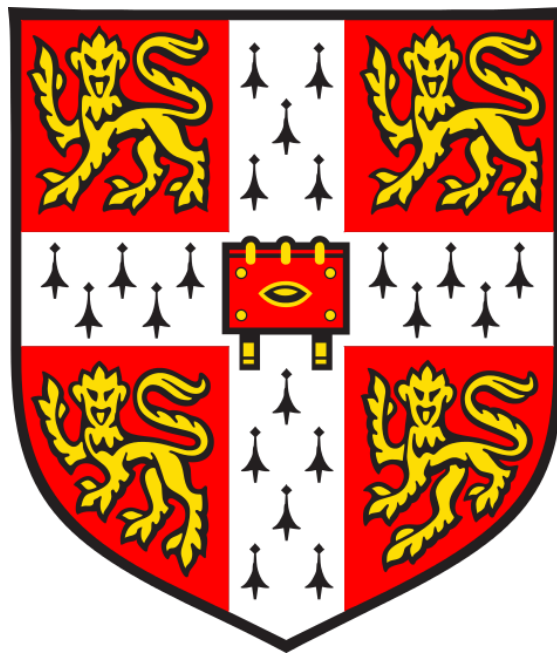# Investigating children's perspective taking and normative frames of social understanding: A critical design ethnographic study of teacher-led dialogue around stories in early years' classrooms

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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It is not the same as any work that has already been submitted before for any degree or other qualification except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the Faculty of Education Degree Committee.

Abstract

Investigating children's perspective taking and normative frames of social understanding: A critical design ethnographic study of teacher-led dialogue around stories in early years' classrooms

Courtney Froehlig

Social communication with adults and peers supports children to play a shared, active, and reflective role in negotiating meaning and making sense of their own social experiences. Through these conversations, children begin to adopt narrative structures, heuristics and rules which help them to organise and explain the social world, but these shortcuts also prompt biases in how children process social information and make judgments about how to engage with others. One of these biases, called the 'Fundamental Attribution Error' (Jones & Harris, 1967), also referred to as 'correspondence bias' or 'attribution bias' is the tendency to make dispositional judgments while overlooking situational factors in considering others' perspectives and explaining behaviour. It emerges between 4 and 6 years of age in western cultures (Seiver, Gopnik, & Goodman, 2013) and is a precursor to stereotyping. This bias has spurred vast research exploring underlying mechanisms and approaches to intervention which are largely focused on promoting situational explanations of others' perspectives. In addition to these structured intervention approaches, some researchers have raised the wider issue of the role educators and caregivers can play in reflecting on and challenging broader social norms that frame children's dispositional judgments.

I partnered with six early years teachers to investigate how teacher-led classroom dialogue around stories could challenge children's normative frames of social understanding, promote children's context-sensitive perspective taking, and lessen dispositional judgments. I also homed in on the role of teachers' reflective practice in supporting children to think and negotiate meaning together in ways that reduce attribution bias. Findings demonstrate how 'normative frames' (i.e. expectations about how people tend to behave in specific circumstances and ideas about what kinds of behaviour are socially valued) guided children's dispositional judgments of characters. Findings also show how, through processes of positioning within the group and with support from teachers, children questioned and shifted their normative frames over the course of the discussions, which was associated with greater context-sensitive perspective taking and fewer decontextualized dispositional judgments. In their reflections, teachers demonstrated how they took ownership of their own professional development within the project, however they also reported that receiving ongoing personalised feedback and support from me during and after the discussions helped them to find new ways to extend the children's thinking further.

In this thesis, I have proposed a conceptual framework which outlines the mechanisms by which children's normative frames and perspective taking might link together to promote or inhibit attributional bias in the context of classroom dialogue around stories. This framework posits that relational reasoning and attributionally-biased reasoning are not mutually exclusive but counterbalanced, as if on a weighing scale. Further, these two types of reasoning are upheld by a central pillar of shared social reasoning, involving an interconnected process of normative framing and perspective taking. In this model, the type of reasoning that becomes more dominant for children largely depends on guided participation with adults and peers, especially within the context of conversation about social life. Further, small group dialogue around stories is conceptualised as a lever that teachers can use to challenge children's normative frames and promote greater context-sensitive perspective taking in order to tip the scale toward relational reasoning and reduce the pull of attributional bias. On the whole, this project extends Educational Design Research and Design Ethnography, providing a model for how educational specialists, researchers, or advisors can support teachers to play a more active and reflective role in children's developing social reasoning.

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Definitions of terms

Episodes of talk: A section of dialogue in which the teacher and students are discussing on one specific topic or idea

Dialogic moves: Action by a teacher with the intention of supporting children's dialogic interactions

Perspective taking: inferring how someone else might think or feel about something

Context-sensitive perspective taking: Perspective taking which pays special attention to how someone's thoughts and motivations are uniquely influenced by specific factors in their environment

Attributional bias: the tendency to make quick judgments about other people's internal dispositions or traits while overlooking important situational factors in explaining the causes of their behaviour. This is also referred to as 'correspondence bias'.

