lines 2-5)

4.2 Coping with dissonance

The second major category that emerged from the data was **dissonance**. In many aspects of their teaching experiences, teachers talked about various types of **dissonance**. Two major subcategories were: dissonance between their own efficacy beliefs and the judgements of others and dissonance between the aims of management and government and their own aims as a teacher.

4.2.1 Efficacy doubts

What happens when the feedback or judgement a teacher receives from a lesson observation or student differs to their own efficacy beliefs, in other words they are **dissonant**? In particular, what are the responses to negative feedback? How does this affect a teacher who is **aspiring for the gold standard** or aiming to improve their efficacy? In this section I will discuss teachers' responses to events that caused them to doubt their efficacy (**doubting efficacy**).

Annie began to question her efficacy beliefs when she received a complaint from the parent of a year 13 student. Although this complaint did not come directly from the student, Annie took it as direct criticism from the students in this class. In fact, it was clear from Annie's interview that she was more concerned about the judgements of stakeholders such as parents and students, than she was with the judgements of management.

'...knocked my confidence....complaint from a parent which I'd never experienced before. I found that really hard just because it was a year 13 and I think that's one of my areas of strength as a teacher. I love teaching A level Biology and I didn't get to teach last year and I suppose coming into a

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new school and a new syllabus I suppose my confidence has been knocked a bit. I'm spending hours planning my year 13 lessons now and reading around the subject. I feel that they saw maybe a weakness because I was so pressurised' (Annie, lines 10-16)

There was a **dissonance** between her own efficacy beliefs about teaching this subject and the complaint from the parent. However, Annie attempts to **maintain** her efficacy beliefs by explaining that the transition of moving to a new school with all the pressures that involved '*knocked*' her confidence. So, she didn't believe she was a bad teacher, just that she was spending too much time focusing on learning new syllabuses and systems in a new school rather than focusing on the quality of her lessons. She used the situation to motivate her to make improvements to her teaching preparation, therefore taking an **active response** by taking responsibility herself to reduce the **dissonance**.

The concept of using an efficacy doubting situation to make improvements to teaching practice arose for other teachers too, suggesting that dissonance which results in efficacy doubts may have positive consequences on behaviours. Some teachers showed an **active response** to efficacy doubting events, motivated to make changes to their pedagogy and research new ideas, whereas others took a **passive response**, waiting for professional development opportunities to be suggested or taking no action at all.

When asked to give an example of an event or situation that may have caused Jill to lose confidence in her abilities as a teacher, Jill talked about a lesson observation in which she was graded as 'satisfactory', a grade which she was disappointed with. She described the event as a '**crisis point**' in her career suggesting that it had a big impact on her confidence. This **crisis point** was not short-term, it lasted for many months, showing that one lesson judgement has the power to lead to long-term **efficacy doubts**.

'Then I had a bit of a crisis you know, gosh I've been doing these for 20 odd years and it's been fine...' (Jill, lines 41-42)

'Oh I mean terrifically for about a year. And that resulted from an observation actually when I got a satisfactory, that was about 3 years ago. I

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had a terrible crisis for several months because I couldn't see the way forward. And that's the thing, the older you are, if you haven't been trained in that..... (Jill, lines 53-55)

The observation appeared to put Jill into panic mode for a while, preventing her from leaving this feeling of crisis. Eventually, the feedback she was given made her think about the methods she was using as a teacher and motivated her to look for fresh ideas to resolve this crisis, but only after a period of months where she felt she didn't know what she needed to do (in her own words she was unable to '*see the way forward*'). Jill appeared to take an **active response** to efficacy doubts by researching new ideas and practices herself rather than expecting others to train her. This may stem from the fact she felt she didn't have enough knowledge about the teaching pedagogy being suggested by management due to being trained very differently in the past. She also took advantage of her position as head of department, with its requirement of observing teachers within the department, to learn good practice from colleagues.

'Well I think I've read a lot about it, I've been on TES, I've watched excellent teacher videos, I've read loads of articles written about things like that. I think actually I've been privileged to observe people you know, other colleagues can't always watch other people.' (Jill, lines 72-74)

At the time of data collection, Jill was also a keen member of a voluntary coaching group, a collaborative professional development activity in which colleagues from different departments discussed good practice and planned and observed lessons together, with the aim of improving each other's practice.

Jill's feelings of crisis were also linked to a feeling of **powerlessness**:

'...then I think suddenly the whole management (and the government!)..... I mean I don't blame the management, the Times Ed everyone was saying this is what we need in lessons. And that's what I mean., it controlled me , I felt controlled by it. I still do a bit.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 43-45)

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So, it could be that Jill's crisis point was influenced by her feelings of **powerlessness** at the time. Taking responsibility for herself, taking an **active response** to change her pedagogy may have been a way of taking some control back, after some months of **doubting** her efficacy.

There was also an element of **perfectionism** seen in Jill and other teachers who took an **active response to efficacy doubts**. They have high standards for themselves and therefore an event in which their efficacy is questioned makes them feel as if they are **letting themselves down**. Actively seeking out ways of improving their practice enables them to attempt to maintain their high standards. So, **perfectionism** could be seen as a useful trait because it gives teachers the motivation to respond to **efficacy doubts**. However, some teachers indicated that being a perfectionist holds negative properties, such as taking longer to complete tasks, and preventing them from being flexible in their approach to teaching. If you are a perfectionist, you may believe that there are particular ways to achieve 'perfection' and may never be happy with your own performance. This could result in **efficacy doubts** increasing. Dominic, a teacher for 3 years with a previous career in research and management, certainly perceived his perfectionist streak as a negative trait, discussing how his colleagues have helped him to be more flexible in his approach to teaching.

'...One or two in _____ have been really supportive and put things into perspective, coz I've tended to try and be fairly perfectionist. I don't think my expectations of students have changed but sometimes I can be much more flexible about the way things go whereas before I used to get really quite.....stressed is too strong a word.....I used to get really....disappointed in myself if I couldn't make the progress I wanted.' (Dominic, lines 16-21)

Something to consider is the difference between experiencing **efficacy doubts** on one occasion and experiencing them on multiple occasions. Holly, who has given feedback to a colleague who continued to receive the same lesson observation judgement over and over again talked about the demoralisation that she perceived to occur for the colleague involved. What is noticeable here is that Holly perceives that the lesson judgement label itself could be detrimental to a

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teacher's confidence if they really are trying to do their best. Perhaps when the same judgements are repeated, the teacher is more likely to give up trying to seek out improvements to their pedagogy as they begin to wonder if they will ever improve, they fail to **see the way forward**. **Efficacy doubts** therefore occur over a longer period of time and do not result in an improvement in practice.

'.....having been on the other side and having to give that feedback to someone else I could see it wouldn't be helpful at all. Especially if you were struggling in some aspect and you were trying to get better.... a number all the time chucked at you might not be helpful.....and maybe if you were trying your hardest and working hard at that and kept ending up with the same result over time you would be , well I don't know how to get it to the next level. I can see how that would not be helpful and would probably demoralise you quite a bit.' (Holly, lines 30-36)

Without speaking to the actual teacher involved it is difficult to know what they were actually feeling and experiencing, however Holly's perception of their response to the situation is still useful. It indicates that Holly is not comfortable giving out lesson judgements for teachers who are struggling as she is concerned about the negative result on their motivation to improve and consequently their efficacy beliefs. The situation described by Holly refers to a teacher who was receiving fairly negative feedback repeatedly whereas it is also possible to receive fairly good feedback repeatedly but for the overall grading to remain constant. This situation arose for Louise and in this case it did not appear to demoralise her. In fact, it served to boost her attempts to improve her teaching.

'...I've only ever had good with outstanding features and those outstanding features change. It's not always the same ones. It makes me more determined that the next time that happens.... right I'm going to take on board those things and try and take it forward.....'(Louise, lines 135-138)

However, the points she was given for improvement were different each time and it appears that overall she was doing well in the eyes of the observer, therefore she may have been able to **see the way forward**. It was clear to her what she needed to do to improve each time, whereas a teacher who was

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receiving many points for improvement might find it harder to focus on what to improve. It also appears that Louise did not doubt her overall teaching efficacy in response to minor ideas for improvement, whereas a teacher receiving many areas for improvement may be more likely to do so.

On the other hand, not all teachers respond to efficacy doubts with a motivation to improve their practice. George (a teacher for over 25 years, with a period as the school's exam administrator and as national curriculum coordinator in his department) appeared to take a more **passive response** to efficacy doubts, waiting for others to provide guidance in what he needed to do to improve. In George's case, returning to a full teaching timetable after some time mainly doing administration triggered his efficacy doubts.

'...it's come as a bit of a shock the way methods and approaches have changed...and I've found it difficult to adjust to current methods and current ways. And they have left me sort of feeling...oh the way I'm teaching must be way off beat. And I can't be doing a very good job because I don't do it that way at all.' (George, lines 19-23)

George states that he found it *'difficult to adjust'* suggesting he could not see how to make the changes expected of him. He did not seek out sources to help him adjust, but waited for these to come to him. When asked if there was a reason why he had not been on an external course for ten years George responded:

'There are fewer of them than there were....I haven't got back into looking that way at things I think. Erm, as I say going from a very much reduced timetable and the National Curriculum coordinator work back onto a full timetable there just doesn't seem to have been time to organise anything in the way of personal CPD.' (George, lines 70-73)

It is interesting that he says *'I haven't got back into looking that way at things I think'* as this suggests he no longer prioritises or finds these types of events useful. Both Jill and George had been teachers for similar periods of time, yet the way they dealt with efficacy doubts are different. George no longer has any responsibility so maybe he does not feel the need to improve his practice to maintain and prove his status like Jill and Annie do. This is linked to section 4.1.2,

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in which the need for teachers in positions of responsibility to be seen as good teachers was discussed in relation to the concept of **proving efficacy**.

Another example of where **efficacy doubts** may have a positive outcome is in relation to 'difficult' classes. I coded this concept as **the dreaded class** to reflect teachers' discussions about classes they did not look forward to teaching, mainly due to behaviour difficulties and/or poor attitudes.

'.....if I know I've got that class on my timetable that day I am dreading it.'
(Lottie, line 131)

Even teachers who appeared to have generally positive efficacy beliefs had concerns about how to deal with particularly challenging classes. Teaching these classes appeared to have an emotional toll for some teachers.

'I've had one particular class that has almost broken me.' (Lottie, line 119)
'They've brought tears to my eyes and had to walk out..... they just don't listen, they don't do anything.' (Lottie, lines 133-135)

Jill's worries about a class seemed to be linked with her concerns about **proving** and **measuring efficacy**.

'...I worry about this class more than I've worried about a class for quite a while. It's not just about that, what if somebody wants to come and observe them, things like that' (Jill, interview 2, lines 132-134)

'....it's a strange psyche of it all. I think that's what dominates most teachers thoughts....a bad class' (Jill, interview 2, lines 144-145)

She is concerned that if somebody were to observe a lesson with this class they would **take a snapshot view** and make a judgement that may not reflect her overall teaching efficacy. Lottie's concerns about **the dreaded class** also appeared to be linked to **proving** and **measuring efficacy** but in a different way. Lottie was concerned that the attainment targets she was set for this class were unattainable and therefore she would not reach her performance management targets for the academic year.

'...I hate having that failure on my performance management every year.'

(Lottie, lines 151-152)

However, Jill believes that all teachers should have a difficult class each year, she views it as a 'right of passage', enabling teachers to hone their teaching skills. Therefore, suggesting that the **efficacy doubts** that occur when teaching difficult classes may serve to make better teachers (with more positive efficacy beliefs) in the long run, as they are forced to focus on adapting and improving their teaching methods (**upping their game**).

'...I think you should always have one because it really challenges you and makes you think of different methods of doing things.' (Jill, lines 145-147)

Holly certainly showed signs that teaching a difficult class had caused her to doubt her efficacy. However, she was also aware that her doubts that she was a bad teacher were probably unfounded and that she had made progress in her teaching since teaching this class. Therefore, **efficacy doubts** enabled Holly to improve her teaching skills and consequently improve her efficacy beliefs too.

'.....when you've got classes with poor behaviour then that knocks your confidence a bit. Like last year I had ___ for example, who week on week were a nightmare. By the end of it, it kind of chips away at you and you think.....I'm worse a teacher now than I was at the beginning of the year. Which actually probably is not the case at all.....and this year I'm not having those issues because the classes have got better and I'm a bit more in control of them.' (Holly, lines 9-15)

The idea that a challenge to your **efficacy doubts** encourages teachers to **up their game** is also relevant to new teachers who are likely to experience a variety of efficacy threatening situations in their first years of teaching (not necessarily related to difficult classes). Learning from these events is more likely to occur if the teacher can recognise where they need to improve and take relevant action, therefore being actively aware of **efficacy doubts** is important. Harriet was interviewed in her NQT year and second year of teaching. By the second year she felt more confident with her teaching skills and had obviously recognised the areas she needed to improve on and taken action on them.

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'.....I was a bit firmer with them this time. Whereas opposed to last year, I think I do have more confidence in, this is my classroom, you're going to do what I ask you to do. This is what we're going to learn.' (Harriet, interview 2, lines 5-8)

4.2.2 Fighting the system

As my interviews with teachers proceeded I began to see how much their disagreement with management and government policies influenced their discussions. I labelled this subcategory **fighting the system** because of the 'us and them' culture that was described between management/government and teachers. It was like there was a battle between the two, with teachers attempting to maintain their philosophical views on how to teach against conflicting guidance and increasing accountability. Like with the response to efficacy doubts, there appears to be two ways that teachers responded to this **dissonance: active** and **passive**.

Active responses to this type of **dissonance** were characterised by teachers who showed their disagreement by making an official complaint or making their views clear to management. For example, Lottie disagrees with one of the performance management targets set by the school each year. Teachers in the school are expected to achieve at least a score of 0 for contextual value added (based on Fischer Family Trust data) for their year 11 GCSE classes. This means that on average, all the students in this class achieve their predicted grade. Lottie thinks this is unreasonable based on the classes she is teaching and has formally complained about this target more than once.

'I'd have the pressure regardless as it's on my performance management, which incidentally I disagree with and I've written on my performance management statement every year, I don't know if anyone's read it. I object to it..... I hate having that failure on my performance management every year.....It's really demotivating....' (Lottie, lines 146-153)

What is striking here is the comment *'I don't know if anyone's read it'*, indicating Lottie's apparent distrust of management and the **powerlessness** she felt. The performance management process was initially formalised by the government in

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order to ensure teachers' development was being reviewed annually and that teachers could set their own targets for professional development. However, the system has been actioned by the school in a way that has made some teachers feel constrained by data targets and as if their views and ideas are not important.

Lottie has even offered alternative methods of teaching some classes which she feels would be more beneficial for them. Lottie uses the word '*fighting*' here to indicate the difficulties she has had getting her opinions listened to, therefore the subcategory **fighting the system** originates in the words of participants.

'.....I'm on threshold this year so I need to get my contextual value added to 0. It's not gonna happen. I get very little family support, they say all the right things but... I'm fighting and fighting to get some withdrawn, _____ should not be doing a language, he's EAL, he's SEN, he cannot cope..' (Lottie, lines 122-125)

Adrian (a career changer with previous industry experience, now a teacher with 4 years experience) also shows an inclination towards taking an **active** response to **fighting the system**. At times in the interview, it almost felt as if Adrian was empowered by the **dissonance** he was experiencing between the aims of school management and his own beliefs. It is possible this empowerment was driving his desire for teachers to take an **active** response rather than remain **passive** due to the **powerlessness** they felt.

'We've got a lot to be very positive about ...stuff that we've got control over the kids are great, the school should be outstanding and if we do all we can do there's no reason why the results can't get better. We've got to really focus on that. Making sure we've got the resources to do that rather than being battered around being told do this do that do the other. We've got to have confidence in ourselves to say this is what we need.....' (Adrian, lines 154-160)

In contrast, some other teachers appeared to prefer taking a **passive** response to the **dissonance** and **powerlessness** they felt. Gary illustrated the **passive** response with his comments about the use of data driven target setting for teachers and the amount of '*irrelevant*' tasks he is asked to do by management.

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'...I used to worry about it...I don't worry now. If it get's done it's done if not...hey. I think that's probably my age talking now. I've only got about another 8 years to go.' (Gary, lines 28-30)

'...I'm quite cynical about this profession. What I do now is keep my head down and do my own job...and I think that's wrong. But there we are.....' (Gary, lines 61-62)

Gary makes reference to the number of years left he has in teaching, suggesting that this could be an explanation for his decision to take a **passive** response to the **dissonance** he feels. He appears to believe that he should actually take an **active response**, but due to feeling '*cynical*' about the profession he has decided to take a **passive response**. This could suggest that he feels that any action he did take would not be listened to. In comparison, Lottie and Adrian have potentially a longer career in teaching ahead of them and may be more willing to take the risk of actively speaking out in order to uphold their philosophical ideas about the profession. However, Holly (a relatively new teacher) also showed a more **passive** response, indicating that she recognised some elements of management's lesson planning guidance was not suitable for her subject but was not sure what to do about this **dissonance**.

'...we'd been told in spotlight from SLT (senior leadership team) you musn't be doing this much practical, you've gotta do this, gotta do that, yet actually I knew that Ofsted wouldn't like that because when they come into music they expect to see music happening. So I was in a real turmoil of what do I do.....' (Holly, lines 54-58)

Holly says she was in '*turmoil*', a good indication of the dissonance she was experiencing. In the end, she chose to change her lesson to please whoever is observing, a less direct method of showing her disagreement with management.

'...That's kind of where I am as a head of department thinking I'm going to tailor my lesson depending on who's coming to watch.' (Holly, lines 59-60)

This could suggest a feeling of **powerlessness**, as she feels bound by the different criteria anticipated in each observation by different observers. Jill also

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showed feelings of **powerlessness** when she talked about her perception that teaching methods had been imposed by management, although she chose to go against their advice (indicating an **active** response to **dissonance**).

'.....I didn't, I couldn't, I haven't been able to follow quite the scheme that's been imposed on us.....' (Jill, lines 16-17)

Perhaps in a school that has not been negatively critiqued by Ofsted, teachers may be very happy to follow the advice given by their management as this has always 'produced the goods' at the time of an inspection and so therefore follow guidance without questioning it. This situation may be less likely to activate feelings of **powerlessness** as the outcome is seen as positive for the individual teacher and the school. Thus, **powerlessness** may be a property of dissonance. Teachers that feel **powerless** may be more likely to feel **dissonance** between themselves and management, and their behavioural response to this **dissonance** differs: it can be **active** or **passive**.

What all these teachers have in common is that they have been teaching for at least 4 years and disagree with the aims and actions of management. The fact that they all discuss this **dissonance** could imply that they have fairly positive efficacy beliefs, as they are confident enough in their own views about what the teaching profession and school should be like to make comment on what they disagree with. Another possible explanation for the **dissonance** shown in the **fighting the system** subcategory is that disagreeing with management or government systems may serve to **buffer** the teacher from a potential reduction in their efficacy beliefs. For example, if management is expecting your classes to achieve a certain data target that you don't anticipate to reach, disagreeing with this target in the first place allows you to buffer yourself from the feelings of inadequacy that could result.

4.2.3 Equilibrium

When talking to some teachers, I saw that when a teacher perceived they had similar aims and values to colleagues around them, they felt more productive and at harmony. This **feeling of equilibrium** appears to be a cognitive state associated with positive emotions. It is the reverse of **dissonance**, influencing a more effective work ethos in individuals and teams (**collaboration**).

One of the consequences of **equilibrium** was the creation of momentum, in particular the positive influence of others upon a teacher's behaviours (I used the code **domino effect** to label this as it suggests the individual teacher is motivated to take action because of the influence of others and because it visually illustrates the idea of momentum). For example, Holly and Sophie were influenced by the positive ethos of colleagues.

'...the people around were really influential, not specifically in the way I teach but in terms of attitudes towards it and positivity..... When _____ was around, she was very positive and that makes me more positive to do my job I suppose. I haven't really learnt particular things from one specific person. I pick up ideas and try them my own way. When I'm with negative people or people who don't try hard you lose your momentum.' (Holly. Lines 104-110)

'.....in my previous school I had a head of area, who was a drama teacher, who was particularly enthusiastic and always extremely positive. I think when you're working in a team of people and that person is always really positive that it makes the rest of the team even more positive and inspired to do things.....' (Sophie, lines 111-115)

So, a positive work ethos from colleagues encourages teachers to work hard too. Colleagues can also influence other teachers' behaviours and attitudes in a negative way, resulting in a less desirable result of the **domino effect**, as illustrated by Alex's comments about INSET days (Alex is a newly qualified teacher with a few years of unqualified experience before she trained on the Graduate Teacher Programme).

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'Teachers love to complain, and there's nothing like an INSET day for getting a group of people together to complain about stuff. Any INSET I've ever been to involves a lot of teachers who are bored, who are sick of doing stuff. Just sitting at the back and being kinda the bad kids.....They're very resistant to new ideas and I think that kinda rubs off on everyone.' (Alex, lines 90-104)

What appears important for the concept of **equilibrium** is that productivity and attitudes are more positive when colleagues share similar aims, values and practices. This results in a positive **domino effect** in which teachers feel momentum and are keen to work hard to achieve their best.

There is also a link with **collaboration** and **networking** with colleagues. Holly and Annie felt that when they had shared values with colleagues (i.e. **equilibrium**) it was easier to collaborate, suggesting that **feeling in equilibrium** is a condition for effective **collaboration**.

'When I've found people that are similar to me as teachers, sharing ideas, planning schemes of work, talking about the subject, doing visit and trips that's been so much easier than if you're having to deal with personality clashes of people..... It's almost impossible to change their personality..... I suppose if they see the benefit then they're more likely to do that.' (Annie, lines 141-147)

Here, Holly discusses how collaboration is difficult when you do not share values with a colleague.

'...he wasn't helpful at all, so that time spent in the hall wasn't useful in the slightest. I would have preferred to have gone off by myself and worked on schemes of work or whatever.....' (Holly, lines 145-148)

Alex and Suzy talked about how colleague observations helped them to improve their skills in the classroom and made reference to the benefits of colleague **collaboration** and **equilibrium** through shared values. Alex's comments illustrate how a shared ethos and positive attitude can 'rub off' on a teacher. Alex hasn't even started at her new school and already appears to feel an affinity with

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the teachers working there as they share her values of using lesson observations to share good practice instead of **measuring efficacy**.

'My new job that I'm starting in September, they've got 18 observation rooms. I'm really excited by the idea of every week you're observed by someone and you'll be watching someone else. And that isn't as a judgement, it's simply because they value watching other people in lots of different subjects.' (Alex, lines 140-144)

This indicates that lesson observations do not necessarily have to be about **measuring efficacy**, and therefore the way that lesson observations influence actual teacher efficacy and teacher efficacy beliefs may depend on the culture created by the school.

Suzy talked about her involvement in voluntary peer coaching groups, showing how shared values and **collaboration** by motivated teachers can encourage teachers to take risks in their teaching by trying new ideas in a safe environment. Again, the shared ethos of colleagues can serve to use lesson observations to **improve efficacy** rather than **measure efficacy**.

'I think it works quite well, in that the staff who go to those groups are really motivated and want to improve their practice and want to learn and trial new things. And I think it's completely non-judgemental and you might try something in your lesson that you're not completely comfortable with, that may or may not work, but you want to try it and you want somebody else to give you advice on whether you did the right thing or whether you could have tweaked it.' (Suzy, interview 1, lines 202-206)

Therefore, **feeling in equilibrium** could be a factor that contributes to improvement in actual teacher efficacy as well as teacher efficacy beliefs. If a teacher feels that the colleagues they are working with share their values they may be more likely to take on board their advice and try out new ideas in the classroom. This may be more likely to result in improved efficacy and efficacy beliefs.

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So, another aspect of **equilibrium** is the positive effect of **colleague relationships**. Sophie (who has worked at the school for 20 years) comments on sharing '*common ground*' with colleagues she has known a long time and that she has the '*same approach*' as her other colleague in the department. Sharing gossip and jokes with colleagues who she feels **equilibrium** with appears important to Sophie as a way of letting off steam but also to address work concerns and deal with stress.

'...you have a bit of a joke about things that might be going on in school that you may think are a bit daft, or perhaps you don't quite agree with andI think being able to have that common bond about the way things are going forward, or not, as the case may be, that it does help.....' (Sophie, lines 132-136)

There were also indications that sharing jokes and gossip were a method of **coping with isolation** in a small department.

'...After a bit of time I find myself going a bit stir crazy thinking I haven't spoken to an adult properly for a few days. You do then think, I need to go out in the world and talk to somebody.' (Sophie, lines 139-141)

However, evidence from the interview with Lottie indicated that **equilibrium** with colleagues is not always essential for the development of positive efficacy beliefs. At her previous school Lottie felt like an outsider.

'.....We didn't really get on, didn't really see eye to eye with anyone.....I didn't really speak to anybody during the day. The people I did I didn't have anything in common with.' (Lottie, lines 84-93)

Yet, by her third year of teaching there she appeared to have developed positive efficacy beliefs.

'Certainly at (previous school) in my last year I really felt like I could conquer the world. It was my 3rd year of teaching and I felt 'yeah I can do this.' (Lottie, lines 34-35)

'In the first year I was making everything from scratch. There was no such thing as sharing, there were 2 NQTs in the dept and we were the only French teachers. The second year I was tweaking stuff and had different classes, the third year I was getting my resources sorted out, I as getting a lot more confident with what works, I knew the kids better, they walked into my classroom, they knew what my standards were and I'd already built up relationships with them. I felt that a lot of the problems I'd had in the first year weren't; really that apparent because I'd had the experience already and I'd gained a bit more of a work life balance.' (Lottie, lines 103-110)

Although Lottie did not feel shared values with her colleagues and this contributed to her wanting to move schools, it did not stop her from developing her skills as a teacher or from feeling positive about herself as a teacher. Other sources of efficacy beliefs such as feeling as if she had mastered various pedagogies, skills and routines had contributed to her efficacy beliefs despite the lack of **equilibrium** with colleagues. However, she does believe that positive **colleague relationships** contribute to a successful career.

'I do think if you're gonna have success professionally you have to have some sort of professional relationships that work.' (Lottie, lines 93-94)

4.3 Moving the goal posts

This is the third major category from the data. The phrase '**moving the goal posts**' was chosen to illustrate the frequent changes to expectations and practice that teachers experienced in their jobs and referred to at many points in the interviews. Indeed, the phrase **moving the goal posts** was used directly by Gary, therefore the category could be viewed as in vivo code (although I had started to use the code **moving the goal posts** in my analytic memos before I had even interviewed Gary). The main types of changes that resulted in **moving the goal posts** were moving schools and changing role within a school (**coping with transitions**), changes in government policy and changes in school policy and practices brought about my school management.

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4.3.1 Coping with transitions

When interviewing Lottie, it was clear that her experiences moving schools and job roles had influenced both her teaching practice and teacher efficacy beliefs. I labelled the concept of moving schools '**coping with transitions**' because the interviews suggested that these transitions created some difficulties for teachers that they needed to resolve in some way. After interviewing Lottie, I decided to approach other teachers for interview (through the process of theoretical sampling) who had also experienced moving school fairly recently in order to explore the concept further.

Lottie found moving schools challenging in terms of adjusting to the differences in school practices. She had spent three years developing confidence in the schemes of work and exam syllabuses at her previous school and then had to adjust her teaching practices when moving schools. She felt that she had to start again '*I was back to square one again*' (line 36) and found that methods that worked at her old school didn't work at a different school '*...trying to use a resource from my old school was like trying to fit a round peg into a square hole ...*' (lines 116-117). It is not difficult to see how this transition could be quite stressful for a teacher, particularly if they were very comfortable with their teaching style and previous school practices. Certainly, it was obvious when talking to Annie (a head of department) that adjusting to new exam syllabuses had knocked her confidence and created anxiety in terms of feeling prepared for lessons.

'...that confidence does go in the exams because I don't know what the exam papers look like ...' (Annie, lines 24-26)

'...I had a file of them all prepared ready for my lessons....whereas now I'm trying to recreate that again. So it's always trying to recreate whereas if you stay longer in a school you can establish really good rhythms with that type of stuff.' (Annie, lines 27-30)

Of note here is Annie's comments about **establishing rhythms** in her teaching, indicating the cyclical nature of teaching. This is something that other teachers also made reference to and appeared to help them to develop confidence year on

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year. In a secondary school, teachers will often teach the same course or schemes of work to different classes each year, consequently building up a collection of resources and lesson ideas. Teachers therefore develop patterns of behaviour that can be reproduced and improved each year. The more they repeat and improve upon pedagogy, the more confident they may become in their teaching skills. Moving school seems to interrupt these rhythms and disrupt a teacher's prior efficacy beliefs. It may take time for a teacher to develop new rhythms and for their teacher efficacy beliefs to return to their previous level.

Some of the anxiety around the transition between schools was related to **establishing yourself** and **proving efficacy**. Lottie, as a fairly young teacher, appeared to feel that her efficacy was being questioned by new colleagues who mistook her for a newly qualified teacher.

"...some of the older people thought I was an NQT, I had to kinda assert my authority and stand my ground again. But that was fine, I dealt with that."

(Lottie, lines 36-38)

For Lottie, it was important that colleagues knew she had some experience and knew what she was doing. She implies that NQTs are treated differently than other staff and they have different expectations of them. There is no indication that Lottie's own efficacy beliefs were threatened by this situation. In fact, having to prove her efficacy and management skills seems to have been a challenge that Lottie felt very motivated to do. It appeared to encourage her to try even harder to be the best teacher she could be which then reinforced her positive efficacy beliefs. In other words, having to prove yourself is mutually reinforcing, both for your colleagues and yourself.

Even for Annie, an experienced teacher moving into a sideways role, the need to be respected and valued by colleagues in a new school is still there.

'It takes time to establish yourself.....' (Annie, lines 18-19)

However, the experience appears to have been less positive for Annie. She seems to have found it more difficult to cope with the demands of **proving efficacy** to colleagues and her students. When her efficacy was questioned by the parents of

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a student, it caused Annie to experience **efficacy doubts**, which encouraged her to work even harder to produce better lessons (see section 4.2.1). She found it difficult to cope with the demands of the head of department role, reporting that she was focusing so much on this aspect of her role that she had less time for her teaching role. Moving into a senior role such as head of department within a new school is perhaps more difficult than moving to a teaching role. It would certainly demand the teacher to get to grips with many more new policies and practices. It also carries a heavier burden in terms of **proving efficacy**, as a senior role carries expectations for the individual to be a good teacher and a good manager.

Coping with moving to a new school was made worse by what Lottie considered to be a poor induction. Lottie felt her needs as a teacher moving schools were not specifically addressed and therefore she had to source the information for herself. Lottie pointed out that some teachers would not do this (*'...I'm quite outspoken.....there are other staff in the school who are not happy about doing that...'* Lottie, lines 72-74) and therefore moving schools would be even more difficult for them. This could suggest that organisational features of a school could leave some teachers at a disadvantage due to differences in their personality and approach to new situations.

However, moving schools was not necessarily a negative event for teachers. Suzy has moved schools three or four times in her nine year teaching career and although she identifies with the fact it can be stressful due to *'new ways of doing things'* (interview 2, line 34), overall there appears to be a positive impact for Suzy. She explains that her career has been improved by experiencing a wide range of practice and it seems that this may have given her more confidence in what methods actually work, therefore boosting her efficacy beliefs.

'.....being in so many schools has also been really useful in terms of seeing all these different ways of working and different practice....good and bad...so yeah.....although it's been stressful it's really helped my career...really helped me.' (Suzy, interview 2, lines 37-40)

So, in this case **moving the goal posts** has encouraged Suzy to learn new methods. Perhaps what is key here is that Suzy has embraced these new methods

and practices and used them to her advantage. Having a good understanding of effective teaching practice has enabled her to pursue her career as an Advanced Skills Teacher and to help colleagues to improve their pedagogy in the classroom.

One factor that seemed to have a positive influence upon how teachers coped with moving schools is **colleague relationships**. Although Lottie found some aspects of moving schools challenging, she reported that good **colleague relationships** really made a difference to her. They acted like a **buffer**, counteracting the negative issues surrounding the move and helping Lottie to cope with the demands.

'My first year was an absolute ball, a lot of bitching, a lot of laughing, erm it was very good fun. And I think that really really helped.

The fact you felt an affinity with your department?

*Yeah, and I could be myself. It wasn't just a chore coming to work.....
You've had a bad lesson, you wanna cry – have a cry! If you want to let off steam, have a chinwag. The conversations we have in (department) are ridiculous!' (Lottie, lines 86-96)*

4.3.2 Powerlessness

This section relates to the discussions I had with teachers about the impact of changing government policies upon school management and teaching practices. I have labelled it **powerlessness** because this is one of the over-riding concepts that seemed to describe teachers' feelings about this topic.

During the stages of data collection, the school was subject to an Ofsted inspection. Three years before, the school had received an overall 'satisfactory' judgement from Ofsted, whereas it had previously been judged 'good'. Therefore, the school had attempted to address the recommendations given by Ofsted in order to improve the judgement, thus initiating a lot of change in school policy and practices. Achieving a 'good' judgement was seen as a key priority in a geographical area where there was strong competition from a much larger

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comprehensive school. The pressures created by the impending visit were felt all academic year, as the school were expecting the inspection at any moment. Of particular interest in terms of this research are the teachers' perceptions of how school management dealt with government ideals (which are perceived to be held by Ofsted inspectors too) and the impact this had on their teaching.

Early on in the data collection stages, approximately a year before the Ofsted inspection, I interviewed Catherine, a head of department with a secondment within the senior management team and responsibility for continuing professional development (CPD) across the school. Catherine felt that when the government changed their ideas about what schools should be doing it made teachers feel as if they were not as competent as they had previously thought.

'...some people feel that their confidence has gone down whereas actually it hasn't, their teaching hasn't necessarily deteriorated. It may have even got better, but it's perhaps a perception...I think we could all say with the new framework and increasing pressure on lessons the standards do feel like they've got higher and perhaps there's a greater awareness of things like I don't know AfL (assessment for learning) for example. So perhaps people who thought that they could do it before now know more about it and therefore feel a bit like they can't do it.' (Catherine, lines 35-41)

In other words, Catherine thought there was a **dissonance** between teachers' actual efficacy and their efficacy beliefs. Essentially, she believed their **efficacy doubts** to be unfounded, based on a perception of low efficacy that did not exist. This perception may have been perpetuated by the discourse of government and management that appeared to change even though it was describing the same things. Sophie, who has been teaching for over 20 years, suggested that management use '**buzz words**' which can confuse teachers and that actually pedagogy has not changed just the language used to describe it.

'.....sometimes you're doing what they say you're doing but you didn't know they meant that in the first instance. I think over the years the words for different things have changed, the concepts, and people describe them in different ways.....people in more senior positions use all the correct

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terminology but sometimes it's presented in such a way that it makes it sound so academic that you begin to think, hmm, am I doing the right thing?' (Sophie, lines 49-57)

This suggests that **efficacy doubts** can be created simply by the use of new language for pedagogy and supports the concept that teachers may have perceptions of low efficacy for skills that they do actually have. In addition to the confusion of new **buzz words**, changes in government ideals may create a situation where teachers have too much information to take in and too many requirements to meet. Catherine believed that this could overwhelm teachers and create pressure that results in a drop in confidence.

'I think it is because there is quite a lot of pressure on people and if you look at, if you like, the ingredients of a good or outstanding lesson there is a lot of pressure on people to include a lot of elements and I think that can knock confidence even if it is something that people can do.' (Catherine, lines 48-51)

Indeed, this 'pressure' can be seen in Jill's discussion of changes to practice expected of her after the last Ofsted visit and the school's decision to focus on more active pedagogy in the classroom.

'.....before that I'd been confident that what I was doing was relevant because I was getting good results.....I sort of had a period of aah, well what's wrong with what I'm already doing because I'm getting good results? A bit of a transition, a big transition for an older teacher actually.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 35-38)

Thus, the changing policies of government can be seen to filter into the changing expectations that school management have of staff, creating a situation where staff may feel bombarded with information and **buzz words**, causing them to question their efficacy. Holly suggests that the pressure to change created by the constant worry of the imminent arrival of Ofsted becomes '*sustained*' over time, suggesting that it has less affect on teachers over time '*...you get a bit immune to*

it...' (Holly, lines 73-76). This could imply that the motivation to improve is lost if teachers are continually subject to an environment of change and improvement measures. So, short-term efficacy doubts create the motivation to improve but long-term efficacy doubts, where a person is continually bombarded with areas to improve and there is continual pressure by management, reduce this motivation.

When interviewing teachers about **moving the goal posts**, it was particularly relevant to speak to teachers who had been teaching for more than 10 years, as it is likely that they would have experienced a wide range of changes in their careers to draw reference from. Although educational policy is likely to have changed at many times in the careers of these teachers, it seemed from their interviews that they had found it most difficult to cope with more recent changes. However, it is difficult to ascertain if this is because recent changes are actually more 'severe' or 'radical' than previous ones, or due to recent changes being more prominent in their minds.

Jill talked about the feelings of **powerlessness** brought about by all the guidance thrust upon her from government, management and even the media. She had a period where she couldn't understand why she should change her practice if she was getting good results. Jill openly discussed that her confidence had been knocked and that she felt there was more control from external forces such as government and school management.

'I think to be honest until then I had been quite a confident teacher but there weren't so many controlling factors from outside the classroom. I think we could be ourselves as individuals...' (Jill, interview 1, lines 25-27)

There is also evidence that she perceives that the skill of teaching has been taken away from the teacher and placed onto management. This links with her comments that good teachers should instinctively know what a good lesson looks and feels like (**following instincts**). Jill thought it odd when management started having staff meetings about lesson planning, where the implicit skills of teaching were being made explicit.

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'I think we started having meetings about lesson planning which you know I thought was a bit strange at first.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 40-41)

So, the feeling that teachers had to 'conform' to certain standards as suggested by external forces reduced Jill's confidence and made her feel **powerless**.

'...then I think suddenly the whole management (and the government!)..... I mean I don't blame the management, the Times Ed everyone was saying this is what we need in lessons. And that's what I mean., it controlled me , I felt controlled by it. I still do a bit.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 43-45)

Some teachers I interviewed appeared less affected by changes in policy and practice than others. For these teachers, change was seen as **inevitable** and they had a pragmatic approach to it. Louise reacted to change by being flexible, adapting her own unique teaching style to fit the new practices enforced by management.

'...I've seen the school move from total freedom to having some prescription of what a model lesson should look like and I have developed my practice as a result of that. But there are still some things that I use from you know my training, modelling activities that type of thing. So I think this whole school approach to lesson planning... that has certainly changed how I teach. It's not necessarily changed some of my approaches I made my approach to teaching fit in....which I think from my observations of other teachers, other teachers have struggled to adapt to the changes that have come in.' (Louise, lines 112-120)

Sophie discussed becoming more computer literate and the fact that this was an **inevitable change** that she had to cope with. Although she still found the change difficult to master at times, she was able to also see the benefits of making the change on her teaching, therefore she also shows a pragmatic approach to **moving the goal posts**.

'But because the schools have moved on and say we all need to be doing this, I have had to follow that lead so that's helped me and it's improved that's

for certain. And it's improved things that I do..... I'd say the resources that I can provide the students with now have definitely improved and it's improved my teaching.....but other aspects to do with admin and general day to day things very often it holds me back a bit.' (Sophie, lines 65-75)

For Louise and Sophie, **moving the goal posts** did not threaten their own teaching approach as much as it did for some colleagues because they learnt to work within the constraints. This may explain why they did not appear to feel **powerless**. They had learnt to cope with change and make it work for them. Although they had both been teaching for a considerable number of years, this did not differentiate them from other colleagues who did feel **powerless**, as many of these teachers had been teaching for a long time too.

4.3.3 CPD and the tick box culture

Another aspect of this subcategory relates to the methods management use to action their desired changes. For the school at the focus of this research, changes relating to teacher pedagogy were mainly communicated through CPD activities, either at the end of a school day or whole professional development days. It was clear that for the majority of the teachers I interviewed, CPD was not seen as of great benefit to them. Indeed, some teachers suggested that CPD only allowed management to show they had '*ticked a box*' and that teachers were not really committed to the changes being suggested.

'.....Ok, we've ticked a box that we've talked about that particular topic, do people go away.....I certainly don't.....do people go away and think actually I'll change my practice because of that, because you've had a ten minute input on something? It's really difficult to feel fully engaged in that timescale. I think certain topics need more time to get people engaged and committed to that change.' (Dominic, lines 143-148)

'I do find some of the CPD sessions a little bit box ticky and not really relevant to what I do in the classroom.' (Lottie, lines 175-176)

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The **lack of time** being given to CPD activities (an issue that was raised by other teachers too) could be affecting actual teacher efficacy if practices are not being implemented, reinforced or followed through. Lack of time could also imply lack of value. This could lead to a **distrust of management** because teachers feel they are being let down by poor CPD. The reference to the **tick box culture** of management implies that CPD and other tasks teachers are asked to do are just for Ofsted rather than for teachers. Teachers do not feel they have ownership over their own development (**powerlessness**).

'...why the hell are we being asked to do this...it's just ticking a box for someone else?' (Adrian, lines 28-29)

To have positive efficacy beliefs, teachers should feel empowered to improve their own practice and know that training provided is relevant and of high quality. Otherwise, it could lead to **efficacy doubts** as they ponder if they really do know how to teach effectively. Therefore, **distrust of management** and the professional development opportunities that are provided could lead teachers to experience negative efficacy beliefs about their own practice too.

References to a **tick box culture** and feelings of **powerlessness** and frustration were also made generally about management methods, where teachers perceived that some of the tasks they were being asked to complete were not useful. Gary was obviously frustrated by the number of *'irrelevant'* tasks he was being asked to do by email and saw them as an indication that management were also *'under pressure'* from elsewhere.

'I like emails...when they're nice emails....but you just get this constant supply of material which is irrelevant.....absolutely irrelevant which just makes me angry really..... I certainly don't think they do it because.....oh, they're not busy let's give them something to do. I think pressures are put on other people.....the person that sent that is obviously under pressure somewhere, or wants to tick a box..... Now, that's fine.....but please don't use me as a guinea pig.' (Gary, lines 25-39)

This could be another example of where guidance from government and Ofsted feeds through the system, resulting in teachers feeling **powerless** as the implicit

nature of teaching is made explicit. Teachers' sense of **professionalism** is removed. Indeed, in the comment below from Adrian, completing tasks for the sake of it without seeing a useful purpose for them is seen as taking away a teacher's sense of **professionalism**.

'...it takes the autonomy away from the staff and makes them feel less professional and less responsibility coz they're just doing stuff because they've been told to do it ...and I think that's where a lot of the pressure arises. If you can't see a purpose in doing something then I personally resent it...' (Adrian, lines 18-21)

Reduced feelings of **professionalism** are linked with **powerlessness** and it is likely that these feelings may also filter through to efficacy beliefs. If teachers are only completing tasks or teaching in a specific way because they have been told to do so and they have little chance for contributing to school policy, they may lose sight of their natural teaching instincts (**following instincts**) and therefore lose confidence in their teaching skills.

4.4 Summary of findings

Three major categories have emerged from the data in this grounded study: **aspiring for the gold standard, coping with dissonance** and **moving the goal posts**.

Firstly, the majority of teachers interviewed were keen to be the best teachers they could be. They **aspired to the gold standard**, striving to be judged as an outstanding teacher by others. This label was acquired from lesson observations where managers judged their teaching and appeared to translate into a judgement of the teacher's overall efficacy in the classroom rather than purely as a measure of the lesson quality. Therefore, lesson observations appeared to be used as a **measure of efficacy** by teachers as well as management. The lesson judgement could also be used to **prove efficacy** to colleagues. This was particularly important for teachers with a status of responsibility in school who needed to show that they deserved their position by **proving their efficacy**.

Teachers appeared to use a variety of indirect and direct sources to **validate their efficacy** beliefs, including lesson observations, feedback from students and colleagues, exam results, trust from management and professional dialogue.

The second major category was **coping with dissonance**. This category manifested itself in many different areas of teachers' lives. One of these was **efficacy doubts**, when teachers had concerns about their own teaching skills often brought about by negative feedback from parents, students and colleagues (in the form of lesson observation feedback). One of the key findings is that although many teachers talked about times when they had experienced **efficacy doubts**, this had for most of them resulted in an improvement in their teaching practice and efficacy beliefs in the long run. This was due to teachers recognising the areas they needed to improve and taking action. Some teachers took an **active response** to efficacy doubts, taking responsibility for researching new ideas and techniques themselves, whereas others took a more **passive response**, waiting for training to be introduced to them. Where **efficacy doubts** occurred over a long period of time, it was less likely for them to result in improved practice and efficacy beliefs.

Teachers also experience dissonance in the form of disagreeing with management and government (**fighting the system**). A **distrust of management** and government corresponded with a feeling of **powerlessness**. Like with **efficacy doubts**, teachers' response could be organised into **active** and **passive**. However, when teachers were in agreement with the values and aims of those around them they felt **equilibrium**. This created **momentum**, where colleagues had a positive influence upon teacher behaviour.

The final major category was **moving the goal posts**, in which teachers discussed the consequences of the frequent changes to expectations and practice they experienced. For some teachers, moving schools caused them to experience **efficacy doubts** as they **established new rhythms** in their teaching and felt they had to **prove their efficacy** to new colleagues. Feelings of **powerlessness** arose as teachers responded to the changing expectations of government and Ofsted. These changes were viewed as **inevitable** by some teachers, who coped

Chapter 4: Analysis of the data

by taking a pragmatic approach and simply adapting their natural teaching style. However, some teachers experienced **efficacy doubts** as expectations and **buzz words** changed. Teachers' distrust of management was fuelled by a sense that they were in a **tick box culture** where school changes and CPD took place only to meet the requirements of Ofsted. This reduced feelings of **professionalism** as teachers lost sight of their natural teaching instincts (**following instincts**).

Chapter 5: Discussion

In chapter 5 I will discuss how my findings relate to research literature in the fields of teacher efficacy beliefs, teacher motivation and teacher development. I will explain how the key categories and concepts identified in the grounded theory analysis correspond with previous research, as well as highlighting how this study contributes to knowledge. Please see Appendix 12 for a diagram summarising how the key findings relate to existing knowledge and theories. The chapter will end with a section analysing the limitations of the research and reflecting on the research process. As in chapter 4, any terms in **bold** type indicate a category, concept or code that emerged during the analysis and memo writing stages of the research.

Although grounded theory is often perceived as the generation of theory directly from the data without influence from preconceived theories or concepts, Birks and Mills (2011) state that:

‘Through applying the work of others to your storyline, you are able to augment, support and validate existing theories and in so doing explain and reinforce the value of your own contribution.’ (Birks and Mills, 2011, p125)

Indeed, Glaser and Strauss (1967) were not against the notion of relating grounded theory to existing theories, as long as this was done after the theory had been developed. Therefore, this chapter aims to explain how the categories, codes and concepts that emerged from the data analysis fit with existing theories, as well as expand knowledge in the fields of teacher efficacy beliefs, teacher motivation and teacher development.

The key research questions set out at the start of this thesis were:

1. What are the sources of *teacher* efficacy beliefs?
2. How do these sources compare to Bandura’s (1997) theorised sources of efficacy beliefs?
3. What are the implications of understanding the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs for educational policy and teacher development?

The nature of grounded theory method meant that as well as addressing these initial questions a number of other relevant questions emerged from the interview data (in particular surrounding the issues of teacher accountability) and were explored further through theoretical sampling. This chapter therefore presents a discussion of all the major themes that emerged from the data.

5.1 Remote sources of teacher efficacy beliefs

As discussed in chapter 2 section 2.4, Adams and Forsyth's (2006) theoretical development of the sources of teacher efficacy beliefs places Bandura's four suggested sources as *remote* sources, based upon past experiences, and contextual factors as *proximate* sources, based on the 'here and now' of teachers' experiences in their particular school (i.e. contextual factors). This model generally fits quite well with the categories and concepts identified in this grounded study, therefore in sections 5.1 and 5.2 I intend to explain how my findings relate to this model of teacher efficacy beliefs, as well as discuss how the study's findings may suggest further areas to consider.

The findings of my study suggest that teachers use **direct** and **indirect** sources of information to **validate** their efficacy beliefs. **Direct** sources (lesson observation feedback, feedback from respected colleagues and student feedback) are defined as those where the teacher is given explicit information about their performance whereas **indirect** sources are those where the teacher's performance is implied (inferences made from management practices, professional dialogue and exam results). The concepts of **direct** and **indirect** sources that emerged from the data do appear to have some alignment with Adams and Forsyth's (2006) model of *remote* and *proximate* sources of efficacy beliefs. The **direct** sources tended to come from verbal persuasion and to some extent vicarious experiences (remote), and the **indirect** sources from contextual factors (proximate).

Validation of efficacy beliefs emerged as a key concept because it appeared that teachers were using these **direct** and **indirect** sources to confirm and enrich their efficacy beliefs rather than to form them in the first place, although there

was some evidence that vicarious experiences were influential for teachers at the start of their career or a new job role. This may be due to the fact that the majority of the teachers interviewed were experienced teachers, therefore they tended to discuss fairly recent events rather than events that happened when they were training or newly trained. Over the period of a teacher's career they are likely to experience these sources on multiple occasions, therefore there are many opportunities for efficacy beliefs to be reinforced. When considering Bandura's (1997) suggested sources of efficacy beliefs the **direct** sources in particular appear to have some overlap with Bandura's theory.

Bandura (1997) dedicates a whole chapter in his book to explaining the sources of self-efficacy beliefs. The four sources identified by Bandura are enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological and affective states (see chapter 2, section 2.3 for a more detailed discussion). These sources have generally been accepted in the self-efficacy literature and more specifically in the teacher efficacy belief literature, although some researchers have questioned whether these sources should be accepted so readily (Klassen et al., 2011). In section 5.1 I will discuss how Bandura's sources of efficacy beliefs relate to the sources of **efficacy validation** identified in my own research, as well as discuss the possible distinctions between them.

5.1.1 The important role of verbal persuasion in the validation of teacher efficacy beliefs

Lesson observations appeared to be one of the most significant sources of efficacy **validation** for teachers. Gary reflected on a particularly successful lesson observation as a time when he felt valued as a teacher. Other teachers also commented on the positive influence of successful lesson observations on their confidence as a teacher.

'...first Ofsted I ever had here was 2006 and the department just got outstanding praise. And that was really.....you know people said to me you were the star of the show. It's a bit about praise really. That was really nice.'
(Gary, lines 131-133)

Chapter 5: Discussion

'If you have an observation and it goes really well and you get really good feedback you kind of feel quite pleased with that and feel more confident doing it again or doing something similar.' (Holly, lines 3-5)

In terms of efficacy **validation**, it was the feedback and judgement received from the person observing that appeared to be most important for teachers. This is what the teacher used when perceiving their relative success at teaching that lesson. The lesson judgement in particular then appeared to be used to support or disprove the teacher's general teacher efficacy beliefs. The quote below illustrates how the feedback from the observer was used to validate Jill's own evaluation of how well a lesson had gone.

'But it is only the view of one person but actually it certainly was a good lesson and I say that modestly.' (Jill, interview 2, lines 49-50)

Therefore, it does not appear to be the teacher's own evaluation of the lesson success that is important, rather the evaluation of the person observing. The observer's feedback can be considered as the verbal persuasion and the graded lesson judgement could be considered a vicarious experience (due to teachers being able to compare themselves against other teachers). Bandura (1997) asserts that the most salient source of efficacy beliefs are enactive mastery experiences (experiences of success and failure in the given efficacy domain). As the lesson observation feedback and judgement given appear to be the element that is given most emphasis by teachers when discussing lesson observations there is a possibility that enactive mastery is *not* necessarily the most important source for the development of teacher efficacy beliefs.

Lesson observations could be viewed as an example of an event that combines enactive mastery experience, vicarious experience and verbal persuasion. Teachers are likely to have particularly salient memories of how successful a lesson went that was observed (enactive mastery experience), but the data suggests that this experience is likely to be influenced significantly by the feedback given by the observer (verbal persuasion). For example, a teacher may initially feel a lesson was very successful but the feedback from the observer suggests otherwise and vice versa. Therefore, the enactive mastery experience

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may be altered by the verbal persuasion received. An example of this came from the experiences of Jill, a teacher for over 20 years who had not questioned her effectiveness in the classroom until a lesson observation. Jill talked about how receiving an observation judgement (satisfactory) she was unhappy with from a senior leader, affected her efficacy beliefs and behaviours for many months afterwards.

'...I had that satisfactory about 3 years ago and my confidence was rocked for ages.' (Jill, interview 1, line 137)

For Jill, satisfactory was not good enough and this may have something to do with her competitive nature. She compared herself to other teachers and saw the satisfactory label as an indication that she was not as good as other teachers. There is therefore also some evidence for vicarious experiences as an influence on efficacy beliefs.