Dispositional judgment: an evaluation of someone else's disposition (i.e. their character, temperament, personality trait) based on their behaviour

Normative frame: individually- or collectively-held beliefs and/or expectations about how people tend to or should behave in specific circumstance, addition to ideas about what kinds of behaviour is socially valued. Normative frames emerge through processes of collective meaning-making in dialogue.

PSHE: Personal, Social, Health and Emotional (PSHE) Education is a school curriculum subject in England which focuses on developing the knowledge, skills and attributes to keep children and young people healthy and safe and to prepare them for life and work. This is sometimes also referred to as PSE (personal, social, and emotional) Education

SEL: Social and emotional learning; Interventions which target SEL seek to improve pupils' interaction with others and self-management of emotions, rather than focusing directly on the academic or cognitive elements of learning

Transcript Conventions

Transcription convention	Description
[	Overlapping utterances
(*italics*)	Indicates unspoken mannerisms
#	Uncertainty about what the child said exactly
!	Raised intonation of voice
Underlined	Emphasis on a particular word or phrase
CAPITALISED	Raised volume of voice
CAPITALISED AND UNDERLINED	Emphasis on a particular word or phrase with raised volume of voice

Chapter 1
Introduction

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, educational reformers in the United States, such as Dewey, argued that character and citizenship education, including the physical, social, moral, emotional, and spiritual components of children's learning, should be considered part of schools' core missions. For example, Dewey (1903) emphasised that values and moral lessons should be integrated within the everyday curriculum and decision making in order to develop students' 'habits of social imagination' (p. 23). With the rising concern around problems related to social exclusion, disengagement, aggression, mental illness, and bullying in children and young people, especially within the United States and United Kingdom in the later part of the twentieth century, there was a surge of policy interest in research around developing educational programmes and interventions that could be embedded in the curriculum to support children's interpersonal skills, social understanding, and social adjustment (Emery, 2016; Greenberg et al., 2003; Kidron & Osher, 2012).

Over the last three decades, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a burgeoning field of research investigating approaches which support students to develop social-emotional competencies, including self- and social-awareness, emotion regulation, relationship skills, group cooperation, and constructive management of social conflict (Weissberg, Durlak, Domitrovich, & Gullotta, 2015). A parallel field of study has also emerged around developing interventions which promote children's 'theory of mind', placing less emphasis on promoting specific social competencies, and instead prioritising the promotion of children's social understanding, often through conversation (e.g. Appleton & Reddy, 1996; Guajardo & Watson, 2002; Ornaghi, Brockmeier, & Grazzani, 2011). Further, researchers within the fields of classroom dialogue and peace education have highlighted the importance of promoting thinking skills which help children to openly and thoughtfully engage with different ideas and perspectives (e.g. Doney & Wegerif, 2017).

Early years classrooms are fertile contexts to provide children with varied learning experiences which support their developing social understanding, especially because social and emotional learning is already part of the foundation of what early years educators do (Durlak, 2015). A common teaching strategy within SEL (e.g. Doyle, Graham, & Bramwell, 2006; Durlak, 2015),

theory of mind training (e.g. Bianco, Lecce, & Banerjee, 2016), and classroom dialogue research (e.g. Maine & Hoffman, 2016) involves capitalising on 'story time' to promote conversations around stories, sometimes referred to as 'book talk', 'shared reading', or 'dialogic reading', in which teachers guide children's thinking about characters' experiences, help them to connect their own experiences, and prompt them to ask questions about the stories.

In my master's thesis project, I explored ways in which early educators could leverage conversations around stories to foster shared thinking and collaborative exploration, and I examined how these discussions stimulated children's perspective taking and expanded their awareness of the interrelating factors that influence characters' social behaviour. I identified specific scaffolding strategies that supported teachers to promote perspective taking through literature-based dialogic activities, culminating in the summary of a tentative dialogic framework, grounded in 'sustained, shared thinking' pedagogic principles.

Notably, within my discussions with the participating teachers, a recurrent theme of concern emerged surrounding children's tendencies to use social categories and labels in explanations of behaviour, especially implicating gender biases and stereotypes, which appeared to create stagnation within the discussions and inhibited children from thinking carefully about the characters' experiences. Since then, my attention has shifted to one specific aspect of children's developing social understanding, namely the tendency to rely on internal features or dispositions to explain behaviour, sometimes in categorical or stereotypic ways, while overlooking the important situational factors that come into play. Within the relevant psychological literature this phenomenon has been termed the 'Fundamental Attribution Error', also referred to as 'correspondence bias' or 'attributional bias' (Jones & Harris, 1967).