'I don't want to have a lesser grading than other people. And actually I think that would push most heads of department. But I'm interested in it, I'm interested in how people learn. And I'm competitive, I don't want other people to be better than me.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 81-84)

In fact, she described this event as a '**crisis point**' in her career. In contrast, when an Ofsted inspector a few years later judged her lesson as outstanding and gave positive feedback about the strategies used in the lesson, despite her veering from the guidance given by management, Jill had renewed confidence in her abilities as a teacher.

'It made me feel comfortable that what I was doing.....well it wasn't a one-off lesson, it was in the amount of time I spent preparing it, but it made me feel comfortable that what I was doing was alright.' (Jill, interview 2, lines 26-28)

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For Jill, both these performance events had significant saliency in terms of her self-efficacy beliefs. What these events had in common was that Jill's efficacy beliefs were affected by the feedback of an individual deemed to have knowledge and expertise, therefore appearing to fit into Bandura's concept of verbal persuasion. Bandura (1997) states that:

'It is easier to sustain a sense of efficacy, especially when struggling with difficulties, if significant others express faith in one's capabilities than if they convey doubts' (p101)

It took a great deal of self-confidence and risk for Jill to go against advice from management and teach how she felt was best when Ofsted came to inspect the school. Therefore, when her practice was confirmed as effective by the inspector it appears that her sense of efficacy was bolstered and management views were discredited. In this case it appears that the expertise of the Ofsted inspector was then viewed as superior to that of management. In reference to verbal persuasion, Bandura (1997) states that:

'The more believable the source of information about one's capabilities, the more likely are judgements of personal efficacy to change and to be held strongly.' (p105)

Bandura's (1997) notion that verbal persuasion is most effective when given by a credible individual seems to be supported in Jill's case. Indeed, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) also recognised the potential for verbal persuasion to act as a powerful source of efficacy beliefs in teachers.

'The positive effects of vicarious experiences and verbal persuasions are likely to be pronounced, because fellow teachers can provide compelling models and credible sources of feedback.' (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p23)

It is worth considering that it may not be that Ofsted trumps school management in terms of credibility, it is possible that the credibility of the persuader comes down to the individual. There may be particularly credible school leaders whose feedback is valued more than particular Ofsted inspectors. This may be worth

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investigating in future research, in order to ascertain the types of individuals who are able to act as powerful verbal persuaders for teachers and to find out the most effective methods used. If verbal persuasion is a particularly important source for teacher efficacy beliefs, then knowing who is most likely to act as a powerful verbal persuader and how they do this may help us to understand how best to boost teacher efficacy beliefs.

Bandura (1997) suggests that enactive mastery experiences that do not match self-beliefs will be '*minimized, discounted or forgotten*' but that experiences that match self-beliefs will be '*readily noticed, given significance and remembered*' (p82). Jill's discussion of the significant impact of a lesson observation that caused her to doubt her teaching ability illustrates that not all experiences that are a mismatch with current efficacy beliefs will be minimized or forgotten. In fact, the significant impact of this event upon Jill's career shows that the event was actually given more salience than others. However, the influence of verbal persuasion is key here. Without the feedback from the senior manager, Jill may not have been aware that her teaching practice did not meet the criteria of a 'good' or 'outstanding' lesson. This illustrates the point I made earlier about verbal persuasion effectively 'shaping' an individual's perceptions of an enactive mastery experience. The significant part that lesson observations play in the experiences of teachers in English schools therefore offers a unique opportunity for enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences and verbal persuasion to interact on a fairly regular basis, which may not occur in other professional domains.

One of the things that struck me when conducting this research is the extent to which teachers seemed to internalise the graded judgements they were given for their lessons. Even though many teachers interviewed talked about the drawbacks of **taking a snapshot** when evaluating teaching effectiveness, they couldn't help but take the lesson judgements to heart and internalise them; there was a paradox between their values and cognitions. The quote below illustrates how repeated successful lesson observations have contributed to Holly's belief that she is a good teacher. A lesson grading below 'good' causes her to question her efficacy beliefs.

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'...I've had pretty good ones for quite a while so I was now to be observed and get a satisfactory I would probably go home quite shattered by it.'
(Holly, lines 25-26)

The phenomenon of individual lesson judgements contributing to a teacher's long term evaluations of their own effectiveness is captured by O'Leary and Gewessler (2014).

'.....through the practice of graded observations these judgements DO become absolute as the longevity of the grades awarded belies the isolated, snapshot episodes upon which such judgements are based.' (p39)

In fact, there was also evidence from the interviews that other teachers would judge their colleagues' effectiveness on the basis of lesson observations and that this could result in poor working relationships. In effect, Jill seems to be suggesting that teachers can be stigmatised by a lesson observation judgement.

'I think there's a little bit of a blame culture..... It's quite easy if you have a bad lesson observation that could really affect your relationships with people if it's not handled well.' (Jill, interview 2, lines 94-97).

So, it appears that the lesson observation judgements may go beyond the influences of verbal persuasion by the individual observing. The persuasion extends to other colleagues, whose judgements about the teacher's capabilities are also influenced by the feedback, thus there was some evidence of a judgement culture amongst colleagues as well as senior staff.

The salience of verbal persuasion through lesson feedback is particularly noteworthy, as previous research investigating sources of efficacy beliefs in novice and experienced teachers (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2007) suggests that verbal persuasion is not a significant source of efficacy beliefs for experienced teachers. Indeed, the researchers comment that teachers are rarely observed by school leaders and when they are the feedback is not valued.

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'As schools have traditionally been structured, with little teaching taking place in the presence of other adults, perhaps it is not surprising that verbal persuasion has not played a larger role in teachers' sense of their capability for instruction.....The perfunctory twice-a-year visit from administrators with a preprinted evaluation form evidently does not provide enough feedback to shape a teacher's belief about his or her capability. Because of the dearth of meaningful feedback from administrators in traditional supervisory practice, it is perhaps not surprising that teachers do not look to school leaders as significant sources to inform their self-efficacy judgments.' (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2007, p954)

It is worth considering that school and educational systems will have changed since 2007. It is certainly the case that in many areas of the UK since 2007 (and in particular in England), lesson observations are now used more regularly as part of performance management and to monitor teaching quality in schools (O'Leary, 2014), therefore this could explain the increased influence on teacher efficacy beliefs found in my research. Another possible reason for Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2007) findings contrasting with my own is that their participants all came from the US, therefore school structures and systems will be different to English schools. However, in the US as well as England, teachers are increasingly subject to accountability systems, where their performance is judged on a regular basis (Sahlberg, 2011) and educational reform in the US appears to mirror England. The findings of my study suggest that the impact of lesson observations upon teacher efficacy beliefs should be researched further, particularly as their use is now more frequent and related to performance management procedures.

Other types of verbal persuasion identified in my research stemmed from student feedback and colleague support. For one teacher interviewed, student and parent feedback appeared to cause her to question her efficacy beliefs, creating **efficacy doubts**.

'...knocked my confidence....complaint from a parent which I'd never experienced before. I found that really hard just because it was a year 13 and I think that's one of my areas of strength as a teacher' (Annie, lines 10-12)

In contrast, student feedback had boosted Sophie's efficacy beliefs and Simon thought that he was a good A level teacher because of the students' confidence in him.

'No, because the feedback I get from the students and because the results you get are good I don't then think, oh, I'm doing something wrong, I need to improve upon this.....' (Sophie, lines 102-104)

'You say with A level you are a good teacher. What made you come to that conclusion?

'Because I understand.....well it's more than one thing. I understand the subject very well and I have an ability to separate the central things from the stuff that's just peripheral. So we can concentrate very much on the things that matter. Because I know the subject really well the students have confidence.' (Simon, lines 111-116)

These findings align with Mulholland and Wallace's (2001) longitudinal case study of a preservice elementary teacher, in which student feedback was reported to have enhanced the teacher's efficacy beliefs. Cheung's (2008) survey of 1400 Chinese primary teachers also corresponds with the findings, as a key source of efficacy beliefs was identified as 'respect and confidence placed in them by students and parents'. However, in comparison to lesson observation feedback, student feedback was less frequently mentioned by the teachers interviewed in my study.

In terms of colleague feedback, Lottie felt that her own efficacy beliefs were 'reaffirmed' by her line manager's supportive discussions.

'...without the support from (line manager) I don't think I would have applied for the job, because it was so stressful (as temporary head of year). She just reaffirmed in me that I actually can do it.' (Lottie, lines 79-81).

In Lottie's case, her line manager appeared to act like a mentor, guiding and reinforcing her behaviours and efficacy beliefs in her new pastoral role. Klassen and Durksen (2014) mixed-method research investigating work stress and efficacy beliefs in preservice teachers also found that verbal feedback from mentors had an impact on efficacy beliefs. Indeed, they found evidence of verbal feedback providing both a positive and negative influence on efficacy beliefs.

Previous research has suggested that verbal persuasion is more influential for inexperienced teachers (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2007) who lack mastery experiences, however the findings of my study indicate that it could be an important source for experienced teachers too, particularly if they are in a new role.

5.1.2 Inspired by experts

Bandura's (1997) suggestion that vicarious experiences are an important source of efficacy beliefs holds some validity with the findings of this research, although it seemed to have less prominence than verbal persuasion. Bandura suggests that individuals will actively seek out successful models in order to help themselves to improve their skills in areas of weakness. Much of this modelling is suggested to occur through observational learning, and it is certainly the case that some teachers' efficacy beliefs (particularly teachers early in their careers) appeared to develop through actively reflecting on and even imitating the behaviours they observed in respected colleagues (**inspired by experts**). Lottie, when talking about her relationship with her line manager saw her as a mentor, as someone to aspire to be like. Alex too, wanted to be just like the mentor she had as an unqualified teacher.

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'Yes, she was like a mentor. I really do look up to her and that's the type of Director of Learning that I've always wanted to be. I don't want to be shouting or asserting my presence that way. I want to be the supportive one who will be disciplinarian as necessary.' (Lottie, lines 55-58)

'I saw how successful she was in her teaching, and the results that she got, and the environment she created in the classroom. And that made me think I want to create that. And in a way there was an element of copying.' (Alex, lines 30-32)

With both teachers, it appeared that their experiences as mentee of this aspirational teacher did influence their efficacy beliefs, helping them to realise their own potential and giving them practical strategies to use themselves. This contradicts a finding of Capa and Woolfolk's (2005) research that reported no relationship between student teachers' perceptions of their mentors' capabilities and their own teacher efficacy beliefs. However, Capa and Woolfolk suggest that the students may have not felt that the mentors were similar to themselves so vicarious experience was less powerful. Perhaps Lottie and Alex did perceive their mentors as similar and could see how they could be like them if they used some of the strategies they had observed. Other research has pointed to the importance of mentors as a source of motivation and modelling (Klassen and Durksen, 2014) and suggested that increased perceptions of support from mentors are more likely to be associated with increased levels of teacher efficacy beliefs in preservice teachers (Moulding et al., 2014), therefore my findings do seem to support the literature on the benefits of effective mentoring practices for teacher efficacy beliefs.

5.1.3 Feeling in equilibrium

The findings of this study suggest that the teachers interviewed were **coping with dissonance** frequently in their jobs. One aspect of **coping with dissonance** was **fighting the system**, in which teachers talked about their **distrust of management** and their disagreements with management and government policy (see section 5.2.1). Some teachers showed an **active response** to this type

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of dissonance, voicing their concerns publicly, but many teachers felt **powerless**, particularly when faced with what they perceived as frequently changing expectations from government and management (**moving the goal posts**). However, there was also evidence that when teachers felt that they shared aims and values with colleagues they **felt equilibrium** rather than dissonance and were more motivated and efficacious in their role.

'.....someone who's working equally as hard and is keen to drive things forward, for me, makes me do the same.....if I feel motivated...it's a spiral I suppose....you feel more confident in what you're doing because you're being more productive. You're getting things done. If you have a day where you've spent all day at work and you've not really achieved much then you go home and feel a bit deflated.....and I suppose in the long term it would chip away at your confidence.' (Holly, lines 117-126)

This created **momentum**, a positive influence upon teacher behaviour and attitudes that appeared to 'rub off' on other teachers (**domino effect**). Teachers who **felt equilibrium** were more motivated to work hard, achieve their best and work in collaboration with others.

'When I've found people that are similar to me as teachers, sharing ideas, planning schemes of work, talking about the subject, doing visit and trips that's been so much easier..' (Annie, lines 141-142)

'When I'm with negative people or people who don't try hard you lose your momentum.' (Holly, lines 109-110)

The **feeling of equilibrium** that creates **momentum** has some similarities to the notion that collective efficacy creates collective agency. Bandura (1997) suggests that organisations can have a shared efficacy belief, termed collective efficacy. He defines perceived collective efficacy as:

'a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to give produce given levels of attainment.'
(p477)

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Bandura (1997) suggests that perceived collective efficacy is influenced by a range of factors such as group structure, the competency of individual members, the competency of leaders and how they coordinate the skills of the individuals, the strategies carried out by the group and how the individual members interact with each other. Therefore, it is a dynamic construct, not just a sum of all the individual teachers' perceived personal efficacy beliefs. Bandura's social-cognitive theory places emphasis upon personal agency, the notion that individuals have some control over their own actions. Perceptions of self-efficacy are important in Bandura's theory because individuals who do not believe they have the power to make changes will not take action and will be less successful than those who do. Goddard (2000) extends Bandura's description of collective efficacy by suggesting that organisations such as schools can also have agency, illustrated by purposeful actions towards their goals. Therefore, schools with positive collective efficacy beliefs are more likely to be successful as they will take actions towards achieving their goals.

The concept of a **feeling of equilibrium** that results in **momentum** (positive teacher behaviours and attitudes such as encouraging positivity in the face of challenges, inspiring new ideas, productivity and collaboration, commitment to the profession) and a positive **domino effect** (where **momentum** 'rubs off' on other teachers) could be likened to the concept of positive collective efficacy as described by Bandura (1997) in that teachers are motivated by a shared ethos of confidence in individual teachers' efficacy and the school's abilities to make change happen. The impact of **feeling in equilibrium** or positive collective efficacy beliefs is almost cyclical because if positive consequences do occur from teacher and school actions then the **feeling of equilibrium** or positive collective efficacy is likely to be reinforced. On the other hand, my research indicated that there could also be a negative **domino effect** whereby negative attitudes of colleagues could also 'rub off' on other teachers thus reducing **momentum**.

‘Teachers love to complain, and there’s nothing like an INSET day for getting a group of people together to complain about stuff. Any INSET I’ve ever been to involves a lot of teachers who are bored, who are sick of doing stuff. Just sitting at the back and being kinda the bad kids. (silly voice) ‘This

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is rubbish'. I never find it a positive experience just generally because everybody is quite negative about it. Not necessarily me.....They're very resistant to new ideas and I think that kinda rubs off on everyone.'

(Alex, lines 90-104)

In a large scale survey of over 26,000 teachers and nearly 7000 principals in the US, Ware and Kitsantas (2007) found that teachers' professional commitment correlated with measures of collective efficacy and individual teacher efficacy beliefs. These findings have some similarities to my own study as they indicate that positive beliefs can influence positive teacher behaviours, however I believe that the concept of **feeling in equilibrium** that emerged from the data cannot be directly compared to the notion of collective efficacy beliefs and is a distinct concept. Essentially, the teachers I interviewed described *the feeling of equilibrium*, indicating that equilibrium is an affective (emotional) state. When in the affective state of **equilibrium** they felt an affinity with their colleagues. In particular, they used the words 'positive' and 'positivity' to explain the attitudes of colleagues who they felt an affinity with and who inspired productivity and **momentum**.

'.....in my previous school I had a head of area, who was a drama teacher, who was particularly enthusiastic and always extremely positive. I think when you're working in a team of people and that person is always really positive that it makes the rest of the team even more positive and inspired to do things.' (Sophie, lines 111-115)

'....when I first started, _____ as my head of department and just the people around were really influential, not specifically in the way I teach but in terms of attitudes towards it and positivity. I think I'm just the sort of person, if I'm with positive people. When _____ was around, she was very positive and that makes me more positive to do my job I suppose.' (Holly, lines 103-107)

There was an implied sense that colleagues could achieve things together when **feeling equilibrium** but the notion of collective efficacy beliefs as articulated by

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Bandura (1997) is not quite the same concept. Collective efficacy beliefs are a shared belief in the group's ability to achieve group goals, whereas **feeling in equilibrium** could be seen as a precursor to positive collective or individual efficacy beliefs. Without *feeling* in **equilibrium**, teachers may be unlikely to have positive efficacy beliefs or have the motivation needed to improve their practice. If viewed in this way, **equilibrium** is therefore a *condition or precursor* for positive efficacy beliefs.

The concept of **feeling in equilibrium** could also be related to the literature on the 'fourth way' of educational change (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009) by providing some support for the notion that 'social capital' helps to build 'professional capital'. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) argue that the clear purposes, empowerment and positive relationships fostered in the 'fourth way' educational philosophy help to improve teacher happiness. Countries such as Finland that have adopted 'fourth way' principles such as the rejection of high-stakes testing and the encouragement of teacher collaboration and professional autonomy have created environments where being a teacher is a highly prized profession. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) suggest that Finnish teachers are rich in 'professional capital', a concept that includes a range of different capitals including human (an individual's knowledge, skills and training that create talent), social (collaborative networks involving trust and support), moral (the pull of fulfilling a purpose), symbolic (the status for a particular line of work) and decisional (ability to make effective decisions in complex situations). The fostering of a **feeling of equilibrium** amongst colleagues could certainly contribute to social capital, of which shared values and aims are an important feature. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) point out that in Finnish schools the shared visions and goals integral to social capital are '*often implicit and shared through daily acts of cooperation*' (p51), aligning with the **feeling of equilibrium** discussed by the teachers in my study. There are other similarities too. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) suggest that social capital can create the conditions necessary for improved human capital. In the quote below, they comment that individuals can gain confidence from their relationships with colleagues. If this is equated to teacher efficacy beliefs then we can see how

feeling in equilibrium, as a part of social capital can contribute to improve human capital and possibly professional capital too (if the other suggested capitals are also strong).

'High social capital does generate increased human capital. Individuals get confidence, learning, and feedback from having the right kind of people and the right kinds of interactions and relationships around them.' (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012, p4)

Physiological and emotional states are one of the four suggested sources of efficacy beliefs theorised by Bandura (1997), therefore there is potential for **equilibrium**, if defined as an emotional state, to be a source of teacher efficacy beliefs. As discussed in chapter 2 section 2.3.5, there appears to be very little research that addresses the potential for physiological and affective states to influence teacher efficacy beliefs, therefore my study may contribute to the literature in this area. In addition, in their review of the research on teacher emotions, Sutton and Wheatley (2003) claim that little attention has been given to the effect of positive emotions such as happiness upon self-efficacy beliefs, instead research has tended to focus on emotions as a *consequence* of efficacy beliefs. Considering that evidence suggests that experimentally manipulated moods can influence efficacy beliefs (Forgas et al., 1990; Kavanagh and Bower, 1985) it may be useful to investigate further how teachers' feelings of equilibrium may contribute to their efficacy beliefs and consequent actions. Are there particular types of schools that induce feelings of equilibrium, does it depend on teacher experience or leadership style? These are all questions which if answered may help us to explore the concept further and understand how it may be encouraged as a condition for positive efficacy beliefs.

Research into teacher efficacy beliefs has not focused specifically upon investigating physiological and affective states as a source of efficacy beliefs, therefore perhaps this is necessary in order to fully understand its relevance in the domain of teaching. Qualitative interviews in which teachers are asked specifically about their emotional and physiological states in relation to

particular events in their professional lives may be a valid way of exploring this topic. This would rely on careful and sensitive interviewing skills in order to ensure that participants are comfortable talking about such issues.

5.2 Proximate sources of teacher efficacy beliefs

Adams and Forsyth (2006) suggest the following contextual factors as *proximate* sources of efficacy beliefs: availability of resources, student characteristics, physical condition of the school, school size and school level and bureaucratic structures. As discussed at the start of section 5.1, the **indirect** sources of **efficacy validation** (management practices, professional dialogue and exam results) that emerged from the data could fit into the *proximate* sources suggested by Adam and Forsyth's (2006) model, in particular their suggestion of bureaucratic structures and student characteristics. However, there was little evidence from the data for other aspects of the contextual factors they propose as influential, such as availability of resources, physical condition of school, school size and school level. Indeed, in the next sections I will illustrate how in fact much wider contextual factors beyond the school itself may have influenced the efficacy beliefs and professional lives of the teachers in this study.

5.2.1 Trust and professionalism

The management styles and practices of senior leaders emerged as an **indirect** source of **validating** efficacy from the interview data. There was some evidence that if senior leaders showed that they trusted teachers to make decisions this reinforced efficacy beliefs. For example, Sophie perceived that past senior leaders had faith in her capabilities when they trusted her decisions regarding physically restructuring the teaching rooms in her department.

'So, it was like we've employed you because we think you're the person for the job....' (Sophie, line 154)

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In contrast, some teachers perceived the current school management to have less faith in their staff, with teachers feeling as if they were merely being told what to do and their professional judgement taken away.

'We have groups of very intelligent people that shouldn't be treated like a number and be told what to do.' (Dominic, lines 54-55)

Experienced teachers noticed that things that they were normally left to decide themselves had started to become prescribed by management. For Jill, the removal of some of her professional freedom regarding lesson planning created doubts about her abilities.

'I think we started having meetings about lesson planning which you know I thought was a bit strange at first. But then I realised that what was in these lesson plans wasn't really what I was doing. Then I had a bit of a crisis you know.....' (Jill. Interview 1, lines 40-42)

Helsby (1995) in her grounded theory of teacher professionalism, reports that teachers identify autonomy as a key feature of 'being a professional'.

'..a `professional' was seen as someone who made their own decisions about their work, rather than simply carrying out the orders of others. This was sometimes linked to the idea of being `trusted'.' (Helsby, 1995, p321)

Therefore, a perceived lack of trust from school management could be viewed as questioning a teacher's professionalism, possibly lowering efficacy beliefs as a result. Tschannen-Moran (2009), in a survey of teachers in 80 middle schools in the US, found that bureaucratic leadership (characterised by a hierarchy of authority and the presence of rules, policies and regulations) implied distrust of teachers and consequently led to a lesser degree of teacher professionalism compared with professional leadership structures grounded in trust (characterised by collective inquiry, reflection, decision-making). The guidelines given for lesson planning in Leaford School could be seen as an example of bureaucratic leadership in action, creating a formalisation of procedures and

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removing teachers' professional autonomy. However, it wasn't just the removal of trust and autonomy regarding lesson planning that affected Jill, it appeared to be the fact that the methods senior leaders were encouraging teachers to use were not the methods Jill was used to. So, in a way she was questioning her *own* professionalism in addition to feeling that other people questioned it. The quote below illustrates how Jill felt that even the media were prescribing what teachers should be doing. Jill felt '*controlled*' by it, implying that she was not free to teach as she wanted to.

'...I think suddenly the whole management (and the government!) I mean I don't blame the management, the Times Ed everyone was saying this is what we need in lessons. And that's what I mean, it controlled me , I felt controlled by it. I still do a bit.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 43-45)

Although the teachers in Helsby's (1995) study felt that teaching fitted into their ideas of 'being a professional', they too didn't always view autonomy as something that they experienced in their role, suggesting that government legislation removed some of their autonomy. In Helsby's study, the national curriculum was identified as one such legislative factor seen to reduce teachers' professional freedom. This was also discussed by Jill, although it appeared to have less impact on her because she was already teaching the content expected in the national curriculum, therefore you could argue that she did not feel her professionalism was questioned. At the end of the quote she refers back to the issue of lesson planning being prescribed by management, again indicating the significant effect it had on her teacher efficacy beliefs.

'.....when the national curriculum came in for languages and we had to teach this that and the other. That was OK because we were probably teaching most of that anyway but erm... no this latest thing was quite a revolution for me. And I did feel confident before that.' (Jill. Interview 1, lines 47-50)

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McCulloch, Helsby and Knight (2000) note that individual or groups of teachers' responses to initiatives imposed on them by external forces is affected by their '*professional confidence*' (p106). Professional confidence is explained as:

'a belief both in one's authority and in one's capacity to make important decisions about the conduct of one's work..... the feeling of coping with the work in hand and of being 'in control'. (Helsby, 1995, p324-325)

McCulloch et al. (2000) argue that when professional confidence is high, teachers are more likely to view policies as suggested guidelines which they can interpret and use as they see fit, whereas when professional confidence is low they are more likely to follow policies to the letter and are more responsive to external guidance. One could argue that in the case of Jill, the introduction of rules and guidelines for lesson planning highlighted her lack of professional confidence at that time, particularly as she said she felt 'controlled' by it (**powerlessness**). It could also be viewed as a factor that *caused* a lack of professional confidence in Jill, in that it took away her autonomy to decide herself what lesson plans should consist of and at the same time made her feel that she did not in fact have the ability to lesson plan effectively anyway. The concept of 'professional confidence' has some similarities with the concept of 'decisional capital' as described by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012). Both concepts encapsulate an understanding that the teacher as a professional has the ability and is trusted to make important decisions about their work.

'Making decisions in complex situations is what professionalism is all about.....They come to have competence, judgement, insight, inspiration and the capacity for improvisation as they strive for exceptional performance.' (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012, p5)

Jill said that she felt '*controlled*' which seems in direct comparison to the notion of decisional capital. In fact, feelings of **powerlessness** and deprofessionalisation caused by a lack of autonomy were common in the interviews.

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'...it takes the autonomy away from the staff and makes them feel less professional and less responsibility coz they're just doing stuff because they've been told to do it...' (Adrian, lines 18-20)

Encouraging teachers to follow specific procedures and strategies in their teaching could be seen as a consequence of the increasing accountability of schools, as school leaders attempt to meet the imposed targets from government. The presence of guidelines for lesson planning highlights how management were seen to be shifting towards a more bureaucratic leadership style. Tschannen-Moran (2009) explains that in schools with mainly bureaucratic structures, teachers can become less cooperative (often covertly) in an attempt to assert their professional status. She found that when teachers perceived school leaders to treat them as professionals they were more likely to trust school leaders in return.

In the interviews, there was evidence of an element of distrust for senior leaders as a reaction to increasing bureaucratic control, with some teachers attempting to **fight the system**. One example of this is Suzy's reactions to the introduction of working groups. All teachers had to be a member of one of these groups that came together once a term to discuss the 'way forward' with a particular issue in school.

'We've also got the working groups which I think are a good idea.....I think there is a slight issue in our group in that we've got somebody running it that's trying to railroad their own ideas through...whereas the idea is supposed to be that it's a discussion amongst the staff and not dictated down to...so I think that's a slight flaw in the system. But I think with a couple of strong minded people it can perhaps be challenged.' (Suzy, interview 2, lines 72-76)

Suzy's comments illustrate how although the working groups were sold by management as a way that teachers could get involved in decision-making regarding school matters, Suzy felt that they were perhaps not a genuine opportunity to do this. There was an illusion of participation but in actual fact senior leaders were using them to push through their own ideas. This could be

seen as an example of 'contrived collegiality' (Hargreaves, 1994). Datnow (2011) describes contrived collegiality as '*...administratively regulated, compulsory, implementation-oriented, fixed in time and space, and predictable.*' (p148). This is in direct contrast to genuine collaborative cultures that are '*spontaneous, voluntary, development-oriented, pervasive across time and space, and unpredictable.*' (p148). At the end of Suzy's comments the concept **fighting the system** starts to appear as she explains her desire to challenge senior leaders and their methods.

Other teachers also showed evidence of disagreeing with management and for some this resulted in **active** responses such as directly telling them this on their performance management feedback. The quote below illustrates this, as well as the lack of trust in senior leaders implied by the final comment.

I'd have the pressure regardless as it's on my performance management, which incidentally I disagree with and I've written on my performance management statement every year, I don't know if anyone's read it. (Lottie, lines 145-147)

Although there was no evidence of teachers overtly undermining management, there was a sense that teachers were not happy to just go along with things they did not agree with. This is akin to Tschannen-Moran's (2009) suggestion that teachers are less likely to cooperate when school leaders use a bureaucratic orientation. Thus, the lack of trust shown in senior leaders and the resulting **fight the system** attitudes could be viewed as a direct result of the leadership style of the school.

Relational trust has been recognised as a key element of successful schools and an important resource for reforming schools (Bryk and Schneider, 2003). The benefits of trust include teachers that are more willing to 'buy in' to change, to take risks and to take on the difficult extra work needed in order to make reform happen. Bryk and Schneider suggest that relational trust consists of four main features; respect, personal regard, competence and personal integrity and that teachers are more likely to trust colleagues and school leaders who exemplify these features. Yin et al. (2013) found that where teachers had high trust in their

colleagues they were more likely to feel a sense of empowerment. This trust didn't just relate to senior leaders, it extended to other colleagues too. Tschannen-Moran (2009) suggests that schools with high levels of trust are more flexible, reflective and communication is open. The findings of this study support the notion that trust is important for teachers to feel empowered and that teachers are less likely to buy in to change suggested by management if trust is missing.

5.2.2 Performativity: Measuring efficacy

O'Leary (2014) explains that from the late 1980s and early 1990s there was a 'deprofessionalisation' of the teaching profession, with rapid reforms and increasing amounts of administrative bureaucracy.

'As a result of the reforms, the notion of professionalism was to be reconfigured. The professional autonomy of teachers was to be substantially eroded and these key qualities were to be superseded by a set of technicist skills that formed part of a new culture of 'performativity'.' (O'Leary, 2014, p15)

This deprofessionalism was underpinned by 'new managerialism', a style of management borrowed from the private sector that became popular in the public sector in order to improve performance and efficiency. Outputs began to be monitored and individuals and organisations became accountable for their performance. Thus, a competitive performativity culture began to develop in which teachers have to perform in order to 'get on' in their careers and in order to perform, certain criteria and guidelines must be met. Ball (2003) states that performativity is:

'...a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentives, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). The performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or

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'moments' of promotion or inspection. As such they stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organisation within a field of judgement.' (Ball, 2003, p216)

In England, the introduction of regular Ofsted inspections in the 1990s could be seen as a prime example of this performativity culture. In short spaces of time, schools and teachers are judged against specific criteria. If a school does well in their Ofsted inspection they are rewarded by being 'left alone' for longer until the next inspection, whereas if a school is judged to be performing poorly they can expect more frequent Ofsted visits and interventions.

The notion of a performativity culture or discourse can be clearly seen in the concepts that emerged in the data analysis, in particular, the concepts **measuring efficacy** and **proving efficacy**. Teachers talked about their effectiveness in the classroom being measured and judged by senior leaders in two key areas: lesson observations and exam results. Lesson observation grades of outstanding, good, satisfactory or unsatisfactory (at the time of the data collection) were used to quantify teacher quality, to justify rewards and sanctions in the form of performance management and to prove oneself as a 'good' teacher.

'I'm really trying to fight for that outstandingI just want to say I've had one...' (Lottie, line)

Such judgements appeared to influence the efficacy beliefs of teachers as they measured themselves against the externally imposed criteria.

'...having positive results in observations, that improves your confidence but at the same time if you don't get the grade you're looking for that has a negative effect and makes you feel bad, even if it's still a good observation.'
(Suzy, lines)

Teachers talked about lesson observations **taking a snapshot** of their teaching, aligning with Ball's description above of *'moments' of promotion or inspection*.

'...I think what was so stressful was wanting to show all the good work that I had done all year in that tiny space of time.....'(Holly, lines 69-70)

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O'Leary (2014) argues that lesson observations have become a regular feature of teachers' lives as the performativity regime has increased under the 2010 coalition government, therefore it is perhaps not surprising that it featured so heavily in the everyday experiences of the teachers I interviewed.

'..the emphasis on teaching and learning as the main vehicle for driving up standards and extending the agenda for continuous improvement has entered a new phase of heightened scrutiny and performativity.....In the light of this, classroom observation has become an even more prominent feature of professional life.....' (O'Leary, 2014, p25)

The performativity culture in which teachers are now entrenched encourages a discourse in which teachers are assessed against performance criteria (such as lesson observation criteria and exam results) in various areas of their professional lives (such as performance management meetings, inspections, league tables, observations). Ball, (2003) calls the latter, the 'mechanics' of performativity and argues that where teachers are subject to such a multitude of judgements and comparisons they:

'...become ontologically insecure: unsure whether we are doing enough, doing the right thing, doing as much as others, or as well as others, constantly looking to improve, to be better, to be excellent. And yet it is not always very clear what is expected.' (Ball, 2003, p220)

The notion that teachers are constantly aiming to improve and 'perform' at their best is certainly captured in my research. One of the main categories that emerged was labelled **aspiring for the gold standard** to highlight this motivation. In particular, the desire to be judged as an outstanding teacher (from a lesson observation) was frequently discussed by the teachers interviewed. In the quote above, Ball comments that *'And yet it is not always very clear what is expected'*. Again, this feature was also seen in the interview transcripts, as despite specific Ofsted style criteria being in place for lesson judgements, teachers felt that they still couldn't seem to meet them. It is as if the bar is continually being raised.

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'...Its just frustrating because I look at an outstanding lesson plan and I think I've done that, I've done that, I've done that, what am I doing wrong?' (Lottie, lines 166-168)

Teachers were also expected to meet data targets as part of their performance management criteria. For example, a certain percentage of their exam classes had to achieve at least their target grades (calculated from Fischer Trust data) and therefore there was a clear link between meeting student achievement targets and being judged as a 'good' teacher.

'.....I think basically that the most pressure is government insisted. These are the targets that you have to make. Basically...if you don't meet those targets ie 80%, people think you're a bad teacher and I don't believe that.' (Gary, lines 2-5)

Again, such data driven performance criteria is synonymous with the performativity 'technology' as described by Ball (2003). Schools, teachers and even geographical areas are compared and judged on levels of student achievement.

'.....government policy over the last two decades.....continues to emphasise student achievement as one if not the most important variable on which to base judgements about the quality of teaching and learning.' (O'Leary, 2014, p90)

So, there is potential for exam results to influence teacher efficacy beliefs because within the wider context of their professional work, the performativity discourse tells them that student achievement is a measure of teacher quality. The fact teachers discussed inferring their effectiveness in the classroom from exam results meant they were coded as an **indirect** source of efficacy beliefs. Sophie illustrates the point about student achievement as a measure of productivity in her comments below. In other words, if the teacher does the right things their students should do well.

'...I think because, oh, they've got good results so therefore we are obviously doing the right things but perhaps we could be even better....then that's when I think well what could we do to get even more students getting better grades.' (Sophie, lines 104-107)

Management are setting the targets (under the pressures of government policies and accountability measures) but there is a sense that not only management and government judge teachers in this performativity culture. The judgement culture is permeating the whole system, including the teachers themselves. Earlier on Gary used the phrase *'people think you're a bad teacher'* in relation to not achieving data targets, which could imply colleagues in general, management or government. Another interviewee, Jill, commented that colleagues could be stigmatised by other staff members for getting particular grades in their lesson observations.

'It's almost becoming a public document, we almost know what every teacher in the school is like and I don't like that..... it almost becomes a point of gossip sometimes which I really feel uncomfortable with. And I think there's a certain lack of sympathy.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 139-143)

Such comments indicate how accountability can lead to a blame culture, where teachers' performance is publically compared and judged. Takahashi (2011) argues that the social cognitive theoretical framework has dominated teacher efficacy belief research and that a sociocultural perspective could offer a valid alternative. If a sociocultural perspective is taken, teachers' work, effectiveness and efficacy beliefs could be seen as co-constructed between colleagues. This offers a different lens for interpreting teacher efficacy belief research, indicating the importance of context for teachers' shared understandings. If viewed in this way, Jill's comments above could show how the discourse of accountability becomes ingrained in a school, as colleagues' understanding of what makes a good teacher are co-constructed by teachers, managers and government.

5.2.3 *Performativity: Moving the goal posts*

Moving the goal posts was a key category characterised by teachers' discussions of what they perceived as frequent changes to expectations and practice and the effects these had on their professional lives. It is very much related to the notion of a performativity culture because, in particular, experienced teachers felt that there had been shifting sands in the educational system in the last 20 years and that they had to change their practice regularly to fit into the changing demands.

'Government are the last people to meet their targets. You know...at the end of the day they expect us to meet targets and they keep moving the goal posts.' (Gary, lines 11-13)

There was a perception that standards were continuously being raised and that teachers needed to work harder or differently to meet them, with the result that some teachers questioned their abilities (**efficacy doubts**).

'...some people feel that their confidence has gone down whereas actually it hasn't, their teaching hasn't necessarily deteriorated. It may have even got better, but it's perhaps a perception...I think we could all say with the new framework and increasing pressure on lessons the standards do feel like they've got higher.....' (Catherine, lines 35-38)

In an analysis of 600 primary and secondary teachers' perceptions of what causes them stress in the workplace, Jellis (1996) identified 'rate of change' as the fifth most important factor (in front of this factor was lack of time, lack of parental support, lack of resources and national curriculum/irrelevant paperwork). The rate of change was described as '*much too fast*' (p5) with teachers stating that as soon as they had got used to one system another one had been introduced in its place. Nearly twenty years on, this feeling of having to cope with changing expectations on a regular basis does not appear to have faded in many of the teachers I interviewed.

The notion of changing demands causing teachers to question their practices is reflected in Ball's (2003) comments about the effects of a performativity culture

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where things never stand still. There is always someone or something judging you.

'.....there is a high degree of uncertainty and instability. A sense of being constantly judged in different ways, by different means, according to different criteria, through different agents and agencies. There is a flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that makes one continually accountable and constantly recorded.' (Ball, 2003, p220)

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) in their analysis of global education policies in the last 40 years comment that:

'Even today, there is little letup. Every time English schools look like they might be reaching the bar set by the government, the government finds a way to redefine what counts as success, so many schools simply fall short of the bar again.' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009, p27)

In light of the reduced trust of teachers implied by the accountability culture in this school, the perception that expectations and targets were continually changing merely served to enhance the mutual lack of trust for senior leaders and government and increase some teachers' feelings of **powerlessness**. Indeed, there was evidence that when change is constantly expected teachers become 'immune' to it, losing motivation to develop their teaching.

'Now that they've (Ofsted) gone it's the aftermath and yes we've got to improve and there is that pressure but it's more of a sustained thing that's kind of continuous. Maybe you get a bit immune to it....I don't know.' (Holly, lines 73-76)

As such, the fast paced rate of change in schools in response to external targets and agendas may serve to reduce relational trust and teacher motivation.

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5.2.4 Coping with transitions

Moving schools appeared to be an important source of anxiety for some of the teachers interviewed. The concept of **coping with transitions** fell under the major category **moving the goal posts**, as teachers talked about getting to grips with different school structures, management practices and schemes of work when they started a new job.

'.....I kind of felt like I had to start again..... Sometimes trying to use a resource from my old school was like trying to fit a round peg into a square hole.' (Lottie, lines 112-116)

There was evidence that these transitions in their careers could threaten their efficacy beliefs.

'Certainly at (previous school) in my last year I really felt like I could conquer the world. It was my 3rd year of teaching and I felt, yeah I can do this. And then moving here I felt like I was back to square one again.'
(Lottie, lines 34-36)

Reusing and improving lesson plans, resources and activities each academic year is an example of where teachers **established rhythms** in their jobs, allowing them to develop their confidence teaching a particular year group or exam syllabus. Moving schools disrupted these cyclical rhythms due to teachers needing to learn about new exam syllabuses and the different ways in which schools and departments worked.

'So it's always trying to recreate whereas if you stay longer in a school you can establish really good rhythms with that type of stuff.' (Annie, line 29)

In addition, moving schools involved teachers feeling that they needed to **prove their efficacy** to new colleagues, as illustrated by the quote below. Annie felt that she needed to establish herself when starting at a new school, suggesting that she needs to build up a good reputation within the school.

'It takes time to establish yourself and get used to different syllabuses.....'
(Annie, lines 18-19)

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The concept of an event such as moving schools threatening efficacy beliefs is not directly addressed by Bandura's (1997) four sources (enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, physiological and affective states). The findings of this study suggest that it is disruption to a teacher's accepted norms of practice and the desire to prove oneself to new colleagues that could cause a teacher's efficacy beliefs to dip. These factors don't neatly fit into Bandura's four suggested sources but do show the possible importance of contextual factors in shaping teacher efficacy beliefs. Essentially, 'analysis of the teaching task' (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) appears to be particularly relevant to teachers when they move schools due to the varied factors present in different schools.

To some extent, the induction programme organised by the school may have influenced the way that teachers coped with moving schools. Lottie believed it to be a poor induction, not focusing on the important things she needed to know such as whom to ask for help about various things.

'I suppose the induction here.....was not very good. To be honest. I felt that I didn't need extra training on child protection, on how to be a good form tutor. What I needed was a photo book of who these people were, what their roles are and which admin people to see about finance, timetabling. It was stuff like that....I felt like I was completely and utterly confused, walking round like a zombie the first few weeks.' (Lottie, lines 60-69)

Harriet felt that the induction was not suitable to her as a newly qualified teacher (NQT), in particular her first experiences of CPD at the school.

'They were all so specific. I was like, they were all quite useful but at the moment I can't quite remember how to plan a lesson..... So it was slightly overwhelming.' (Harriet, lines 66-69)

Although there are statutory guidelines for the induction of newly qualified teachers (DfE, 2013), the induction of experienced teachers into a new school is normally developed and run by the individual school, therefore there is more

potential for this process to be variable between schools. Indeed, even with the statutory guidelines for induction of newly qualified teachers, the experiences of NQTs could vary considerably depending on the school they are employed in (Bubb, 2007). As the findings of this study suggest that moving schools may threaten efficacy beliefs, at least in the short term, understanding how schools can most effectively support teachers that are new to their school is important.

A search of bibliographic databases did not find research specifically investigating how moving schools may impact on teachers or focusing on the induction of (experienced) teachers into a new school. Research into the career paths of teachers tends to be focused upon the differences between the phases of a career as a teacher (student teacher, early career teacher, mid career teacher, late career teacher) rather than transitions between schools and roles. For example, Fessler and Christensen (1992) developed a model identifying different stages of a teacher's career (preservice, induction, competency building, enthusiastic and growing, carer frustration, career stability, career wind down, career exit), suggesting that the environment (both at work and personally) can affect career decisions and motivation.

According to Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) teacher efficacy model, efficacy beliefs should not change when a teacher moves school as long as the teacher understands the teaching tasks, resources and barriers to be similar. They suggest that the teaching task is made up of factors such as:

'.....students' abilities and motivation, appropriate instructional strategies, managerial issues, the availability and quality of instructional materials, access to technology, and the physical conditions of the teaching space, to name only a few.' (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p231)

The evidence from my study suggests that moving schools may cause a shift in efficacy beliefs, *specifically* due to the changing nature of the teaching task and varied constraints in differing schools. Therefore, the results do support aspects of Tschannen-Moran et al.'s (1998) model. Indeed, Tschannen-Moran et al. themselves comment that task analysis will be most significant for *'novice teachers and those entering a new assignment'* (p231). Tschannen-Moran and

Hoy (2001) have previously identified context change as a potential area of study in teacher efficacy beliefs but it does not appear to have been explored since.

To what extent would a change in grade level or curriculum generate such a reexamination? How much does a change in context, such as a move from an urban to a suburban or rural context, arouse a reassessment? Could the efficacy beliefs of teachers change in response to differing principal efficacy beliefs when there is a change of leadership at the school?' (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001, p802)

Further research into the impact of moving schools on teacher efficacy beliefs would be useful if we are to understand the potential difficulties that teachers experience and how to support them when making the transition between two schools. It may also be helpful to investigate if there is a differential impact between experienced and novice teachers.

5.3 Teacher motivation: Aspiring for the gold standard

5.3.1 Proving efficacy

Most of the teachers interviewed in this study talked about striving to be the best teacher they could be. This aspiration was often framed in terms of Ofsted judgements, indicating how the performativity culture had permeated teachers' motivations; many set their sights on being judged as an 'outstanding' teacher. Comments such as the one below typify the participants' attitudes towards this aim:

'Most of my lessons have been rated as good...I've never actually got the outstanding which is something I'm striving for.' (Gary, lines 45-47).

Even for teachers who did not talk about achieving the outstanding judgment for their lessons, being a good teacher in general was a key goal.

'...my aim is to be what I would call a good classroom teacher, respected, motivate students to deliver' (Dominic, lines 65-66)

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For some teachers, the achievement of an outstanding lesson judgement appeared to be viewed as a 'badge of honour', something that proved their abilities as a teacher to other teachers. It was a label that was seen as important to gain the respect of their peers as well as for the recognition received from senior leaders in the school.

'I just want to say I've had one.' (Lottie, line 166)

Therefore, some teachers appeared to be motivated by the desire to prove their effectiveness as a teacher (**proving efficacy**) and to achieve an outstanding lesson; viewed as the pinnacle of teacher achievement (**aspiring for the gold standard**). As discussed in section 5.2, to some extent the desire to prove oneself as a good teacher may be related to the accountability regime in which the teachers were firmly entrenched.

In particular, proving that you were a good teacher to other colleagues appeared to be important to teachers in positions of responsibility. Judgements from lesson observations were seen as a way of **proving efficacy** and therefore teachers such as Jill, Louise and Annie talked about a responsibility to **practice what they preach**. It was important they were seen to be carrying out the practices that they were expecting colleagues to do in order for them to prove their teaching skills and for their status to be upheld.

'..... if I am pushing forward that we need to be doing these things I need to be doing it in my own practice.' (Louise, lines 96-100)

'....as head of department they look at you because you should be setting the tone for the department.....' (Jill, interview 1, lines 4-5)

'...the thing is as head of department you've got to try and be as good as the people you're observing at least and that's my motivation. I don't want to be, I don't want to have a lesser grading than other people. (Jill, interview 1, lines 80-82)

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There are some similarities here with the concept of vicarious experience (see chapter 2, section 2.3.2) as suggested by Bandura (1997). Bandura (1997) states that ‘.....people must appraise their capabilities in relation to the attainment of others.’ (p86). According to Bandura, individuals compare themselves to associates and if they perform better than them their self-efficacy is enhanced, whereas being outperformed lowers efficacy beliefs. So, the judgement given to a lesson observation is viewed as a **measure of efficacy** and used to prove and compare effectiveness to colleagues. This seems particularly important for teachers with responsibilities whose position appears to carry with it the expectation that you are an effective teacher. If Bandura’s theory is applied to the findings then it could be argued that comparing themselves to their colleagues enables teachers in positions of responsibility to enhance and even **maintain** their own efficacy beliefs for their teaching and for their management role. However, I think that the concept of **proving efficacy** goes beyond the concept of vicarious experience put forward by Bandura as it incorporates a motivation to achieve a particular goal and to further one’s standing with colleagues.

5.3.2 Self-efficacy and goal theory

As discussed in chapter 2 section 2.2, teacher efficacy beliefs have been associated with various outcomes such as student achievement, teacher wellbeing and teacher attrition. The influence of self-efficacy beliefs upon motivation and subsequent *behaviours* may help us to understand why it might relate to these outcomes.

‘...self-efficacy is an important motivational construct. It influences individual choices, goals, emotional reactions, effort, coping, and persistence. Self-efficacy also changes as a result of learning, experience, and feedback.’ (Gist and Mitchell, 1992, p186)

Motivation can be defined as:

‘..the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained.’
(Schunk, Pintrich and Meece, 2009, p4)

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Motivation cannot be directly observed but must be inferred from a person's behaviours and speech. Bandura (1997) discusses how self-efficacy beliefs relate to three key motivation theories: attribution theory (the notion that individuals evaluate the causes of their performances as due to effort or ability and will be more motivated if successes are attributed to ability and failures to lack of effort), expectancy-value theory (the more likely a behaviour will produce valued outcomes, the more motivated an individual will be) and goal theory (motivation through the pursuit of challenging goals). Although there are varied motivation theories, they all agree that cognitions are key and that motivation is a complex process influenced by a range of personal, social and contextual factors (Schunk et al., 2009). These theories also agree that motivation, performance and behaviour have a reciprocal relationship, therefore one's achievements can affect motivation and vice versa.

Bandura (1997) views self-efficacy as a key aspect of goal setting; individuals who have a specific goal and a high self-efficacy for achieving it are more likely to exhibit behaviours that are conducive to success such as persistence and effort. Bandura argues that goal setting must be based upon perceptions of efficacy otherwise individuals would set themselves unachievable goals. He also asserts that it could be a two way process; when goals are set by others, the setting of high goals can also operate to increase the efficacy beliefs of the individual. In relation to the achievement of goals, Bandura suggests that efficacy beliefs:

'...influence the level at which goals are set, the strength of commitment to them, the strategies used to reach them, the amount of effort mobilized in the endeavour, and the intensification of effort when accomplishments fall short of aspirations.' (Bandura, 1997, p136)

Figure 4 illustrates how setting goals is theorised to relate to efficacy beliefs (Gist and Mitchell, 1992, p189). According to this model then, high self-efficacy beliefs will generate more positive behavioural consequences such as challenging goals, more effort and persistence.

four types of experience. Further, limited understanding exists as to how individuals evaluate those cues in forming self-efficacy.

Figure 1 presents a simplified view of the process by which self-efficacy is formed. Note that the major emphasis is placed on those judgments and information categories that precede the efficacy assessment; the consequences of efficacy beliefs (e.g., goals) are not the focal concern in this figure. Three types of assessment processes appear to be involved in forming self-efficacy. First, there is an analysis of task requirements. This analysis produces inferences about what it takes to perform at various levels. For example, someone considering the task of making a market forecast may consider the extent to which mathematical abilities (e.g., statistics) will be required in order to perform well and how much time will be needed. This task analysis should be most explicit when the task is fairly novel or when it has been observed only. When the task has been performed personally and frequently in the past, the individual is likely to rely more heavily on his

Figure 4. A model of self-efficacy-performance relationship. (Gist and Mitchell, 1992, p189)

In terms of the findings of my study, goal theory does seem to have some relevance. As discussed earlier, teachers appeared to be motivated by a general goal of being a better teacher and by specific goals such as achieving an 'outstanding' lesson. The level at which they set these goals may reflect their efficacy beliefs, ie. teachers who aim for 'outstanding' may have more positive efficacy beliefs than those who only aim for 'good'.

It could also be argued that the grades of lesson observation judgements give teachers a frame of reference for these goals. So, for the general goal of being a better teacher, being able to state a specific goal such as achieving an outstanding lesson, may help teachers to breakdown exactly what they need to do to achieve the general goal and therefore increase their motivation. Goal theory research supports this assertion, suggesting that clear and specific goals have a more positive effect on performance than general ones (Locke and Latham, 1990).

The concept of **proving efficacy** identified in my analysis has some similarities to the notion of performance goals, a construct within achievement goal theory

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generally applied to understanding school students' motivation and achievement behaviour (Ames, 1992, Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2002, Dweck and Leggett, 1988), although the theory has more recently been applied to teacher motivation (Butler, 2007). Individuals who aim to be better than others and receive recognition for their achievements are said to have 'performance goals', whereas individuals who focus on improving their skills and understanding in order to 'master' a task are said to have 'mastery' or 'learning goals'. Dweck (1999) argues that successful individuals tend to show '*mastery-oriented qualities*' (p1) characterised by a love of learning, persistence when faced with challenges, valuing effort and seeking out challenges.

Performance and mastery goals were suggested by Dweck and Elliot (1983, cited by Dweck, 1999) after noticing that some school students tended to respond to obstacles in their learning in a helpless pattern (doubting their intelligence, inflating their failures, losing hope in future success) and others in a mastery-oriented pattern (no attribution of blame to any source, focusing on how to improve performance, remaining optimistic). They argued that students tend to prefer different achievement goals and that this can explain their reactions to challenging tasks. Those who respond in a helpless pattern are suggested to have performance goals. As their focus is on measuring their ability based on their performance, poor performance is believed by them to be due to poor ability. Those who show a mastery-oriented pattern tend to have mastery goals. Individuals with mastery goals focus on finding ways to improve their performance, therefore poor performance just means that they haven't found the best strategy for that task yet. Further developments of the theory have suggested that performance goals (and to some extent mastery goals) can be further divided into approach and avoidance categories (Elliot, 1999). Performance approach goals are characterised by individuals who aspire to outperform others and to achieve the highest normative judgements whereas individuals with performance avoidance goals aim to avoid looking inferior in comparison to others and avoid achieving the lowest normative judgements.

So, teachers such as Lottie who appeared motivated to achieve the label of 'outstanding' for their teaching by the recognition this would receive from

colleagues would be considered as having performance goals according to Dweck's (1999) theories. If the performance goal is further differentiated as described above, then Lottie could be considered to hold performance approach goals, as she seems intent on striving for the highest grade possible.

'I'm annoyed that I can't seem to get a full outstanding lesson. I've tried to be part of the 'good to outstanding group'. I get good with outstanding features every time. I'm really trying to fight for that outstanding...

Is that judgement important to you?

I just want to say I've had one.' (Lottie, lines 162-166)

However, there was no evidence that Lottie exhibited the 'helpless' responses to challenge suggested by Dweck (1999) such as doubting her intelligence, inflating her failures or losing hope in the possibility of future success. In fact, she appeared to be a fairly confident teacher with plenty of determination. Other teachers such as Louise and Holly showed evidence of mastery goals, valuing the feedback received in lesson observations as tools to help them improve their teaching in the future. As Louise stated when discussing lesson observation feedback, '*anything like that forces you to up your game*' (lines 127-128), suggesting that she responds to feedback by learning about new teaching methods with the aim of improving her teaching (mastery goals).

Dweck's (1999) theories imply that individuals either have a tendency for mastery or performance goals, discussing them as habitual patterns of behaviour. However, my findings suggest that there may not be a simple dichotomy between the behaviours that are typical of individuals with performance or mastery goals if applied to teacher motivation. Jill appeared to be motivated by being in competition with other teachers and not wanting to be outperformed, suggesting performance avoidance goals (*'I'm competitive, I don't want other people to be better than me.'* lines 83-84) but also showed mastery goals (seeking out new teaching ideas) in her reactions to what she considered a poor lesson observation (*'Well I think I've read a lot about it, I've been on TES, I've watched excellent teacher videos, I've read loads of articles written about things like*

that.....I've learnt from watching colleagues. ' Lines 72-75). Butler (2007) found that teachers' goal orientations were related to their help-seeking behaviours. Teachers with a mastery orientation had positive perceptions of seeking help and saw it as beneficial for their professional development, whereas teachers with performance avoidance goals perceived help seeking as threatening, indicating their poor abilities as a teacher, therefore Jill's help-seeking response to the lesson observation possibly indicates a mastery goal orientation. Overall, Jill does seem to fit into the mastery-oriented behaviour patterns, believing that her abilities as a teacher are malleable and can be improved with effort, however the contradictory elements of her behaviour and attitudes illustrate that teacher motivation may be more complex than the dichotomy of achievement goal orientation allows. Further research into teacher motivation is required in order to understand how teachers' behaviours may be related to their goal orientations.

5.3.3 How do contextual factors influence teacher motivation?

Although achievement goal theory generally suggests that goal orientations are fairly fixed attributes, there is evidence that the way tasks are framed can influence the way individuals respond, therefore contextual factors may be important in the development of goal orientations. Elliot and Dweck (1988) found that students who were given performance goals (by being told that their ability would be measured from their performance on a task) tended to show 'helpless' response patterns when the task was difficult, but when given a mastery goal (told that the task would allow them to learn some useful things) students showed a mastery-oriented pattern. In terms of the teachers in my study, this could imply that the way in which management explain their approach and values towards the tasks teachers are expected to do (such as classroom management, lesson planning, assessment) could affect teachers' resilience in the face of challenges in these tasks. For example, if teachers believe that their abilities as a teacher will be *measured* and *compared* by lesson observations or exam results then, according to achievement goal theory, they are likely to hold performance goals and be at risk of a helpless response to

failures or difficulties. On the other hand, if teachers believe that lesson observations and exam results will *help them to develop* into a better teacher they are likely to hold mastery goals and show mastery-oriented responses to failures or difficulties. This could also explain why in the case of lesson observations, some teachers like Lottie appeared to be motivated by **proving efficacy**, even though in other aspects of their job they were more concerned about their own development. These teachers' motivation for particular tasks/events may have been influenced by the varying management values for particular aspects of their role.

The notion that a teacher's achievement goals and responses to difficulties can be influenced by management practices and values has relevance to the concept of **measuring efficacy**, which emerged as a subcategory of the major category **aspiring for the gold standard**. A key finding within **measuring efficacy** was that many teachers perceived that the judgements they were given after lesson observations were taken as a measure of their overall teaching effectiveness by management. The fact that observations are 'measurement' tools could indicate that teachers would be likely to hold performance goals. As discussed earlier, there is evidence that some teachers did hold performance goals in relation to lesson observations, wanting to prove themselves as good teachers and compete with colleagues.

A key aspect of achievement goal theory as put forward by Dweck (1999) is the notion of fixed versus malleable intelligence. Some individuals are labelled as 'entity' theorists, viewing intelligence as fixed and others are labelled as 'incremental' theorists, viewing intelligence as malleable. It has been reported that entity theorists are more likely to hold performance goals and incremental theorists are more likely to hold learning goals and that theories of intelligence can be manipulated, appearing to directly cause these learning goals (Dweck and Leggett, 1988). Incremental theorists are seen to have more adaptive implicit theories of intelligence, as these are more likely to lead to mastery goals and mastery-oriented behaviours. If theories of intelligence are causal factors for different types of achievement goals, understanding an individual's theories about the nature of intelligence becomes important.

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Of relevance here is Dweck and Leggett's (1988) discussion of the mutability dimension, the notion that how people categorise phenomena as controllable or uncontrollable will affect how they treat them. Things that are viewed as uncontrollable and important will be '*monitored, measured and judged*' (p266), whereas things that are viewed as controllable and important will be '*acted on and developed*' (p266). Dweck and Leggett (1988) argue that an individual's entity or incremental theory about intelligence can be applied outside of the self to explain other beliefs they hold about the world around them, including other people.

'Here an entity theory would assert that people, places, things, and the world in general are what they are and there is little one can do to alter them. An incremental theory would propose that desirable qualities can be cultivated: People can be made more competent, institutions can be made more responsible, the environment can be made more healthful, the world can be made more just.' (Dweck and Leggett, 1988, p266)

Their theory predicts particular patterns of behaviour, cognition and affect based on whether a person holds an entity or incremental theory. For example, an entity theorist's goal orientation is towards making judgement of attributes. Even if the attribute is judged as needing improvement, an entity theorist is not likely to pursue change (as attributes are perceived as fixed) and may over-generalise attributes based on small samples of actions or outcomes. In contrast, when attributes are viewed as needing improvement, incremental theorists will seek to make changes by analysing how processes can best be mastered. Negative judgements of attributes are theorised as resulting in contempt from an entity theorist, whereas an incremental theorist's emotional affect will be empathetic.

Dweck and Leggett's (1988) theory about the generalisation of implicit person theories could be quite interesting if applied to teacher motivation and development. The notion that there is a difference between how an uncontrollable and controllable phenomenon is dealt with is particularly relevant. The findings of my study suggest that lesson observations are perceived

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by teachers as a way that management measure teacher efficacy, suggesting that teacher effectiveness is seen as uncontrollable, aligning with an entity theorist's approach, under Dweck and Leggett's theory (the fact that lesson observations are given a judgement by management also agrees with the uncontrollable dimension). However, the education system in England actively encourages teachers to develop and improve their teaching skills through a wide range of professional development activities (Ofsted, 2013) suggesting that teacher effectiveness is not necessarily seen as uncontrollable. Indeed, at the school in which the participants taught, lesson observations were promoted by management as a method for learning about how to improve your teaching skills (aligning with an incremental approach) rather than a way of measuring teacher effectiveness.

Recent research by Kam, Risavy, Perunovic and Plant (2014) indicates that within a workplace, subordinates may form a common consensus regarding their impression of managers' implicit person theories (either entity or incremental). Although their study did not investigate how these beliefs were formed, they suggest that implicit person theories may be communicated by verbal and non-verbal cues such as providing coaching (incremental) and discussing mistakes as if they will affect future performance (entity). Therefore, it may be that teachers are responding to these cues and perhaps reading into what they *believe* are senior leaders' actual motives for lesson observations. If this is valid, then it suggests that school leaders and policy makers should think carefully about how they frame the tasks that form an integral part of teachers' professional lives. If they wish teachers to be genuinely motivated to improve their skills then it is important that an incremental approach is adopted in which teachers' skills are genuinely communicated and perceived as something that can be developed.

5.4 Teacher development

5.4.1 Efficacy doubts as a source of teacher change

It was clear that teachers experienced **efficacy doubts**, times when they doubted their abilities as a teacher, and that they dealt with these doubts in different ways. Some teachers took an **active response** to efficacy doubts, taking responsibility for seeking out ideas to change their practice (*'I've read a lot about it, I've been on TES, I've watched excellent teacher videos, I've read loads of articles written about things like that..... I've learnt from watching colleagues.'* Jill, lines 72-75) whereas others took a **passive response**, seemingly less interested in making changes to their practice (*'...there just doesn't seem to have been time to organise anything in the way of personal CPD'*. George lines 72-73) and tended to wait for others to initiate professional development to address areas of weakness.

To some extent these findings concur with Wheatley's (2002) suggestion that efficacy doubts are necessary in order to motivate teachers to change their practice. This theory is in contrast to Tschannen-Moran et al.s' (1998) teacher efficacy model in which low efficacy beliefs are suggested to correspond with reduced effort and persistence. In particular, the teachers who responded to efficacy doubts in an **active** way showed some of the behaviours identified by Wheatley as products of efficacy doubts, such as reflection, motivation to learn and productive collaboration.

'In brief, teacher efficacy doubts may aid reform by fostering teacher learning in many ways: inducing disequilibrium and change, fostering teacher reflection, supporting motivation to learn and responsiveness to diversity, and promoting productive collaboration.' (Wheatley, 2002, p16)

These behaviours take place in order for a teacher to reach their aspirational future efficacy, therefore there appears to be an emphasis on the future for these teachers rather than dwelling on the past. This highlights how efficacy doubts are linked to the key category **aspiring for the gold standard**, as teachers strive to be the best they can be.

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There was also evidence from my study that some teachers do not respond in such a productive way to efficacy doubts, preferring not to take action to improve their practice. Simon describes that although he feels he could improve his behaviour management techniques he is not motivated to do so.

'I believe I know HOW to do it. I'm much less certain that I WANT to do it. So when I have to I can get classrooms under reasonable control. Like most teachers I don't like them to be quiet, I like them to be animated.....err...and sometimes they get out of hand. I know how to behave to make it happen but I find that quite tedious so I don't do it as much as I should.' (Simon, lines 25-29)

The concept of **passive** reactions to **efficacy doubts** as described in my analysis could have some relevance to Wheatley's (2002) theory where he argues that teachers with global efficacy doubts (in comparison to specific efficacy doubts related to their confidence in specific skills) are likely to avoid particular teaching methods or whole areas of the curriculum. Therefore, it could be that teachers who appeared to take a **passive** response to **efficacy doubts** (such as George and Simon) were actually experiencing global efficacy doubts rather than specific, resulting in a state of denial where efficacy doubts are not confronted. Such assertions would need to be investigated further, perhaps by interviewing the teachers identified as exhibiting active and passive responses to efficacy doubts in more detail and using a teacher efficacy scale (such as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) in order to ascertain whether Wheatley's argument does in fact correspond with the teachers' behaviours and efficacy beliefs.

Sutton and Wheatley (2003) in their review of research into teacher emotions suggest that emotions may have a moderating influence upon teacher efficacy beliefs that may be of importance when they experience efficacy doubts. They assert that some teachers may be able to maintain positive emotions even when confronted with past failures and doubts about future success, which could explain why efficacy doubts do not always lead to reduced effort and teaching outcomes as predicted by teacher efficacy belief models such as Tschannen-

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Moran et al., (1998). Jill illustrated this clearly in her determination to improve her teaching even after receiving lesson observation feedback that caused a '**crisis point**' in her career. Perhaps Jill's response to the efficacy doubts was moderated by her emotions? Again, as discussed in section 5.1.3, this points to the importance of researching the influence of emotional states upon efficacy beliefs, an area that has received little attention in the literature.

In an experimental study investigating the effects of induced short-term failures in a computer based task upon self-efficacy beliefs, Hardy (2014) found that individuals with more positive self-efficacy beliefs were more likely to be resilient, persistent and learn from their mistakes. Hardy (2014) states that:

'Although failure is often conceptualised as a negative, destructive force, the current findings suggest that occasional failure experiences may ultimately benefit subsequent performance for highly confident individuals who may be more prone to positive capacity-goal achievement biases and thus complacency. Taken further, actively inducing temporary failures.....may serve to increase perceptions of challenge regarding goal attainment, which facilitates greater effort and resource allocation.....' (Hardy, 2014, p157)

He argues that understanding how people react to occasional setbacks is important in contexts where failures do sometimes occur. I would suggest that teaching could be one such context; there will be tasks, situations and lessons where a teacher may consider they have 'failed' now and then, such is the variable nature of teaching, therefore understanding teachers' responses to efficacy doubts is important. The results of Hardy's study suggest that there is the possibility that short-term efficacy doubts could produce beneficial behaviours such as increased effort and persistence, as long as the individual has positive efficacy beliefs for the domain already. My own data also suggests that efficacy doubts may produce similar positive behaviours, and if Hardy's findings regarding this being the case for individuals with positive self-efficacy are valid, then it could be possible that the teachers who showed an **active** response to efficacy doubts had positive efficacy beliefs and those who showed a **passive** response had lower efficacy beliefs.

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Some research has focused on how teachers respond to changes to their practice and educational reforms and this could also have some relevance to the concept of **efficacy doubts**. Feldman (2000) compares the assimilation of new teaching methods (termed practical theories in his paper) with conceptual change in science, arguing that some practical theories take on paradigm status, shared by the community (of teachers), enduring and without easy modification.

'In some ways, they become the ethos of that community into which newcomers are indoctrinated.' (p 611)

Of particular relevance to understanding why **active** or **passive** action may be taken after efficacy doubt events is Feldman's analysis of how teachers accept a new teaching method (practical theory). Firstly, he argues that it is integral for the current practical theory to be viewed as problematic or ineffective, leading to a teacher becoming 'discontented' with it. He then draws on Posner's conceptual change model (1982, cited by Feldman, 2000) suggesting that teachers must find the new teaching method sensible, beneficial and enlightening (providing a new understanding) in addition to feeling discontented in order to embrace a new practical theory. The comments below by Jill and Sophie (both teachers for over 25 years) illustrate that because technology such as interactive whiteboards was seen as a beneficial tool for teaching more effectively they were embraced quickly, even though they were not confident using technology in the classroom initially.

'.....when we started doing whiteboards and I could barely at the time switch my computer on, say 7 or 8 years ago, that was a bit of a blow to your confidence. But I quickly saw that as a good tool. I introduced that quite quickly into my teaching.' (Jill, interview 1, lines 57-59)

'.....there's a lot of stuff that is done on the computer and because I'm extremely slow I take an inordinate amount of time doing it..... But it's swings and roundabouts because I'd say the resources that I can provide the students with now have definitely improved and it's improved my teaching.....' (Sophie, lines 68-74)

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Posner's model (1982, cited by Feldman, 2000) could be applied to my own findings in relation to efficacy doubts, suggesting that teachers who take a passive response to efficacy doubts (such as George) may not have viewed new practices as pragmatic, beneficial or enlightening compared to their current practices and therefore chose not to seek out change. This has implications for the professional development of teachers, as it suggests that when attempting to help teachers who are experiencing efficacy doubts when faced with new practices, it is important to ensure they see their current practice as ineffective and the new practice as pragmatic, beneficial and enlightening.

Gregoire (2003), puts forward a dual-process model to explain conceptual change in teachers (the acceptance of a new way of teaching) in which teacher efficacy beliefs play a pivotal role in the motivation aspect of the model. She suggests that when a teacher considers a change to their beliefs and practice that challenges their current beliefs they will feel some stress. This is associated with their appraisal of whether they have the resources to tackle the situation (stress appraisal). Gregoire's (2003) model states that efficacy beliefs can mediate how the stress appraisal is defined by the teacher. Teachers with positive efficacy beliefs about their ability to implement the change will perceive the change as challenging and will systematically process the change. In contrast, a teacher with low efficacy beliefs for their ability to implement the change will perceive the change as a threat and will attempt to avoid it. If Gregoire's model is applied to the concepts identified in my study, teachers that took an **active response** to efficacy doubts (seeking out new teaching methods) may therefore have positive efficacy beliefs about their abilities to implement the necessary changes to their teaching and those who took a **passive response** (waiting for ideas and strategies to come to them or taking no action) may have low efficacy beliefs about their abilities to implement the change. This suggests that efficacy doubts by themselves are not enough to influence teachers to change their practices. They must also have confidence that they will be able to implement the changes, even if they still need to learn how.

So, the findings of my study suggest that Wheatley's (2002) theory that efficacy doubts are important for teacher change may be valid, although the dichotomy of

teacher responses to such events suggested in the data analysis implies that efficacy doubts by themselves may not be enough for teacher change to occur. As such, the **passive** and **active** concepts identified in this study help to expand our understanding of teachers' responses to short-term efficacy doubts. If we incorporate aspects of models of teacher change (eg. Gregoire, 2003) and findings from research into responses to short-term failures (Hardy, 2014) with the concepts that emerged from the data analysis, the two types of responses that resulted from **efficacy doubts** may be due to variances in levels of teacher efficacy beliefs. Those who show **active responses** to efficacy doubts may have higher levels of teacher efficacy beliefs and perceptions that they can implement the necessary changes and those who show **passive responses** may have lower levels of teacher efficacy beliefs.

Considering that active responses may be more likely to result in beneficial behaviours and improvements to practice, this implies that it is no use trying to initiate change or reform in teachers' practices unless they already have fairly secure levels of efficacy beliefs. Efficacy doubts experienced by teachers who already have low perceptions of their own efficacy may be more likely to result in passive responses which are consequently less likely to bring about positive changes to practice. This theory would benefit from further exploration, combining quantitative measures of teacher efficacy beliefs (such as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) and interview methods, so as to determine to what extent levels of teacher efficacy beliefs do influence teachers' varying responses to short-term efficacy doubts.

5.4.2 CPD and the tick box culture

Many of the teachers interviewed had concerns about the value of continuing professional development (CPD) activities provided by the school. They expressed dissatisfaction with a **tick box culture** in which professional development was only offered in order to meet the changing demands of government and management priorities (**moving the goal posts**). In this way,

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professional development could be linked to the performativity culture discussed earlier in section 5.2.

'...lots of the CPD which we've had have been about this is what Ofsted are looking for, this is the best way to do it ..and not necessarily making me feel better about what I'm doing, but making me think I've got to modify what I'm doing. A really, really small example is that I put the aims up every lesson, but I'm now not allowed to put aims anymore, it has to be objectives.....which I think is just a little indication of those types of things.' (Suzy, interview 1, lines 68-74)

This notion of professional development in order to 'tick boxes' parallels the results of a survey of 2500 primary, secondary and special teachers in the UK (Hustler et al., 2003) in which teachers felt that they took part in CPD mainly because of national priorities and the school development plan rather than their own interests or needs. Interestingly, newly qualified teachers were less likely to report this pattern. This could suggest that they were less aware of national priorities and the school's development plan or that they genuinely were allowed to follow their own interests and needs when taking part in CPD. It would be useful to explore if the same pattern of responses occurred with teachers today.

The teachers I interviewed did not view professional development activities as useful for themselves as teachers, and the pedagogy they were asked to change as a result of it was carried out '*because they've been told to do it*' (Adrian, line 20). This appeared to result in reduced perceptions of **professionalism** and increased feelings of **powerlessness** as teachers were not committed to making changes to their practice, especially when they felt CPD had been arranged to 'tick a box' and therefore rushed or not thought through.

'....do people go away and think actually I'll change my practice because of that, because you've had a ten minute input on something. It's really difficult to feel fully engaged in that timescale. I think certain topics need more time to get people engaged and committed to that change.' (Dominic, lines 144-148)

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As discussed in section 5.2, the teachers' comments about professional development are indicative of a bureaucratic leadership style present in the school where teachers are told what to do and how to do it, perhaps illustrating the pressures that management felt to push through particular pedagogies.

'...at the end of the day...the person that sent that is obviously under pressure somewhere, or wants to tick a box.' (Gary, lines 37-38)

Evans (2014) argues that the multidimensional processes involved in the professional development of teachers have been ignored by researchers and practitioners in education, who tend to interpret professional development as observable from peoples' actions. Indeed, Evans note that interpretations of professional development are sometimes iterated to include the impact on student learning, an interpretation which she disagrees with. Evans's model divides the concept of professionalism into three areas: behavioural, attitudinal and intellectual, arguing that professional development occurs when these three dimensions are changed. She claims that school leaders tend to focus on changing teachers' behaviours when they should also focus on changing the cognitive dimensions of professionalism such as attitudes and intellectual development. For Evans, effective professional development will enable teachers to see that there is a 'better way' of doing things through developing these multiple dimensions of professionalism.

'The importance of winning over hearts and minds cannot be over-emphasised; teachers will seldom be fully engaged with and committed to 'new' or 'different' forms of practice – including ideas and ideologies– unless they perceive them as potential improvements (even if only partially) to existing practice....' (Evans, 2014, p195)

Evans (2014) recognises that behaviour change can be imposed upon individuals within an organisation by leaders, but without the associated attitudinal and intellectual changes necessary for professional development it will not be perceived as better practice by the individual. This aligns with Opfer and Pedder's (2011b) assertion that teacher learning is complex and that it must be

viewed as a complex system rather than just an event. Evans' theory is certainly relevant to my research findings in which teachers did not appear to see the value of the changes they were being asked to make to their practice by senior leaders. Their perceptions that CPD activities and changes to practice imposed by senior leaders were part of their agenda to 'tick the box' for Ofsted inspectors may have prevented the necessary attitudinal and intellectual change occurring. This has links with the discussion of teacher professionalism and the performativity culture (section 5.2), illustrating again how senior leaders were seen to cascade down policies and practices in a bureaucratic style due to pressures from 'higher structures' such as government and Ofsted. This finding supports Opfer and Pedder's (2011b) suggestion that context is an important influence upon teacher learning and highlights the impact of school culture and even a whole educational system's culture upon teacher development.

5.4.3 Reframing the use of lesson observations: From evaluation to reflection

As first discussed in section 5.3.3, interviews indicated that there appeared to be a contradiction between the *perceived* use of lesson observation and the *communicated* use. Teachers did not seem to believe that lesson observations were really a tool for management to help teachers improve their teaching as communicated by senior leaders, they believed they were used as a way of **measuring efficacy**. This belief was supported by the fact that lesson observations were used as part of the evidence for performance management procedures. O'Leary and Brooks (2014) reported similar findings in their mixed-method study of Further Education teachers' experiences of classroom observation, with teachers regarding observations '*as a mechanism for 'measuring' teacher performance*' (p536, emphasis in text), even though teachers believed the purpose should be as a professional development tool in order to improve their teaching. This contradiction between what teachers perceived lesson observations *should* be for and what they believed they are *actually* used for may explain why lesson observations seemed to cause anxiety in some of the teachers interviewed.

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The teachers interviewed believed that lesson observations were only **taking a snapshot** of their teaching, therefore not an accurate measure of their true teaching efficacy.

'...I think what was so stressful was wanting to show all the good work that I had done all year in that tiny space of time.....and actually being incorrectly judged for a whole career's worth of work from a 20 minute observation with one class.....' (Holly, lines 69-72)

The comment below highlights the idea of lesson observations as a 'window' into teaching. One lesson may not capture all the things a teacher is doing to be an effective or ineffective teacher. It may distort the true big picture.

'We all hit at that particular moment in time a pinnacle on that particular day. And that's what makes judgements so stupid. It's like looking at a bank statement. On this day you have £5,000 in your account and the person says you're a rich person.....but a few days later all your cheques come out. But they don't see that.....so it's like a window.' (Gary, lines 133-138)

Some teachers were concerned about being observed with their worst class (**the dreaded class**) in case it shows them up as a 'bad' teacher, again illustrating the fear surrounding lesson observations and their snapshot nature.

'...I worry about this class more than I've worried about a class for quite a while. It's not just about that, what if somebody wants to come and observe them, things like that' (Jill, lines 132-134)

Indeed, Lawson (2011) agrees that lesson observations have generally been used: *'in the form of 'one- off' events that capture the behaviour of teachers, trainee teachers and students at a moment in time'* (p317). Considering that teachers spend so much of their time in the classroom (typically 90% of a standard teacher's timetable), one lesson observation is always going to be a small sample of their teaching. Some lessons will be better than others, therefore one can

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never be certain that a lesson observation will represent what that teacher does most consistently on a daily basis. When used as a 'measure' of a teacher's effectiveness the validity of lesson observations could therefore be questioned. Indeed, research suggests that the snapshot nature of observations and the advanced notice given means they are not an effective way of identifying effective or ineffective teachers (O'Leary, 2011, cited by O'Leary, 2014). In addition, research investigating teacher educator feedback for a videoed student teacher lesson found surprising discrepancies between observers' evaluations, suggesting that even the same lesson may be interpreted very differently depending on the observer and their pedagogical biases (Sullivan et al., 2000).

The use of lesson observations by school management and Ofsted tends to be associated with a technicist approach, as lesson judgement criteria divides teaching into discrete skills in order to assess the relative effectiveness of teaching and to highlight where a teacher is doing well and needs to improve.

'The extreme part-learning stance is taken by some supporters of competency-based teacher education who believe that teaching can be atomised into hundreds of discrete mini-acts which can be systematically learned and appraised, and the extreme holist stance is adopted by those who contend that teaching is an art, and to seek to segment it, is to destroy it.' (Wragg, 2012, p128)

This technicist approach aligns with Ball's (2003) discussions of a performativity culture with teacher performance related to the achievement of particular competencies. O'Leary (2014) argues that conventional methods of lesson observation are linked to high-stakes performance management systems, creating a *'risk-averse culture of teacher learning'* (p136) rather than an open and reflective culture based on self-evaluation. To some extent there was evidence to support this. For example, teachers talked about teaching in a certain way to please the observer, therefore avoiding the risk of a poor lesson judgement by using particular pedagogies favoured by the observer.

'That's kind of where I am as a head of department thinking I'm going to tailor my lesson depending on who's coming to watch.' (Holly, lines 59-60)

'...what I did do 2 or 3 nights before was I did look on the internet at the Ofsted criteria....' (Jill, interview 2, lines 18-19)

On the other hand, there was evidence that peer observation schemes, not linked to teachers' performance management or other monitoring programmes in the school were encouraging teachers to trial new ideas and self-evaluate, offering some support for the notion that lesson observations outside of the accountability structures can support teacher development more effectively. Peer observations were seen as non-judgemental and referred to as a source for trying out new ideas in a safe environment and for gaining constructive feedback. They were not seen as an event that could threaten a teacher's efficacy beliefs, unlike lesson observations conducted by senior leaders.

'I think it's completely non-judgemental and you might try something in your lesson that you're not completely comfortable with, that may or may not work, but you want to try it and you want somebody else to give you advice on whether you did the right thing or whether you could have tweaked it. And that's been really valuable.' (Suzy, interview 1, lines 202-206)

Peer observations seemed to be regarded as a more genuine opportunity (compared to lesson observations by senior leaders) for teachers to reflect on and develop their practice. The time after the lesson in which teachers discussed the lesson together was where much value was placed; this is where teachers could have a **professional dialogue** about teaching and learning. But there was also evidence that the act of observing itself allowed teachers to reflect on their own teaching.

'It's not just the observing, it's having the communication with that teacher. Talking to them about their lesson planning or even their use of IT in the lesson. That powerpoint was really interesting, and how have you managed to always include extension tasks?...and getting advice. Literally, these are my learning objectives can you give me some advice as how you would to do it if it was your lesson?' (Louise, lines 69-74)

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'I find everyone time you observe someone it makes me reflect on my own practice.... I find I have the time to think about what they're doing well and what they need to develop. That helps me in my judgement of what would I have been doing and how I need to develop. So I see it as a two-way thing. I learn so much from observing other people...even when it's going really wrong. How people cope with pressure and this helps me deal with a situation differently. Because I think I don't really have time to reflect unless I'm observing someone.' (Annie, lines 176-184)

O'Leary (2014) also reports that the feedback stage of the classroom observation process is regarded as important by teachers. He places emphasis upon the co-construction of knowledge about teaching and learning between the observer and the observee, arguing that a dialogic approach allows meanings to be negotiated and understanding to be enhanced. This 'working with' approach is in direct contrast to a 'working on' approach in which the observer is presumed to hold all knowledge and to impart this onto the observee. Louise's comments above (*'Talking to them about their lesson planning.....getting advice'*) indicate that Louise takes a dialogic approach when partaking in peer observations. This dialogic feedback model has some parallels with coaching, in which the coachee is believed to hold solutions and the coach guides them in the process of analysing what solutions to take. The importance of dialogic feedback aligns with the findings of Tschannen-Moran and McMaster's (2009) quasi-experimental study of professional development formats, which reported that coaching was more effective than other less dialogic techniques for improving teachers' confidence for implementing new strategies. Considering the importance placed on lesson feedback by the teachers interviewed (regardless of whether it was from senior leaders or peers), further research investigating effective lesson feedback practices for teachers may be important in order to ensure that they are productive rather than destructive.

Lesson study, a type of professional development activity that has peer collaboration and reflection at its heart could have the potential to harness the

benefits of peer observation recognised by the teachers in this study and change the way that teachers perceive lesson observations. In fact, some of the teachers interviewed were taking part in a voluntary peer observation model that although wasn't labelled as lesson study, followed some of the principles. In small groups of four they decided a focus, researched and discussed ideas to address the focus, planned a lesson together, arranged for one teacher to observe the lesson and then reflected on the lesson together. Knowledge gained from the professional dialogue about the lesson was then used by the members of the group in their own teaching. Much of the positive comments about peer observation quoted earlier came from teachers who had participated in this scheme within the school, therefore there is some evidence to support the notion that a professional development format such as lesson study could be beneficial in encouraging teachers to engage in professional dialogue and reflect. The findings seem to support recent research of lesson study in the UK (Cajkler et al., 2014; Dudley, 2013; Norwich and Ylonen, 2013) suggesting that lesson study can improve teachers' pedagogic knowledge, encourage innovation and risk-taking and engage teachers in deeper professional dialogue. However, as this study did not specifically set out to investigate peer observation models the support for lesson study can only be tentative, as further data is needed in order to fully saturate the codes and concepts surrounding peer observation. More research is needed in order to ascertain the exact benefits of lesson study in English schools.

On the other hand, despite the generally positive comments by teachers about the benefits of peer observation (and working collaboratively with colleagues in general) it was felt that this type of professional development was not valued by senior leaders due to the lack of time given to teachers to take part in such activities.

'But the difficulty is the time issue that we're not given enough time after school to meet up and we're not given time in school to take these observations. I think it could be even more effective than it is. At the moment it's relying on a lot of goodwill.' (Suzy, lines 209-212)

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Making time for collaborative professional development such as lesson study has been acknowledged as a problem by Cajkler et al. (2014) and Dudley (2013) who suggests that school leaders may be put off using lesson study due to the disruption they perceive it would cause to the timetable and teacher cover system. There is also the issue of the culture shift necessary for lesson study to be successful in England. Such professional development models rely on school cultures where teachers trust each other, feel they can take risks and appreciate the benefits of using their time to collaborate and reflect on teaching and learning. O'Leary (2014) argues that the accountability regime may have made it difficult for teachers to forget about evaluating each other and to focus on reflection.

'As a teacher it can be difficult to watch somebody else teach and not to form opinions about the effectiveness of the performance; it seems to happen almost instinctively.....it has become deeply embedded in the psyche of teachers as an evaluation tool. Encouraging teachers to detach evaluation from observation requires a significant cultural shift on an individual, institutional and collective level across the profession.' (O'Leary, 2014, p121)

However, the teachers in my study did seem able to focus on reflection when observing lessons outside of the performance management system, therefore it is possible that O'Leary's concerns are unfounded.

Perhaps the key for professional development models such as lesson study to be successful is trust.

'When school professionals trust one another and sense support from parents, they feel safe to experiment with new practices.....Talking honestly with colleagues about what's working and what's not means exposing your own ignorance and making yourself vulnerable. Without trust, genuine conversations of this sort remain unlikely.' (Bryk and Schneider, 2003, p43)

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The comments that Suzy made about taking risks in her lessons when working with colleagues in the peer observation scheme are an indication of the inherent trust between colleagues: *'you might try something in your lesson that you're not completely comfortable with, that may or may not work, but you want to try it and you want somebody else to give you advice...'* (Suzy, lines 202-204). I would argue that trust is an important concept for schools to consider if they really want teachers to move on with their teaching and to genuinely reflect on their practice. Bloemeke and Klein (2013) found that teacher quality in 221 beginning mathematics teachers in Germany was related to a climate of trust and autonomy. However, as discussed in section 5.2, the 'performativity' culture (Ball, 2003) that seems to have permeated English schools tends to reduce professional autonomy and trust, therefore a significant shift in government policy may be needed in order to create the school cultures necessary for collaborative professional development such as lesson study to be as successful as they have been in other countries like Japan. Even without such a shift from government, there is certainly potential for school leaders to consider how they can foster a cooperative school ethos where teachers can take risks and have protected time to reflect on teaching and learning together.

5.5 Limitations and reflections

Although I used grounded theory methods I cannot claim that this study is a perfect example of grounded theory. Within the time constraints of an EdD programme I was unable to fully saturate the categories and concepts that emerged from the data. Further theoretical sampling would have enabled me to explore the basis of the concepts in more detail and to gain a clearer understanding of the key properties and conditions. In particular, concepts such as **feeling in equilibrium** and **copng with transitions** would benefit from further teacher interviews and analysis so that I could explain for example how experienced teachers cope with moving schools compared to less experienced teachers. The key here is the method of constant comparison of data used in grounded theory to fill gaps in the understanding of a concept or category.

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Through further theoretical sampling with new participants or repeated interviews with existing participants I would be able to fully describe and explain the properties and dimensions of all the categories and concepts.

Corbin (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) suggests that good quality grounded theory must be logical, have depth, variation, creativity and show evidence of memos. Through the detailed explanation of the codes and concepts in chapter 4 and chapter 5 I hope that I have been able to illustrate how analytic memos, intermediate and advanced coding stages helped to develop the theory in its current form, despite not being fully saturated in all areas. In addition, the presentation of some new concepts and ideas such as **coping with transitions** and **feeling in equilibrium**, along with their suggested relationship with existing theories illustrates how new understandings have been developed.

According to Corbin's criteria (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), good quality grounded theory must 'fit' and have 'applicability'. The idea that a grounded theory should be useful and understandable to the professionals working in that area is common criteria for all evaluation schemes (eg. Charmaz, 2006; Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and Corbin also suggests that applicability means that knowledge is added and can be used to change practice. As a professional who works within the area that is the focus of this grounded theory I would hope that the categories and concepts do make sense to other professionals working in school education. However, the true test of this would be to disseminate the findings to such professionals in order to review their responses and reflections.

As I have taken a constructivist approach to this grounded theory I think it is important to reflect on how my experiences, knowledge and beliefs may have influenced the research. As a teacher in the same school as the participants I shared many experiences with them, and therefore the questions I asked in the interviews, the interpretations of their comments and the analysis itself may have been affected by this commonality. Indeed, Corbin and Strauss (2008) state:

'When we share a common culture with our research participants.....we as researchers, often have life experiences that are similar to those of our participants. It makes sense, then, to draw upon those experiences to obtain

insight into what our participants are describing.' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p80)

Although I can't know exactly what participants are experiencing, having some level of understanding gave me a repertoire of potential topics to discuss with the participants. In fact, my own experiences as an Advanced Skills Teacher led me to be interested in researching the topic of teacher efficacy beliefs, as I saw such a variance in teacher's confidence.

Having some rapport with the participants already helped to make participants feel comfortable and talk openly. A researcher from the 'outside' may have had to spend more time developing rapport in the interview in order to gain genuine insight into participants' experiences. On the other hand, my closeness to the participants' experiences could have led me to pursue certain areas of enquiry in the interviews that I perceived were relevant but were not actually relevant for the participants themselves. To some extent, the grounded theory method helped to ensure that this did not happen, as the process of theoretical sampling focused me on the emerging themes arising from the initial coding of the data to inform my next interviews. However, from a constructivist viewpoint, the researcher's role does not have to be completely neutral. Charmaz (2006) argues that the researcher's interaction with the data is integral to grounded theory:

'Your grounded theory journey relies on interaction – emanating from your worldview, standpoints, and situations, arising in the research sites, developing between you and your data, emerging with your ideas, then returning back to the field.....To interact at all, we make sense of our situations, appraise what occurs in them, and draw on language and culture to create meanings and frame actions. In short, interaction is interpretative.' (Charmaz, 2006, p179)

From this perspective then, my interpretations of the data, whether affected or not by my experiences and beliefs are a valid and necessary part of the grounded theory process.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and implications

In this chapter I present a summary of the key conclusions and implications for policymakers and practitioners. These conclusions are directly related to the discussion of the findings and literature presented in chapter 5.

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 Teacher motivation

In her paper regarding the relationship between leadership orientation and professionalism, Tschannen-Moran (2009) suggests that further research is required to answer the following question:

‘To what extent is greater professionalism related to the motivation of teachers and their self-efficacy beliefs?’ (p243)

I believe that this study has helped to partly answer this question, finding that the reduced professional autonomy and trust inherent in a school system where standards and accountability are held high, can serve to negatively influence teacher efficacy beliefs and lead to a lack of empowerment. In addition, there was evidence that this ‘performativity’ culture as described by Ball (2003), in which teachers are held accountable for their performance and frequently judged through lesson observations and their achievement of data targets served to influence teachers’ motivation. Many teachers **aspired for the gold standard**, aiming to achieve the ‘outstanding’ badge of honour for their lessons. Although this could be viewed as a positive influence on motivation, encouraging determination and effort to achieve the highest standards, there was evidence that this judgemental atmosphere may cause some teachers to hold performance goal orientations. As such, teachers may be motivated by competition and **proving their efficacy** to others, rather than truly developing their skills. School leaders should therefore take care to communicate their values in order to encourage a culture where teachers are motivated by a desire to improve their skills for their own self-development rather than to outperform others. I did not set out to answer Tschannen-Moran’s question specifically at the outset of the

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research, but the grounded theory method used enabled me to follow the themes that arose in the data, and the issue of professionalism in a climate of accountability appeared important in the discourse of the teachers involved in this study.

6.1.2 Coping with transitions

Some interesting and perhaps novel concepts arose which may contribute to knowledge in the area of teacher efficacy beliefs. In particular, the concept of **coping with transitions** highlights that differing school structures when changing jobs, can lead to dips in a teacher's efficacy beliefs, particularly if the contrasts between school practices and policies are significant. The findings suggest that the way that a school inducts teachers into the school may improve the possible threats that moving schools could potentially have on efficacy beliefs. Therefore, planning a useful and comprehensive induction programme may be beneficial in order to help teachers cope with the demands of changing their practices and 'rhythms' when they move school. Further research is needed to explore the impact that moving schools has on teacher efficacy beliefs. Is there less impact on teacher efficacy beliefs for less experienced teachers who may have not built up such a bank of resources and practised 'rhythms' in their teaching? What types of induction programme are most beneficial for ensuring that efficacy beliefs are strengthened when teachers join a new school? There appears to be a gap in the literature and therefore there is potential for our understanding of teacher efficacy beliefs to be enhanced by studying such events in greater detail.

6.1.3 Sources of efficacy beliefs

To some extent the validity of Bandura's (1997) four sources of efficacy beliefs were upheld by the categories, codes and concepts discussed in the analysis, although his emphasis upon the importance of enactive mastery experiences was not supported by the data. Analysis of the interviews suggested that verbal

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persuasion was a powerful source, appearing to help to confirm or disprove teachers' own perceptions of their effectiveness. This contrasts with previous research indicating that verbal persuasion is not a significant source of efficacy beliefs for experienced teachers (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). In particular, the influence of lesson observation feedback was salient for teachers and it is argued that they provide an opportunity for mastery experiences (teachers' own evaluation of the lesson success), vicarious experiences (comparing one's performance to colleagues, particularly the lesson judgement) and verbal persuasion (feedback from the observer) to come together in one event, with verbal persuasion tending to override the other sources. Attention needs to be paid to the way in which feedback is given to teachers and the person providing the feedback as credibility did appear to impact on how influential the verbal persuasion was upon teacher efficacy beliefs.

6.1.4 Reframing lesson observations

Lesson observations in general were a key discussion point for many of the teachers interviewed with tensions between their perceived use and communicated use. This is an important topic for teachers in England, with the increasing use of lesson observations as a means of accountability seemingly contradicting teachers' preferred use as a means of professional development. O'Leary (2014) argues that:

'...the central role that observation has to play in the professional practice of teachers seems incontestable. Where the contestations start to emerge, however, is in relation to the stated aims and the way in which the process of observation is operationalised.' (p42)

Peer observation schemes however, provided an opportunity for teachers to work together in a more collegial way, encouraging them to take risks and to engage in non-judgemental professional dialogue. It is suggested that lesson study, a professional development format more common in the Far East may provide an opportunity for schools and teachers to reframe lesson observations from a means of accountability into a more effective way of engaging teachers in

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reflective professional learning, especially in the light of recent lesson study research in the UK (Cajkler et al., 2014; Dudley, 2013). Such professional development formats may improve teachers' sense of autonomy about their own development, avoiding the sense that they are taking part in CPD in order to meet external agendas. Due to the required time and practical requirements necessary for lesson study to work, school leaders would need to evaluate their structures and culture for such practices to be most effective. There is potential for such changes to be considered by the increasing number of Teaching Schools, as they start to take the lead in providing professional development for teachers in England.

6.1.5 Feeling in equilibrium

The concept of **feeling in equilibrium**, when teachers share values and aims, may contribute to knowledge in the field of teacher efficacy beliefs as a possible emotional state that appears to create **momentum**; encouraging teachers to think positively, work hard and collaborate more effectively. Thus, it also has relevance when considering the conditions and climate necessary for collaborative professional development. It is suggested that **feeling in equilibrium** could act as a *precursor* for positive teacher efficacy beliefs; individual and collective. As such the study provides a tentative theory for the influence of an emotional state upon teacher efficacy beliefs, an area of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy sources that has received very little attention in the teacher efficacy belief literature. If the concept is seen as a part of Hargreaves and Shirley's (2012) notions of 'social capital' (cooperation and trust based on implicit shared values), contributing to increased 'human capital' (an individual's abilities) and overall 'professional capital' (the complete assets of teachers that are '*developed, invested, accumulated, and circulated*' (p49) in successful fourth way educational systems), then understanding such emotional states in more detail may help teacher efficacy belief researchers to explain how teacher efficacy beliefs contribute to more effective teachers and schools.

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6.1.6 *The relevance of efficacy doubts*

School leaders' approaches to professional development may also need to be evaluated in the light of the study's findings regarding teachers differing responses to short-term **efficacy doubts**, such as concerns about one's ability to use a new teaching technique. In contrast to much of the teacher efficacy belief literature asserting the importance of increasing efficacy beliefs to produce gains in performance (eg. Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998), this study found some evidence to support Wheatley's (2002) theory that efficacy doubts may serve to motivate teachers to improve their practice. However, this was not seen in all teachers and it was suggested that teachers with already higher levels of teacher efficacy beliefs may be more likely to respond productively to short term doubts about their abilities. Further research is needed to fully explore the effects of short-term efficacy doubts on teachers' behaviours and performance and to find out how this may be moderated by existing perceptions of efficacy. This may help school leaders to understand the impact of introducing new initiatives and providing feedback to teacher upon their consequent behaviours, so that performance can be enhanced rather than diminished.

6.1.7 *Accountability and context*

Since the interview data was collected, Ofsted have changed their practices regarding lesson observations. In a recent document clarifying Ofsted's requirements for schools undertaking inspection Ofsted state that:

'Ofsted does not award a grade for the quality of teaching for any individual lessons visited and it does not grade individual lessons. It does not expect schools to use the Ofsted evaluation schedule to grade teaching or individual lessons.' (Ofsted, 2014a, p1)

Mike Cladingbowl, Ofsted's National Director for schools raises concerns about *'ineffective and unnecessary lesson observation'* in schools caused by school leaders' narrow visions of what effective teaching should look like (Ofsted, 2014b, p2). Cladingbowl accepts that Ofsted probably has a role to play in the

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creation of these views and practices, *'I won't pretend that some of this is not the result of Ofsted inspection'* (p2). Cladingbowl argues that it is important for inspectors to see teaching when they visit, but that evaluation of teaching must include a wide range of other evidence too such as students' work and student and parent views. He goes on to suggest that Ofsted inspections should not be used as justification for particular lesson planning or observation methods in schools.

'..teachers and schools should be allowed to teach as they see fit. After all, they know what works for them and what works for their children.....they should be able to exercise their craft without due intervention'. (Ofsted, 2014b, p2)

After a successful trial of no judgement lesson observations in the summer term of 2014, the policy was implemented across all school inspections from September 2014. As yet, the impact on schools of this change in direction by Ofsted is difficult to ascertain but a recent article in the Times Educational Supplement, suggests that the majority of school leaders are still grading individual lessons (Exley, 2014b). Indeed, in my current work for the Local Education Authority I frequently see that schools are using their own versions of Ofsted judgements to evaluate lessons. More time is needed to see if the policy does change the way that school leaders evaluate teachers and individual lessons and to assess the impact upon teachers' evaluations of their own efficacy.

The implications of this change in Ofsted policy ie. that teachers should not teach in a particular way because of Ofsted inspections and that school leaders should evaluate teaching in the way they feel is most appropriate appears naïve. Teachers have been used to a culture in which they are judged and held accountable, and school leaders are under increasing pressure to improve student outcomes and teaching quality. Making judgements about teacher effectiveness from lesson observations is now seen as a valid method of 'measuring' the quality of teaching in schools by school leaders. Would school leaders be able to judge the quality of their teachers without adhering to the types of methods that have been advocated by Ofsted and government policies in

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the accountability regime? Have they become over reliant on the structure enforced on them by Ofsted? It would seem that countries such as Finland that have taken a 'fourth way' approach to teaching and learning have managed to achieve high student outcomes, teacher quality and public trust in schools without the reliance on externally enforced standards and accountability systems. Instead, their education system trusts schools to self-correct whilst providing non-judgemental support (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2012).

This study highlights in many ways the important influence of context on teacher efficacy beliefs and the professional lives of teachers. In particular, the context beyond the individual school needs to be appreciated and considered. The study has shown that a 'performativity' culture (Ball, 2003), which has its origins in government policy and is cascaded into individual schools, may have significant effects upon teachers' experiences and confidence. Gewirtz (1997) discusses the tendency for school effectiveness research to ignore the influence of macro-structures such as government policies and to focus on micro-structures within the school as the 'cause' of school success or failure.

'..any adequate understanding of teachers' work necessarily involves a serious consideration of the immediate school environment and the wider contexts within which schools are located.' (Gewirtz, 1997, p219)

Indeed, although widely accepted models of teacher efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) and more recent models (Adams and Forsyth, 2006) do include the consideration of school context as an influence upon teacher efficacy beliefs, such models tend to focus on the micro-structures of individual schools rather than the macro-structures of educational policy. This study suggests that a wider consideration of context needs to be appreciated as an influence upon teacher efficacy beliefs, as government policies have a profound effect upon the micro-structures present in schools.

McCulloch, Helsby and Knight (2000) highlight that teacher professionalism was threatened in the 1990s by the National Curriculum, the increasing power of senior managers and market initiatives such as encouraging competition between schools and the devolvement of Local Education Authorities (LEA). Such

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policy initiatives have been taken to deeper levels in recent years with the widespread conversion of many maintained schools into academies and the introduction of Teaching Schools that are expected to have increasing responsibility for school-to-school support and professional development opportunities for teachers; effectively reducing the influence of the LEA. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) comment that '*...the spread of academies is weakening local authorities to the extent that many can no longer run their school improvement and support services.*' (p2). Such developments are in complete contrast to Finland's 'fourth way' approach to education in which local municipalities are integral to public education; responsible for allocating school budgets, designing local curriculum, appointing school principals and involved in self-evaluation (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2012). The local municipalities and schools work in collaboration, determining their own objectives rather than these being directed by national government.

Sahlberg (2011) argues that Finland has managed to resist what he calls the Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM), in which many countries have focused on curriculum development, assessment, technology-assisted teaching and learning and the achievement of numeracy and literacy targets; a standards-based educational system where schools and teachers are held accountable for student outcomes and competition is assumed to produce higher quality education. The Finnish 'fourth way' philosophy of education has contributed to an extremely successful educational system where teacher quality and student achievement excel and there is an inherent trust in teachers and schools (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2012). Indeed, other successful educational systems such as Singapore also exhibit features of the 'fourth way' (Hargreaves, 2012). It would be useful to investigate teacher efficacy beliefs (through qualitative interviews and quantitative measures) in countries such as Finland and Singapore, in order to explore how the conditions created by these educational systems influence teacher efficacy beliefs. The findings could be compared to countries with different educational philosophies such as the UK and US and help to develop a richer understanding of the influence of context upon teacher efficacy beliefs.

6.2 Summary of implications

The findings of this research lead to a number of implications for practitioners and policymakers summarised below.

- The importance of a culture of trust rather than accountability is emphasised in order to improve professional autonomy and teacher efficacy beliefs. Countries such as Finland where ‘fourth way’ principles are in action, are indicative of the improved professionalism possible where teachers are valued and trusted in a collaborative school culture.
- School leaders and policy makers should take care to communicate their values in order to encourage a culture where teachers are motivated by a desire to improve their skills for their own self-development rather than to outperform others.
- Teacher efficacy beliefs appear to be strongly influenced by verbal persuasion of school leaders, particularly in the context of lesson observations. Again, school leaders should evaluate how feedback is communicated and the appropriateness of comparative judgements in this feedback.
- Collaborative professional development formats such as lesson study are suggested as an example of CPD that engages teachers in reflective professional dialogue and deeper pedagogical improvements. This is in contrast to CPD arranged to meet external agendas.
- Moving schools could cause a dip in teacher efficacy beliefs. School leaders should take care to plan appropriate induction programmes to support teachers making such a transition.

My interest in teacher efficacy beliefs began with a desire to find out what influenced the confidence of teachers and to understand how this knowledge might be applied by schools and policymakers to enhance teacher performance. Although I was a teacher at Leaford School at the time the data was collected for this thesis and therefore directly aware of the influence of government policies upon schools and teachers, I did not expect for the notion of a ‘performativity’

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culture (Ball, 2003) to figure so significantly in the professional lives of the teachers I interviewed. By carrying out this study using grounded theory methods I was able to analyse the interview data systematically and follow up on codes, concepts and categories that emerged as the data collection progressed. This helped me to recognise the varied factors influencing teacher efficacy beliefs without being restrained by existing theories or models and to gain insight into other areas of teachers' professional lives connected to teacher efficacy beliefs such as teacher motivation and teacher development.

I hope that the conclusions and implications presented in this thesis will help school leaders and policymakers to reflect on the climate of accountability that is present in many schools in England today and think about to what extent it influences teachers' thoughts and practices. Professional trust seems to be integral to teachers feeling happy and confident in the work they do, but trusting teachers to be professionals rather than monitoring them doesn't mean that we are leaving teacher performance and student achievement to chance. Examples such as Finland show how such professional trust can lead to outstanding educational outcomes for all. It is perhaps now time for English government to loosen its reins on schools and teachers and allow them to achieve their potential.

Appendix 1: Initial survey

I am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Education at the University of East Anglia researching teachers' views of themselves as a teacher and experiences of professional development. I would be very grateful if you could complete this short 5 minute survey. Your responses are completely anonymous and will only be viewed by me. If you would like to volunteer to be interviewed for the research please leave your name at the end.

Many thanks

Rachel Minett

For the purposes of this short survey, professional development activities include whole school INSET sessions and smaller workshops, courses you have been to out of school, G20 group, teaching and learning group, coaching, mentoring, feedback from lesson observations or any other forms of professional development you have taken part in when working at another school.

1. Please rank the following forms of professional development activity from most to least useful. 1 = most useful. If you have not taken part in an activity please do not rank it.

Whole school INSET in the hall	
Smaller group workshops with some degree of choice over the workshops	
Smaller group workshops with no choice of workshop	
Good to Outstanding group	
Teaching and Learning group	
Being mentored (eg as an NQT or ITT)	
Courses out of school	
Feedback from lesson observations	

Appendix 1

2. Please tell me about a professional development activity you have found particularly useful and why.
3. Please tell me about a professional development activity you have found less useful and why.
4. To what extent do you think professional development activities influence your confidence in your teaching skills?

To a great extent

To some extent

They don't affect my confidence at all

5. Which of these aspects do you value the most when taking part in professional development activities?

Discussing with other teachers and colleagues

Opportunities to try out ideas in your own classroom

Long-term CPD (ie activities that last for longer than one session)

Opportunities to observe other teachers

CPD tailored to your individual needs

Choice of workshops

Working with colleagues outside of your department

Working with colleagues in the same department

Other (please add)

If you would be happy to be interviewed as part of my research please leave your name here.

Appendix 2: Semi-structured interview schedule examples

Initial semi-structured interview schedule

Questions about professional development

What are the first 3 words that come into your head if I mention INSET?

Please can you describe a particularly successful INSET day?

Why did you feel that was a successful INSET?

Please can you describe an INSET day you feel was particularly unsuccessful?

Why did you feel that was an unsuccessful INSET?

Can you tell me about your experiences of the G20 group? *

Why did you decide to take part in the G20 group? *

What impact do out of school courses have on your teaching?

What advice would you give to teachers who plan INSET/professional development activities?

Questions about teacher efficacy

Can you give me 3 words that describe you as a teacher?

How confident do you feel as a teacher?

How often do you feel confident about your teaching?

Can you tell me about a time you felt particularly confident in the classroom?

How do you think your teaching has an impact on the students' you teach?

To what extent do you have control over how you teach?

Do other people have an impact on your confidence as a teacher? (if yes, can they give an example?)

(NQTs) Can you describe the type of teacher you hope to be in five years time?

What do you think are the factors/people that have most affected your confidence as a teacher?

Is there anything else you would like to ask me or tell me?

** for participants who have taken part in this activity*

Appendix 2

Example of an interview schedule created after analysis of some previous interviews/ theoretical sampling

MOVING THE GOAL POSTS

Where do you feel pressures come from as a teacher? (internal/external?) How do you deal with these pressures?

Jill – how has your positive Ofsted experience affected you?

CRISIS POINT

Have you ever doubted your abilities as a teacher? Why? How did you deal with this? – links to Wheatley research.

(for more experienced teachers) Can you think of a time when you felt a turning point in your teaching? – extra probe could be - perhaps from confident to less confident or the other way around? Alternative wording” Have you felt a ‘crisis point’ in your career? – how was this resolved?

Does being graded for an observation affect you in any way?

What do you think makes a good teacher? How do you know this?

COLLABORATION

This year you have been working with your own/similar departments more frequently during CPD. Tell me about your experiences of this?

Have you ever been part of a team creating resources to be used by your own department/others? Did this affect your perceptions of your own teaching skills?

How do others in your department affect your teaching practice?

How does the group you are working with during INSET affect your experience of CPD? – probe in order to investigate how collective efficacy beliefs might impact individual efficacy beliefs.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE/PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

What influences how you teach? – (if necessary prompt with: external forces, own philosophy, training etc).

When you have observed another teacher, have you ever seen good practice that you have then tried for yourself? How did this go?

Have you ever chosen not to replicate good practice you have seen – why?

Appendix 2

(if they have been a mentor) How has being a mentor impacted upon your own teaching?

(for teachers with responsibility) Do you think your position of responsibility changes your teaching practice?

How do you think other teachers perceive you as a teacher? How does this affect you practice?

INSPIRED BY EXPERTS

When you have observed another teacher, have you ever seen good practice that you have then tried for yourself? How did this go?

Have you ever chosen not to replicate good practice you have seen – why?

For those that have been mentored – How has your mentor (now or in the past) impacted on your confidence as a teacher? How did mentoring affect you teaching practice?

(for teachers in a small department) How do you access resources to improve your practice? – (do they feel isolated/less professional dialogue?)

Harriet – Why do you find targets from mentor/observations useful? How does this impact your confidence as a teacher?

Jill – You mentioned in the earlier interview that languages conferences have boosted your confidence, mentioning the opportunity to see experts and network. How has attending these conferences impacted on your teaching or feelings about yourself as a teacher?

Other questions probing teacher efficacy beliefs

Can you tell me about a time you have felt valued as a teacher?

Can you describe an experience that has really motivated you as a teacher to improve your practice?

For second year teachers. Can you describe how your perceptions of your teaching skills has changed over the last two years? What events/experiences have impacted upon these perceptions?

Appendix 3: Transcript example

Sophie – Head of art department. Second stage participant

Has there ever been an event that has made you feel confident in your abilities as a teacher?

When we've done CPD things and people start talking about particular issues and you've given your opinion and you think well actually that's something that I've been doing for a long time and it's been reinforced. There have been things like that...and then people have said oh Sophie why don't you lead one...which is quite nice but I never see myself as being someone who's that knowledgeable particularly. But my practice I probably am but I just don't think of it myself. It's reinforced when you're in the wider world of other teachers and you're made aware.....and you think well actually I thought everybody knew that and it becomes apparent that not everybody does. I can't name an event but I think in general training terms.

You're part of a small department. Does that affect you in any way? You say you don't think of yourself like that, but other people say that.

I think that if you're dealing with English or languages or maths and you're having lots of staff that you're constantly dealing with, instructing maybe this is how we need to do things that you're getting a bit more feedback from other members of staff that you work with, whereas in a small department if you do happen to agree on things anyway you're not getting conflicting views, we need to do this and we just do it! So, there's no question about it at all so in a funny sort of way you wonder well, is that what's going on everywhere else? You've not had that experience of somebody not agreeing with what you say.

What are your experiences of CPD?

It's a mixed bag really. I sometimes feel that because of the nature of the subjects I'm involved with, drama, music, that sometimes if you've got other people coming in, members of staff attached to different department, well we didn't have anyone attached to us. Now I don't know whether that was because they didn't have anybody that could come or whatever but in the end we were sort of a group in the hall talking about things amongst ourselves because we just decided to help each other out. We didn't have an outside person there to see it from a slightly different angle, we were still doing it from our own viewpoint and I sort of felt that we could have done with somebody there but because we are art, music and drama, do you have an art, music drama teacher for the group? That would have been 3 different people, so if you were going to pick on somebody to come and give their viewpoint it still might not have been really subject specific. So I suppose we tend to be quite a tricky area and I do find that generally and it's not just in this school, it's across the board, you are sometimes dealt with in a way that.....I'm not quite sure how to deal with those we'll just sort of palm them off a little bit because of the nature of what you do...and perhaps you're working practices are a little bit different to other people. I find that a

little bit frustrating.....and when you have films about good examples of.....it's always classroom based where they're doing activities that are not related to the way I would normally teach. I would love the opportunity to actually see that from a real subject specific point of view.

Is there anything that has made you feel less confident in your abilities?

I wouldn't say I'm always confident, I'm always questioning and thinking about it and then actually have to take stock it.....what does that actually mean? When I realise what they actually mean by it...but I'm actually doing it. Sometimes there's a lot of buzz words and the way people describe things.....and sometimes you're doing what they say you're doing but you didn't know they meant that in the first instance. I think over the years the words for different things have changed, the concepts, and people describe them in different ways. Sometimes you're thinking...what's that...oh I know what that means.....you know language for learning.....and it's been different things in the past. So I think sometimes. I think that particularly people in more senior positions use all the correct terminology but sometimes it's presented in such a way that it makes it sound so academic that you begin to think.....hm.....am I doing the right thing?

You've been in teaching a long time. Have you noticed any changes that make things difficult for you as a teacher?

Well obviously for me it's simple things like how technology has progressed because I'm from a background that's not computer literate in the first instance so everything is really.....I've had to come up to scratch as quickly as possible. It's just becoming more literate with those sorts of things....trying to do general powerpoints and bits and pieces. I now do them quite happily but you know, 10 years ago I wouldn't even have been doing that. But because the schools have moved on and say we all need to be doing this, I have had to follow that lead so that's helped me and it's improved that's for certain. And it's improved things that I do.....but then equally there's a lot of stuff that is done on the computer and because I'm extremely slow I take an inordinate amount of time doing it. Whereas if I was to write it on a piece of paper and pass things on I would be much more efficient personally...because I'm much quicker doing it that way. But it's swings and roundabouts because I'd say the resources that I can provide the students with now have definitely improved and it's improved my teaching.....but other aspects to do with admin and general day to day things very often it holds me back a bit.

Does that affect your confidence at all or is it just an annoying thing?

An annoying thing.

How do observations affect you?

I always, no matter what is said, I always take what is said and think well maybe I could improve but I think in general the things that have been said have been very positive. I've never really had a bad observation so that does help. But when you get an observation and you get consistently good with outstanding features and you think what do I need to do to get to that next step, but nobody can

actually tell you or show you but they can say what you're not.....that can be quite tricky because I'm not really sure. But I've been courses since and I've been on one recently outside of school and it has highlighted certain things but it's nothing I didn't already know. I just don't know how you could do what they're asking every single lesson to be outstanding. You could probably produce that..... but I think there are things in place I think I could probably do that in order to illustrate a point. I'm a little bit more aware of that now but I think in the past some of the observations I've had have been slightly contradictory. It's saying good with outstanding features but then not really being able to say the specifics. Maybe one person will say you need to do this slightly more and another will say you need to do this slightly more...the other person said that was perfectly fine. I know it can vary from lesson to lesson but it's.....I don't think people in more senior positions know how to move the practical lessons forward for outstanding. Not really.

You say that the feedback can be contradictory. Does that affect the way you feel or behave?

No, because I just do it the same anyway.

You don't feel demoralised?

No, because the feedback I get from the students and because the results you get are good I don't then think, oh, I'm doing something wrong, I need to improve upon this. I think because, oh, they've got good results so therefore we are obviously doing the right things but perhaps we could be even better....then that's when I think well what could we do to get even more students getting better grades. There are things you try and put in place but even so, it varies from year group to year group. What works one year doesn't necessarily work for the other.

Has there ever been anyone that has really inspired you as a teacher?

Apart from...I've seen.....in my previous school I had a head of area, who was a drama teacher, who was particularly enthusiastic and always extremely positive. I think when you're working in a team of people and that person is always really positive that it makes the rest of the team even more positive and inspired to do things. I think when I came to this school and we were still a bigger area it was quite nice to have that sort of backup in a way. Whereas now they've done away with that and now you're in a small little thing....you think it's quite nice to be part of that bigger group and have somebody who's in charge of you but enthusiastic and wanting the whole area to do well. So I would say there was but....very rare.

You've been here quite a long time. How do colleague relationships impact on you?

Erm....I think that would. From a personal point of view....I'm the sort of person that thrives on a bit of company, being able to talk about things. Just generally saying it how it is and chewing the fat a bit. So I think for me it is important but I'm not sure that it is for everyone. The fact I work in a small department. I get on

very well with Laura and we have the same approach and we obviously make jokes about things, have a laugh about bits and pieces that are going on, slag off a few people and then laugh about it behind closed doors (laughs). But in the wider circle there are people in school I've known for a long time and although I don't see them on a regular basis you always know that you have a chat about things and you've got some common ground and you have a bit of a joke about things that might be going on in school that you may think are a bit daft, or perhaps you don't quite agree with andI think being able to have that common bond about the way things are going forward, or not, as the case may be, that it does help. So I do think that is important because otherwise if you're working in isolation too much,.....and I find that being in the art department I can be here every lunchtime, all my lessons and not necessarily see too many people. After a bit of time I find myself going a bit stir crazy thinking I haven't spoken to an adult properly for a few days. You do then think, I need to go out in the world and talk to somebody.

Can you remember the transition between your previous school and this school?

Yeah, I can remember. I think....I was living in _____ and the reason I wanted to move schools, it was a sideways move, was because I'd just had a child and it was a case of juggling with nursery and stuff. This job came up, it had sixth form teaching so I thought great, sideways move and that was fantastic. My husband was teaching locally, he knew quite a lot of people already and then....as I got the job, greeted with, oh yes, I know so and so. People very much took you under their wing, it was very much everybody knew somebody else and even the head was very friendly, treating you like a long lost member of a family, like you were part of a family. It was all a case of make you feel as welcome as possible, was there anything I wanted to do that I could see in the department and I said I wanted a wall built at the bottom of this room, which was done, and it was done within a matter of a few weeks when you requested something. So, it was like we've employed you because we think you're the person for the job, you've made some suggestions, we've actually listened to them straight away and acted upon them immediately. It was very positive.

Does being in a position of responsibility affect your teaching practice in any way?

I don't think it does. I'd like to hope that it doesn't make any difference whether you're a mainstream teacher or in a position of responsibility. Having people, like student teachers come in to teach you feel you must be a good example, but there is another member of the department who's also in a position of responsibility who also wants to be seen to be doing what they should be doing. I don't necessarily have to really prove myself to the members of my department, having said that I've now got people who are PE specialists, art's their second subject, teaching in art. I've always said lead by example so if I'm asking them to do something I would do it myself, so I suppose in that sense you do but you don't really think about it that much.

Appendix 4: Initial coding example

Sophie – Head of art department. Second stage participant.

<p>Has there ever been an event that has made you feel confident in your abilities as a teacher?</p>	
<p>When we've done CPD things and people start talking about particular issues and you've given your opinion and you think well actually that's something that I've been doing for a long time and it's been reinforced. There have been things like that...and then people have said oh Sophie why don't you lead one...which is quite nice but I never see myself as being someone who's that knowledgeable particularly. But my practice I probably am but I just don't think of it myself. It's reinforced when you're in the wider world of other teachers and you're made aware.....and you think well actually I thought everybody knew that and it becomes apparent that not everybody does. I can't name an event but I think in general training terms.</p>	<p>PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE</p> <p>Recognising/VALIDATING efficacy through professional dialogue</p> <p>FEELING VALUED being asked to give expert advice</p> <p>Efficacy recognised by others by being asked to share good practice VALIDATING EFFICACY</p> <p>Unable to see efficacy unless pointed out</p> <p>PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE identifying lack of efficacy in colleagues COMPARING COLLEAGUES? NEW CODE?</p>
<p>You're part of a small department. Does that affect you in any way? You say you don't think of yourself like that, but other people say that.</p>	
<p>I think that if you're dealing with English or languages or maths and you're having lots of staff that you're constantly dealing with,</p>	<p>Larger departments – more opportunity for PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE</p>

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<p>instructing maybe this is how we need to do things that you're getting a bit more feedback from other members of staff that you work with, whereas in a small department if you do happen to agree on things anyway you're not getting conflicting views, we need to do this and we just do it! So, there's no question about it at all so in a funny sort of way you wonder well, is that what's going on everywhere else? You've not had that experience of somebody not agreeing with what you say.</p>	<p>Requiring professional dialogue to recognise/VALIDATE efficacy</p> <p>Lack of DISSONANCE in small departments, no discussions about how to progress</p> <p>COMPARING COLLEAGUES/DEPARTMENTS</p> <p>ISOLATION</p>
<p>What are your experiences of CPD?</p>	
<p>It's a mixed bag really. I sometimes feel that because of the nature of the subjects I'm involved with, drama, music, that sometimes if you've got other people coming in, members of staff attached to different department, well we didn't have anyone attached to us. Now I don't know whether that was because they didn't have anybody that could come or whatever but in the end we were sort of a group in the hall talking about things amongst ourselves because we just decided to help each other out. We didn't have an outside person there to see it from a slightly different angle, we were still doing it from our own viewpoint and I sort of felt that we could have done with somebody there but because we are art, music and drama, do you have an art, music drama teacher for the group? That would have been 3 different</p>	<p>Feelings of ISOLATION as a small/creative department</p> <p>Not FEELING VALUED?</p> <p>ISOLATION</p> <p>COLLABORATION due to lack of CPD planning for creative subjects</p> <p>Wanting to hear conflicting views/DISSONANCE</p>

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<p>people, so if you were going to pick on somebody to come and give their viewpoint it still might not have been really subject specific. So I suppose we tend to be quite a tricky area and I do find that generally and it's not just in this school, it's across the board, you are sometimes dealt with in a way that.....I'm not quite sure how to deal with those we'll just sort of palm them off a little bit because of the nature of what you do...and perhaps you're working practices are a little bit different to other people. I find that a little bit frustrating.....and when you have films about good examples of.....it's always classroom based where they're doing activities that are not related to the way I would normally teach. I would love the opportunity to actually see that from a real subject specific point of view.</p>	<p>Recognising practical difficulties in selecting a representative for creative subjects</p> <p>We are a 'tricky area'</p> <p>Lack of understanding of creative subject CPD needs ISOLATION</p> <p>COMPARING CONTEXTS</p> <p>Not FEELING VALUED 'palm them off'</p> <p>COMPARING COLLEAGUES</p> <p>FEELING FRUSTRATED by other people's lack of understanding/recognition of creative subject pedagogy</p> <p>Unable to access CPD due to irrelevance/DIFFERENTIATION</p>
<p>Is there anything that has made you feel less confident in your abilities?</p>	
<p>I wouldn't say I'm always confident, I'm always questioning and thinking about it and then actually have to take stock it.....what does that actually mean? When I realise what they actually mean by it...but I'm actually doing it. Sometimes there's a lot of buzz words and the way people describe things.....and sometimes you're doing what they say you're doing but you didn't know they meant that in the first instance. I think</p>	<p>Re-evaluating efficacy regularly</p> <p>REFLECTION</p> <p>Confusing messages from management</p> <p>'buzz words'</p> <p>pedagogy sound</p>

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<p>over the years the words for different things have changed, the concepts, and people describe them in different ways. Sometimes you're thinking...what's that...oh I know what that means.....you know language for learning.....and it's been different things in the past. So I think sometimes. I think that particularly people in more senior positions use all the correct terminology but sometimes it's presented in such a way that it makes it sound so academic that you begin to think.....hmm....am I doing the right thing?</p>	<p>'buzz words' masking practice MOVING THE GOAL POSTS with terminology but practice constant Terminology creating confusion CYCLICAL NATURE OF TEACHING Management using terminology creating EFFICACY DOUBT</p>
<p>You've been in teaching a long time. Have you noticed any changes that make things difficult for you as a teacher?</p>	
<p>Well obviously for me it's simple things like how technology has progressed because I'm from a background that's not computer literate in the first instance so everything is really.....I've had to come up to scratch as quickly as possible. It's just becoming more literate with those sorts of things....trying to do general powerpoints and bits and pieces. I now do them quite happily but you know, 10 years ago I wouldn't even have been doing that. But because the schools have moved on and say we all need to be doing this, I have had to follow that lead so that's helped me and it's improved that's for certain. And it's improved things that I do.....but then equally there's a lot of stuff that is done on the computer and because I'm extremely slow I</p>	<p>Learning IT skills in the workplace Fast pace of learning IT literacy MOVING THE GOAL POSTS due to technology advances 'following the lead'</p>

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<p>take an inordinate amount of time doing it. Whereas if I was to write it on a piece of paper and pass things on I would be much more efficient personally...because I'm much quicker doing it that way. But it's swings and roundabouts because I'd say the resources that I can provide the students with now have definitely improved and it's improved my teaching.....but other aspects to do with admin and general day to day things very often it holds me back a bit.</p>	<p>slow IT skills reducing efficiency</p> <p>RECOGNISING EFFICACY</p>
<p>Does that affect your confidence at all or is it just an annoying thing?</p>	
<p>An annoying thing.</p>	
<p>How do observations affect you?</p>	
<p>I always, no matter what is said, I always take what is said and think well maybe I could improve but I think in general the things that have been said have been very positive. I've never really had a bad observation so that does help. But when you get an observation and you get consistently good with outstanding features and you think what do I need to do to get to that next step, but nobody can actually tell you or show you but they can say what you're not.....that can be quite tricky because I'm not really sure. But I've been courses since and I've been on one recently outside of school and it has highlighted certain things but it's nothing I didn't already know. I just</p>	<p>REFLECTION after observations in order to improve practice</p> <p>VALIDATING EFFICACY through positive feedback</p> <p>BEING JUDGED</p> <p>Unable to SEE THE WAY FORWARD, ASPIRING FOR THE GOLD STANDARD</p> <p>Outstanding feels out of reach, lack of trust in those giving feedback?</p> <p>Feeling frustrated</p>

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<p>don't know how you could do what they're asking every single lesson to be outstanding. You could probably produce that..... but I think there are things in place I think I could probably do that in order to illustrate a point. I'm a little bit more aware of that now but I think in the past some of the observations I've had have been slightly contradictory. It's saying good with outstanding features but then not really being able to say the specifics. Maybe one person will say you need to do this slightly more and another will say you need to do this slightly more...the other person said that was perfectly fine. I know it can vary from lesson to lesson but it's.....I don't think people in more senior positions know how to move the practical lessons forward for outstanding. Not really.</p>	<p>Questioning maintenance of 'gold standard'</p> <p>Pedagogy 'illustrating a point'</p> <p>TAKING A SNAPSHOT VIEW, playing up to what the observer wants</p> <p>DISSONANCE between observers BEING JUDGED</p> <p>Needing advice in order to SEE THE WAY FORWARD</p> <p>DISTRUSTFUL OF MANAGEMENT</p> <p>ISOLATION of creative subjects</p>
<p>You say that the feedback can be contradictory. Does that affect the way you feel or behave?</p>	
<p>No, because I just do it the same anyway.</p>	<p>Not paying attention to DISSONANCE between management</p>
<p>You don't feel demoralised?</p>	
<p>No, because the feedback I get from the students and because the results you get are good I don't then think, oh, I'm doing something wrong, I need to improve upon this. I think because, oh, they've got good results so therefore we are obviously doing the right things but perhaps we could be</p>	<p>FEELING VALUED? through STUDENT FEEDBACK, VALIDATING EFFICACY</p> <p>BEING JUDGED using results to VALIDATE EFFICACY</p> <p>Management using grades as</p>

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<p>even better....then that's when I think well what could we do to get even more students getting better grades. There are things you try and put in place but even so, it varies from year group to year group. What works one year doesn't necessarily work for the other.</p>	<p>departmental JUDGEMENT RESULTS as an indicator of department efficacy CYCLICAL NATURE OF TEACHING</p>
<p>Has there ever been anyone that has really inspired you as a teacher?</p>	
<p>Apart from...I've seen.....in my previous school I had a head of area, who was a drama teacher, who was particularly enthusiastic and always extremely positive. I think when you're working in a team of people and that person is always really positive that it makes the rest of the team even more positive and inspired to do things. I think when I came to this school and we were still a bigger area it was quite nice to have that sort of backup in a way. Whereas now they've done away with that and now you're in a small little thing....you think it's quite nice to be part of that bigger group and have somebody who's in charge of you but enthusiastic and wanting the whole area to do well. So I would say there was but....very rare.</p>	<p>INSPIRED BY EXPERTS? Inspired by positive attitude DOMINO EFFECT SUPPORT FROM ABOVE ISOLATION Being a member of a team, COLLABORATION DOMINO EFFECT, FEELING VALUED</p>
<p>You've been here quite a long time. How do colleague relationships impact on you?</p>	
<p>Erm....I think that would. From a personal point of view....I'm the sort of person that thrives on a bit of company, being able to talk</p>	

<p>about things. Just generally saying it how it is and chewing the fat a bit. So I think for me it is important but I'm not sure that it is for everyone. The fact I work in a small department. I get on very well with Laura and we have the same approach and we obviously make jokes about things, have a laugh about bits and pieces that are going on, slag off a few people and then laugh about it behind closed doors (laughs). But in the wider circle there are people in school I've known for a long time and although I don't see them on a regular basis you always know that you have a chat about things and you've got some common ground and you have a bit of a joke about things that might be going on in school that you may think are a bit daft, or perhaps you don't quite agree with andI think being able to have that common bond about the way things are going forward, or not, as the case may be, that it does help. So I do think that is important because otherwise if you're working in isolation too much,.....and I find that being in the art department I can be here every lunchtime, all my lessons and not necessarily see too many people. After a bit of time I find myself going a bit stir crazy thinking I haven't spoken to an adult properly for a few days. You do then think, I need to go out in the world and talk to somebody.</p>	<p>'thriving' on company letting off steam with friends</p> <p>EQUILIBRIUM within the department</p> <p>Forming friendships RELATIONSHIPS</p> <p>Forming friendships over time</p> <p>'sharing common ground' EQUILIBRIUM?</p> <p>Making jokes about DISSONANCE, letting off steam</p> <p>'common bond' SEEING THE WAY FORWARD</p> <p>ISOLATION</p> <p>Needing to let off steam</p>
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<p>Can you remember the transition between your previous school and this school?</p>	
<p>Yeah, I can remember. I think....I was living in _____ and the reason I wanted to move schools, it was a sideways move, was because I'd just had a child and it was a case of juggling with nursery and stuff. This job came up, it had sixth form teaching so I thought great, sideways move and that was fantastic. My husband was teaching locally, he knew quite a lot of people already and then....as I got the job, greeted with, oh yes, I know so and so. People very much took you under their wing, it was very much everybody knew somebody else and even the head was very friendly, treating you like a long lost member of a family, like you were part of a family. It was all a case of make you feel as welcome as possible, was there anything I wanted to do that I could see in the department and I said I wanted a wall built at the bottom of this room, which was done, and it was done within a matter of a few weeks when you requested something. So, it was like we've employed you because we think you're the person for the job, you've made some suggestions, we've actually listened to them straight away and acted upon them immediately. It was very positive.</p>	<p>Making a transition for personal reasons</p> <p>Moving sideways</p> <p>Common ground</p> <p>NETWORKING</p> <p>Feeling welcomed</p> <p>MANAGING TRANSITIONS colleagues making an effort</p> <p>Part of the family</p> <p>FEELING VALUED recognised by fast response to requests</p> <p>VALIDATING EFFICACY through management trust in your judgement</p> <p>FEELING VALUED</p>

<p>Does being in a position of responsibility affect your teaching practice in any way?</p>	
<p>I don't think it does. I'd like to hope that it doesn't make any difference whether you're a mainstream teacher or in a position of responsibility. Having people, like student teachers come in to teach you feel you must be a good example, but there is another member of the department who's also in a position of responsibility who also wants to be seen to be doing what they should be doing. I don't necessarily have to really prove myself to the members of my department, having said that I've now got people who are PE specialists, art's there second subject, teaching in art. I've always said lead by example so if I'm asking them to do something I would do it myself, so I suppose in that's sense you do but you don't really think about it that much.</p>	<p>PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH to student teachers</p> <p>Efficacy accepted by department, no judgement?</p> <p>'lead by example' PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH novice teachers</p> <p>unconscious practice</p>

Appendix 5: Analytic memo examples

1st Jan 2013

Analysis of the initial coding of Lottie's interview.

INTERNAL PRESSURE vs EXTERNAL PRESSURE

This theme has come up in other interviews too and in different forms. Perhaps codes such as LETTING YOURSELF DOWN, PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH AND UPPING YOUR GAME all come under this theme. Lottie says '*I'm a perfectionist*' (line 19) suggesting that some of the reason for her feeling as if she is '*run ragged*' (line 18) is due to wanting to do things properly and having high standards for herself. Later on in the interview Lottie says she wants to aim to be judged as outstanding (ASPIRING FOR THE GOLD STANDARD) because "*...I just want to say I've had one...*" (line 166). *The wording of this quote suggests to me that 'outstanding' is a label applied to a teacher from others (BEING JUDGED) that they can then use as a tool to sell themselves – a way of showing efficacy to others PROVING EFFICACY new code? However, it could be that Lottie meant that it was a label to give herself more confidence in her ability.* Teachers such as Louise and Jill also showed elements of this aspirational mindset. *There is almost a competitive element to this aspiration.* This could indicate that teacher efficacy beliefs are affected by internal characteristics (*being competitive*) as well as environmental and situational events. In fact, there is probably a combination of the two at work. *Green added Oct 26th 2013.*

Some of the pressure Lottie feels is due to EXTERNAL PRESSURES such as parents (she is a pastoral leader) and organisational features such as balancing her teaching role with the pastoral role. Even something such as timetabling (*SYSTEM FEATURES? Added Feb 8th*) had an impact on Lottie's perceptions of pressures, due to management time not being spread equally over the 2 weeks of the timetable. This highlights the effect of organisational features on teachers – particularly as Lottie mentions she cannot do her job properly because of it.

"The other thing that's been really really annoying this year is the timetabling. I have 10 management periods 1 week and 5 the other and again you can guarantee

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the shit will hit the fan the week I've got 4 periods, and I cannot do my job properly. I feel like I'm run ragged at times trying to get everything done." (lines 15-19)

MOVING THE GOAL POSTS: TRANSITIONS

Another type of code emerged under the theme moving the goal posts in terms of Lottie's experience of moving schools. After 3 years of working at her first school she felt confident in the curriculum and her teaching style but found moving to N difficult as she felt she had to start again "*I was back to square one again*" (line 36) as the curriculum was different (due to different syllabuses) and she was teaching different languages. Methods that worked at her previous school didn't work at N "*..trying to use a resource from my old school was like trying to fit a round peg into a square hole ..*" (lines 15-16). Lottie also mentioned feeling the need to assert her authority again – stating this was with the staff not the students- which may indicate how a change of school may affect a teacher's efficacy beliefs. **Does needing to exert her authority indicate Lottie felt her efficacy was being questioned by staff at the new school and therefore she needed to 'prove' it? Links with DISSONANCE? (dissonance between Lottie's efficacy beliefs and what she perceives colleagues to think of her efficacy)**

PROVING EFFICACY 2/11/13

"....some of the older people thought I was an NQT, I had to kinda assert my authority and stand my ground again. But that was fine, I dealt with that." (lines 36-38)

Other issues with the transition included a poor induction in which Lottie felt training was not relevant to what a teacher needed when moving from a previous school (DIFFERENTIATION FOR TEACHERS) and therefore she had to source the information herself. Lottie pointed out that some teachers would not do this ("*...I'm quite outspoken.....there are other staff in the school who are not happy about doing that...*" lines 72-74) and therefore moving to N would be even more difficult for them. This could suggest that organisational features of a school could leave some teachers at a disadvantage due to differences in their personality.

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On the other hand, a very supportive dept seemed to counteract some of the negative issues surrounding moving to a new school – **worth following up with future interviews**. “It wasn’t a chore coming to work” (line 90) and “*I do think if you’re gonna have success professionally you have to have some sort of professional relationships that work*” (lines 93-94) show that Lottie enjoyed the relationships with colleagues. The second quote is interesting as it suggests that Lottie feels external factors such as emotional connections could interact with professional success which would link with teacher efficacy beliefs. **Do teachers with poor emotional connections with colleagues have less professional success/ have poor efficacy beliefs?**

However, Lottie also discussed the less positive relationships she had with staff at her previous school and this did not appear to affect her efficacy beliefs as evidenced by “*Certainly at (previous school) in my last year I really felt like I could conquer the world. It was my 3rd year of teaching and I felt ‘yeah I can do this.’*” (lines 34-35), although it may have contributed to her wanting to move schools as she appeared to feel like an outsider there. “*I came from a school where I was the only young one in the whole school and my HOD used to call me the ‘little one’ and I used to hate it, it was ever so patronising. We didn’t really get on, didn’t really see eye to eye with anyone.*” (lines 82-85) and “*..I didn’t really speak to anybody during the day. The people I did I didn’t have anything in common with.*” (lines 91-93)

INSPIRED BY EXPERTS

This theme took the form of a new code SUPPORT FROM ABOVE in which Lottie described how her confidence was improved by working with a supportive line manager who she respected and whom used effective strategies to help Lottie develop into a new pastoral role. Some of this support helped Lottie to see that the behaviours and feelings she had were justified and showed she was doing a good job in the new role “*...she just made me realise that what I was doing was right..and that me getting stressed about it was a clear indicative why I was in pastoral.*” (lines 44-45). In this way the line manager acted as a method of maintaining or increasing teacher efficacy beliefs (for pastoral leadership)

MAINTAINING EFFICACY, VALIDATING EFFICACY? added 1/11/13

RECOGNISING EFFICACY and it was clear that Lottie looked up to her line manager and wanted to be like her. ...” *she was like a mentor. I really do look up to her and that’s the type of DOL that I’ve always wanted to be. I don’t want to be shouting or asserting my presence that way. I want to be the supportive one who will be disciplinarian as necessary.* “ (lines 55-57). It was also this positive relationship (links with dept support mentioned earlier – **new code COLLEAGUE RELATIONSHIPS?**) which Lottie believe enabled her to secure a permanent pastoral leadership role. “...without the support from _____ I don’t think I would have applied for the job, because it was so stressful (as temporary HOY). She just reaffirmed in me that I actually can do it.” (lines 79-81). So Lottie’s efficacy beliefs were (in her own words) reaffirmed by a supportive line manager whom she had a positive relationship with. In a way, the stress was buffered by this support at a time of transition for Lottie (moving into pastoral leadership). BUFFERING?

FIGHTING THE SYSTEM/CLASS

A new code here to describe Lottie’s discussion of a particular class that she felt had knocked her confidence. There is fighting in two ways here – against the (school) system (*I’m fighting and fighting to get some withdrawn line 124*) and against the class itself (“...Yeah, if I know I’ve got that class on my timetable that day I am dreading it. Because I know full well I’ll have a fight on my hands. They’ve brought tears to my eyes and had to walk out..... they just don’t listen, they don’t do anything” lines 131-135) There are also elements of EXTERNAL PRESSURES here due to Lottie’s concern about the unreasonable targets set for this class (**new code: UNATTAINABLE TARGETS**).

“I’ve had one particular class that has almost broken me. And that has been this year and I’ve never felt like that before. Its my bottom set year 11 Italian. They hate Italian, they don’t want to be there, they’re really not very good at it and they’re all predicted Cs. And I’m on threshold this year so I need to get my CVA to 0. It’s not gonna happen. I get very little family support, they say all the right things but... I’m fighting and fighting to get some withdrawn, _____ should not be doing a language, he’s EAL, he’s SEN, he cannot cope. I’m a great advocate of doing nurture

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groups, additional literacy and I've even said I'd be willing to do it. I'd much rather teach project based or an applied language. There is about 10-15 kids who should not be doing a language. They are expected to write 150 words from memory and they can't even do that in English." (lines 119-129)

This example of an ongoing situation illustrates how even one class can negatively affect a teacher's efficacy beliefs. Lottie appears to have positive efficacy beliefs overall but the feeling that she is being asked to do unreasonable or unattainable things demotivates her "*...I hate having that failure on my performance management every year. My previous year I passed it but we did AQA. It's really demotivating*" (lines 151-152). The school sets a PM target of achieving at least 0 contextual valued added (based on Fischer Family Trust data) with year 11 classes but Lottie feels this is unreasonable (DISSONANCE?) and later states she doesn't agree with it and has made this clear to management every year. So, she is fighting the system to get students withdrawn from a subject she feels they cannot do and also against unreasonable PM targets set by management.

Appendix 6: Participant profiles

Jill was a very experienced teacher of 25 years with 21 years at Leaford School, after previously working in the Midlands. At the time of the interviews she had been Head of the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) department but had previously held other posts in the school such as Deputy Head of sixth form and year leader.

Suzy was an Advanced Skills Teacher in the MFL department. At the time of interview she had worked at Leaford School for a couple of years after MFL teaching at a range of other schools in Devon for 6 years.

Harriet was a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) at the time of the first interview in the science department. She had completed her teacher training by completing a PGCE in London.

George was a very experienced science teacher with 30 years service at Leaford School. At the time of interview he held no extra responsibilities but had previously held the position of National Strategies Coordinator and exams officer.

Catherine had been an English teacher for 7 years at the time of interview. She had worked at Leaford School as an NQT and for the 2 years after that, had moved to a local school for a couple of years and then returned to Leaford School to take up the position of Head of English. She also held the position of Associate Assistant Head responsible for CPD at the time of interview.

Simon had worked part time at Leaford School for 3 years as a mathematics teacher. He is a mature entrant to the profession having previously been an engineer.

Alex was completing a maternity cover at the school as a drama teacher. She had worked at 3 other schools over the previous 2 years as an unqualified teacher and completing her teacher training through the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP).

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Louise was an art teacher with 11 years experience, having completed her School Centred Initial Teacher Training at Leaford School. At the time of interview she was in a pastoral position as a Head of Year.

Adrian was a science teacher who had trained on the GTP and taught at another school for 3 years before coming to Leaford School. Before becoming a teacher Adrian had worked in industry for most of his career.

Annie was Head of the science department and new to the school. She had taught for 13 years, working in a variety of schools and taking on responsibilities such as Key Stage 4 coordinator and behavior coordinator. She had also been a Head of department at a previous school.

Lottie was in a pastoral role as a Head of Year and taught in the MFL department. She had been at Leaford School for 3 years having worked at her previous school for 3 years. Before becoming a teacher she had worked in outdoor education.

Gary had been a history teacher at Leaford School for 8 years after completing his PGCE. Before training as a teacher he had run his own business.

Holly was the Head of music and had taught at Leaford School for 6 years since completing her PGCE.

Dominic had taught at Leaford School for 3 years as a mathematics teacher having trained on the GTP at a nearby school. In his previous career he had worked in research and had held management positions in industry.

Sophie had been an art teacher for 31 years, the majority of which had been at Leaford School as a Head of department. She had worked at two schools previous to this one and had held the Head of department position at the last school prior to gaining the post at Leaford School.

Appendix 7: Consent letter for participants

Date:

Dear (name of participant)

Currently I am studying part-time for a Doctorate in Education at the University of East Anglia researching teachers' views of themselves as a teacher and experiences of professional development activities.

I am writing to ask if you would give your permission for me to interview you as part of my research. I hope that this research will result in a clearer idea of what types of professional development activities are most successful for teachers.

The interview will be confidential and will not be shown to anyone else except my research supervisor. You will not be identified by your real name and neither will the school. Before I include anything you have said in my research I will show you what I have written and you will be able to add or remove any parts. The interviews will take place at a time that is convenient for you. If you prefer, I can arrange cover for a class in order for the interview to take place.

Taking part in this research is voluntary and you can change your mind at any time.

If you agree to take part, please could you complete the consent form below. If you have any further questions, please email me at R.Minett@uea.ac.uk. If you have any complaints please contact the Head of the School of Education, Dr Nalini Boodhoo at N.Boodhoo@uea.ac.uk.

Thankyou,

Rachel Minett

.....
I give my consent/do not give my consent to be interviewed by Rachel Minett as part of an EdD research project. I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time and that all information I provide will be confidential.

Name:

Signature:

Appendix 8: Consent letter for Headteacher

Dear Headteacher

Currently I am studying part-time for a Doctorate in Education at the University of East Anglia researching teachers' views of themselves as a teacher and experiences of professional development activities.

I am writing to ask if you will give your permission for me to invite teachers at Leaford School to complete a short online survey about their views of professional development activities and to interview 12 teachers in more depth.

The interviews will be confidential and will not be shown to anybody else except my research supervisor. Teachers will not be identified by their real name and neither will the school. The interviews will take place at a time convenient to the teachers and if possible I would like to arrange cover for the teacher concerned.

At the end of the research I hope to be able to write a short summary of my research for the school outlining my findings and any practical implications.

If you agree to take part, please could you complete the consent form below. If you have any further questions, please email me at R.Minett@uea.ac.uk. If you have any complaints please contact the Head of the School of Education, Dr Nalini Boodhoo at N.Boodhoo@uea.ac.uk.

Thankyou,

Rachel Minett

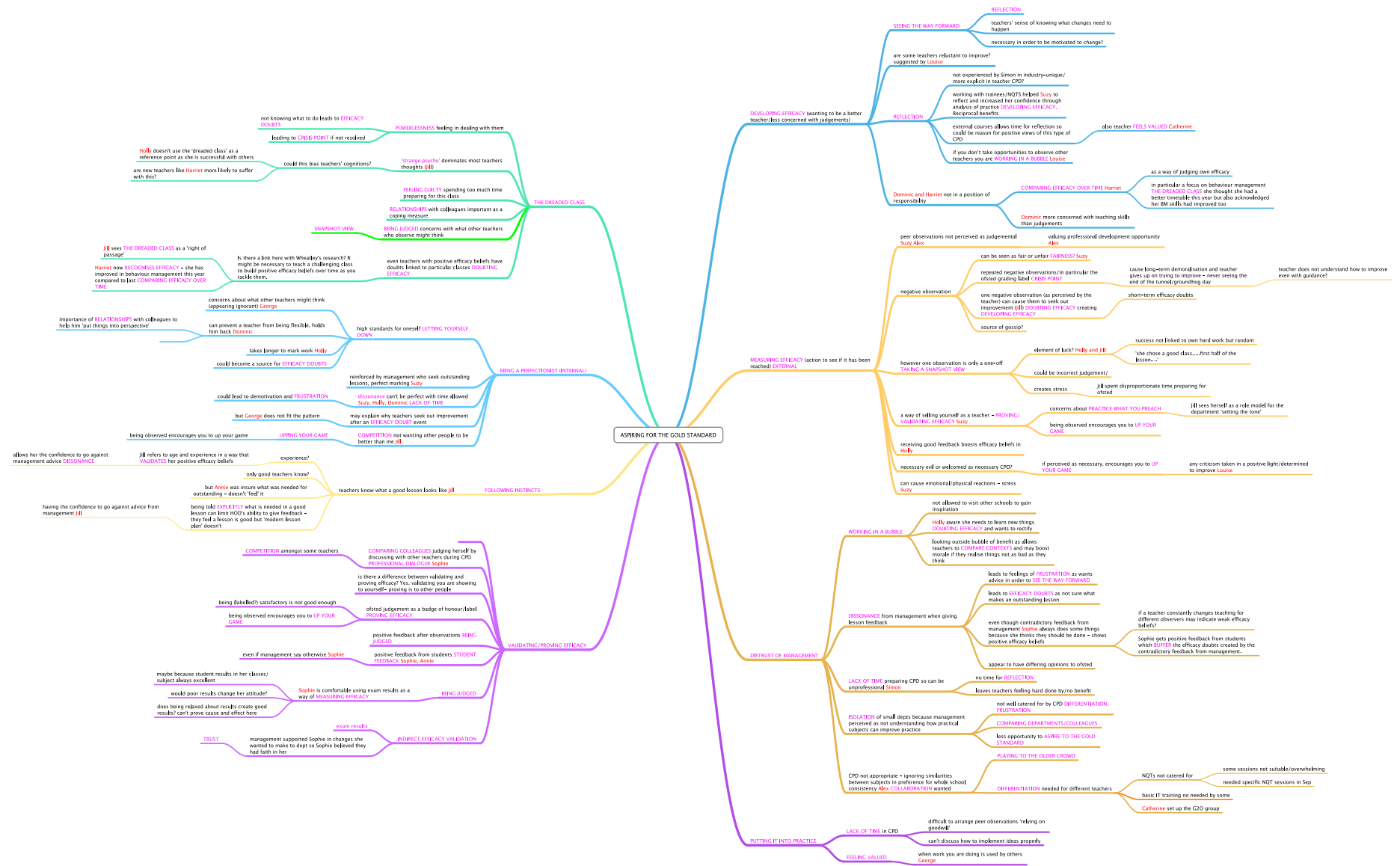
.....

I give my consent/do not give my consent for teachers from Leaford School to complete a short online survey and to take part in interviews with Rachel Minett. I understand that all information provided is confidential and that the names of the participants and the school will remain anonymous.

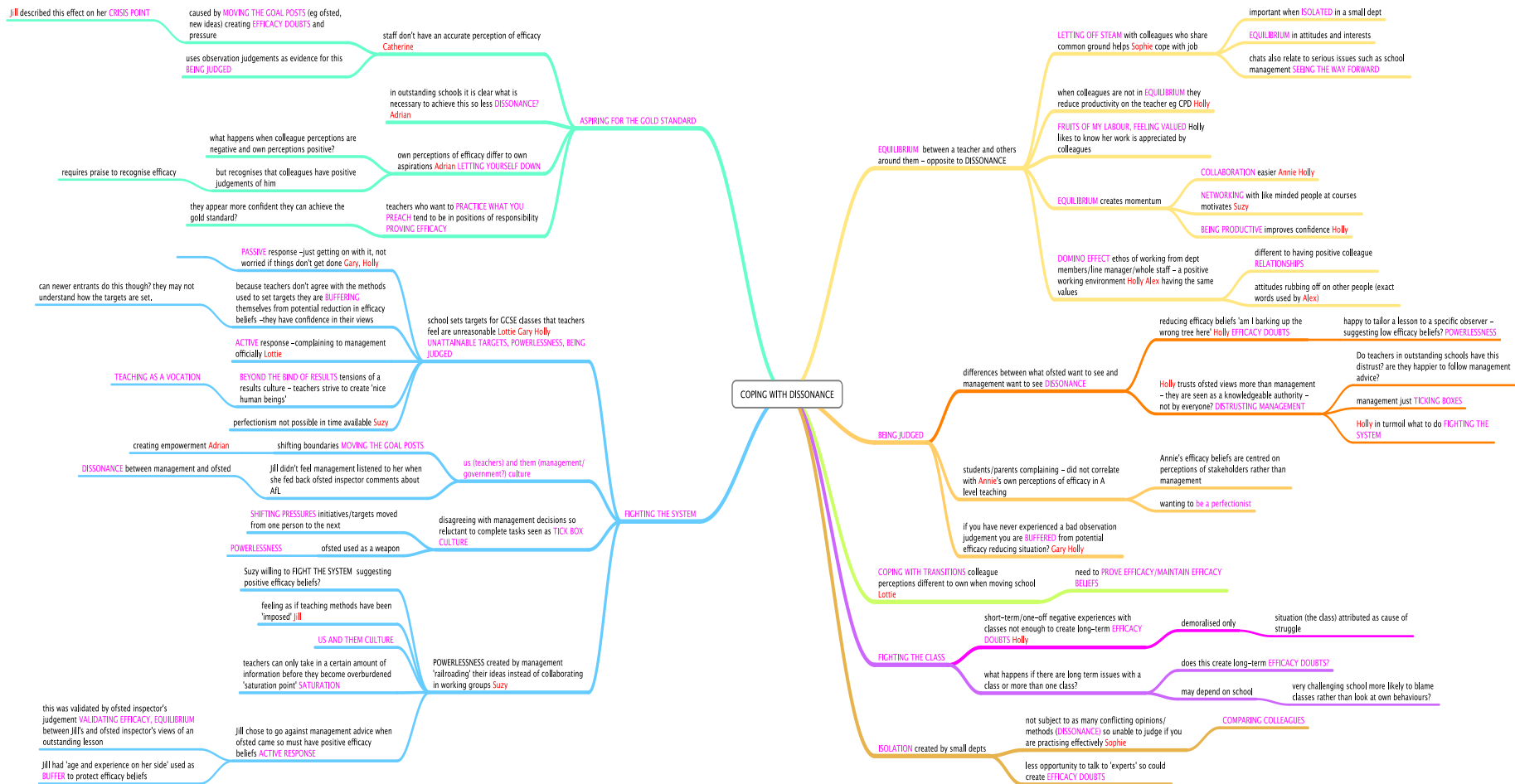
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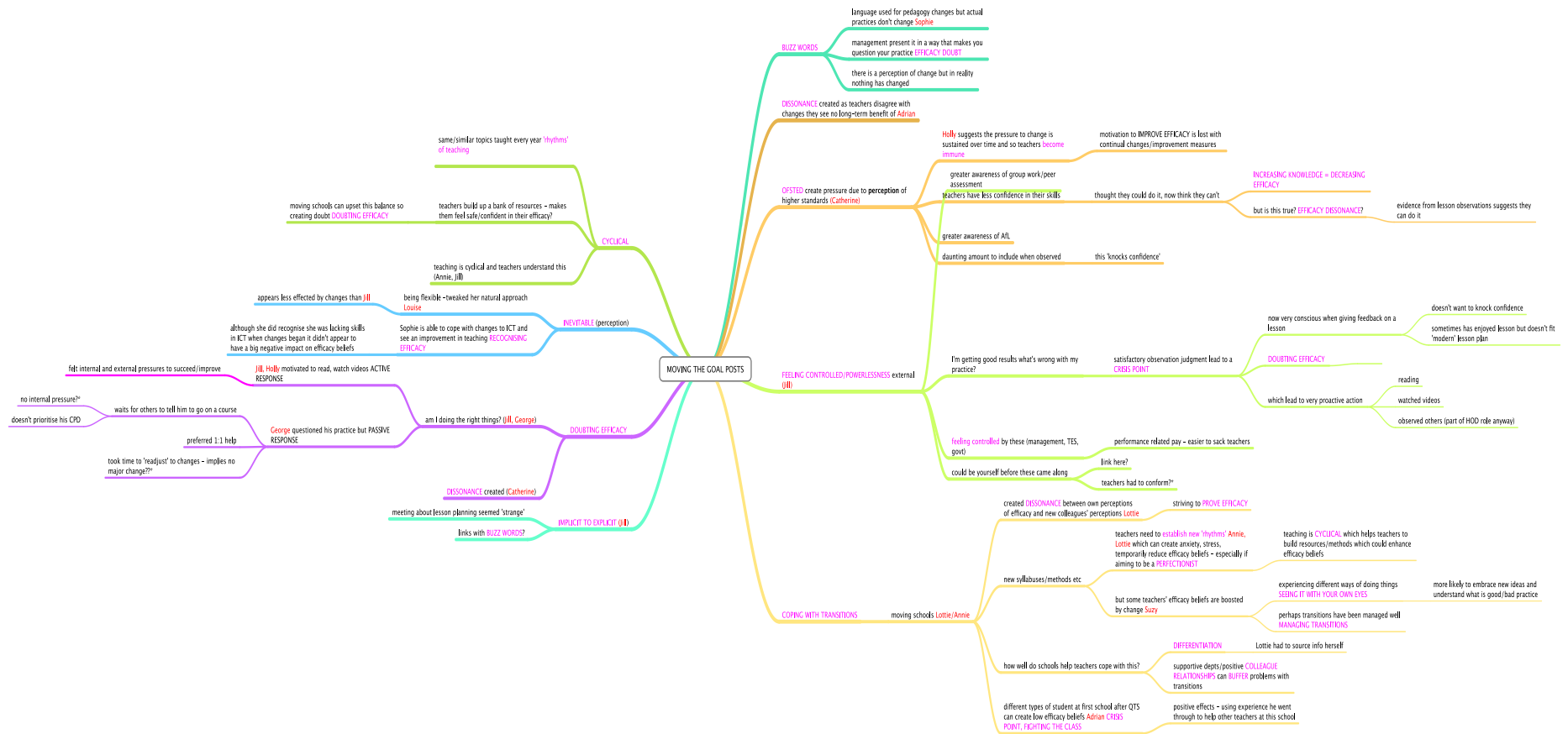
Appendix 9: Aspiring for the gold standard categories and concepts diagram



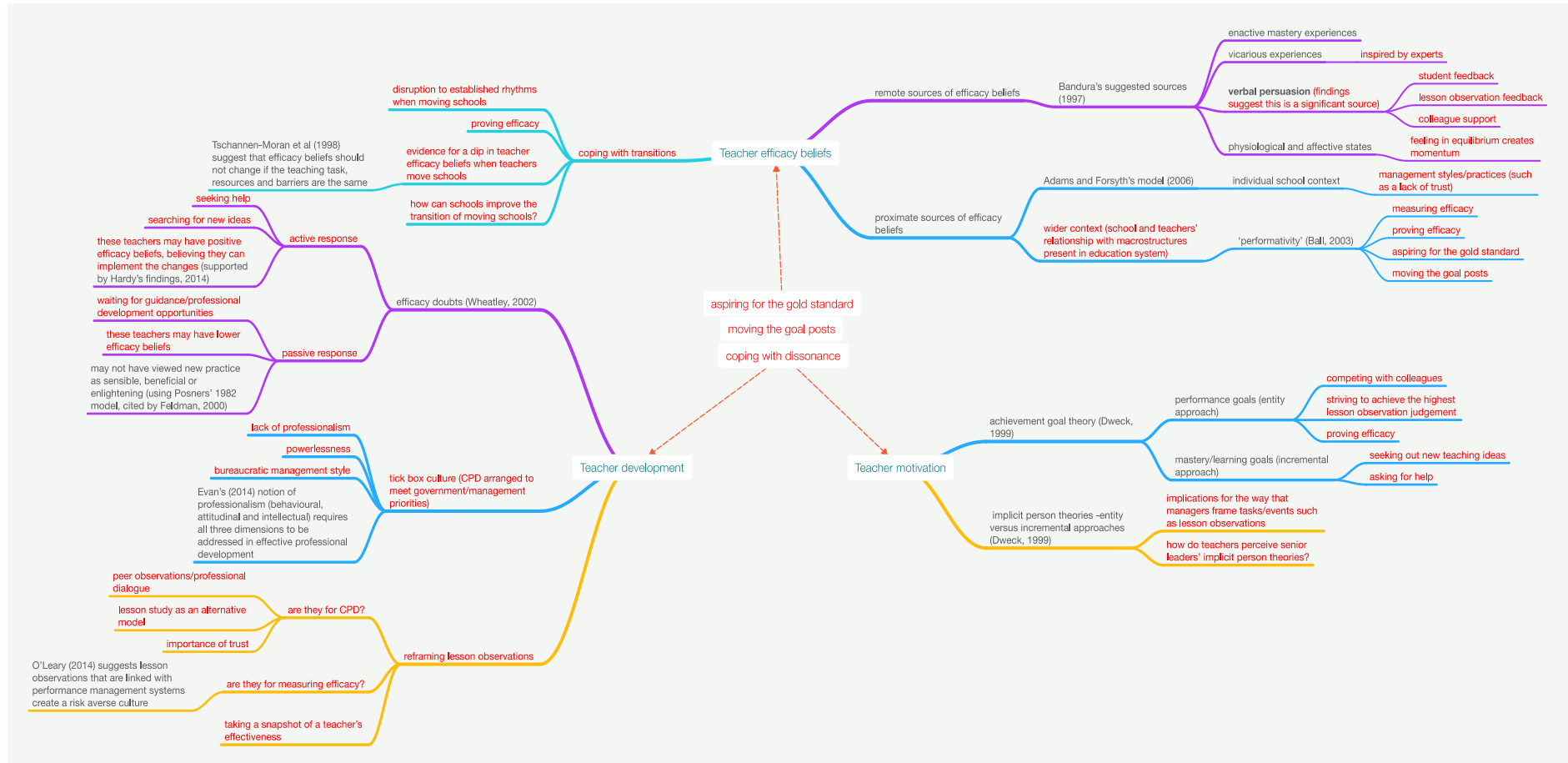
Appendix 10: Coping with dissonance categories and concepts diagram



Appendix 11: Moving the goal posts categories and concepts diagram



Appendix 12: Diagram summarising findings and their relation to the literature



Writing in red indicates findings from this study and/or novel concepts.

Writing in grey indicates existing theoretical frameworks and previous research findings.

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