After thinking more about this developmental phenomenon, I began to review the data from my master's project again with this new frame of reference, and I identified multiple instances in which children explicitly demonstrated this bias when attempting to explain characters' social behaviours. For example, in explaining the behaviour of two characters playing on a playground, children described the female character as a 'cry baby' and the male character as a 'big boy', when the evidence instead suggested that both characters were trying to be brave in a scary situation. In instances of dialogue such as this, categorical or dispositional explanations seemed to preclude children from displaying context-sensitive perspective taking or empathic concern for one or more characters.

In my doctoral work, I was interested in further examining teachers' use of the dialogic framework to support children's social understanding, with the added focus of how teachers might be able to challenge children's thinking, specifically in instances when children explicitly demonstrate attributional bias in their talk around stories. I aimed to examine the learning and teaching processes that occurred within and around this framework with this new overarching aim in mind, in addition to enabling teachers to reflect on and modify the strategies as they tried them out.

I utilised a critical design ethnographic approach, positioned within Educational Design Research (EDR) (Barab, Thomas, Dodge, Squire, & Newell, 2004) in which my primary focus was to become deeply embedded in each setting and to develop thick descriptions in order to gain an insider's perspective on the shared learning and meaning making processes that took place within reading discussions. I had additional goals of 1) collaborating with teachers to develop a set of shared commitments, 2) listening to the perspectives of the teachers and children in their reflections about the shared reading activities, and 3) creating a set of design principles that could support future adaptations of this particular programme design.

In this thesis, I start by reviewing the literature around how children develop social understanding and bias, considering the important role of social communication with siblings, parents, peers and teachers, especially in the context of dialogue around stories. I also review the existing approaches to promoting children's social understanding and reducing bias in classroom settings in order to identify where I locate this work in relation to other relevant fields of study. I then elaborate on my methodological approach of critical design ethnography, outlining my epistemological and theoretical framework and describing the specific methods I used for data collection and analysis. I transition into presenting four findings chapters, including two case studies, a chapter investigating teachers' dialogic moves across all of the settings (including a presentation of design principles), and a final chapter about teachers' reflections about their own professional learning and their students' learning and engagement in the project. In the discussion chapter, I consider these findings in the context of related research, with a focus on discussing theories that help to elucidate the design principles. Finally, I conclude by discussing my own personal reflections on the project and what I perceive to be the limitations, contributions and future directions of this research.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

How children come to develop social understanding has become a popular topic of research and debate, most predominantly over the last four decades. One strand of inquiry concerns the question of how social communication with adults and peers supports children to adopt the tools (e.g. mental state language) which enable them to enter a 'community of minds' (Nelson, 2005). Specifically, Nelson has argued that by engaging in this communication, children gradually develop an awareness of other peoples' thoughts and beliefs, in addition to an awareness of how beliefs are broadly held (e.g. to be true, to be immoral, etc.) within a community. In this way, children begin to develop expectations about how people think and behave, sometimes referred to as social scripts, normative beliefs or 'frames' of social understanding (Cienki, 2007; Guerra, Heusmann & Hanish, 1994; Nelson & Gruendel, 1981; Bretherton, 1989). These frames act as 'shortcuts' which help children make sense of the complexity within their social worlds, however they can also prompt biases in how children process social information and make judgments about how to think about and engage with others (Bennett, 2014; Uhlmann, Poehlman, & Nosek, 2012).

One such bias, called correspondence bias or attributional bias (henceforth to be referred to as 'attributional bias') is the tendency to make judgments about other people's internal dispositions or traits while overlooking important situational factors in explaining the causes of their behaviour. It emerges in children between 4 and 6 years of age in western cultures and is a precursor to stereotyping, prejudice, and in-group favouritism (Seiver, Gopnik, & Goodman, 2013). This bias has spurred research exploring underlying mechanisms and approaches to intervention which are focused on prompting perspective taking which takes into account relational complexity (e.g. how someone's perspective depends on their position in time and space) in order to support people to develop a more complete picture of others' influences and motivations (Gawronski, 2003; Hooper, Erdogan, Keen, Lawton, & McHugh, 2014). This work has primarily involved adults, however there is also a growing body of work investigating interventions which promote primary school aged children's 'context-sensitive' perspective taking within dialogue around stories (Bianco & Lecce, 2016; Bianco, et al., 2016;

Bianco et al., 2019), which may be an important bridge for thinking about how to design programmes that reduce attributional bias in children.

Before beginning to think more carefully about how to design such a programme, it was important to review what is currently known about how children develop the ability to take others' perspectives and what aspects of this process might lead to attributional bias. In this literature review, I first survey the multitude of related research studies around children's developing social understanding, which have largely taken place within North America and Europe, with the exception of some recent research taking place in East Asia, such as Japan and China. Specifically, I review research around children's developing 'Theory of Mind' (ToM) which largely builds on Piaget's cognitive constructivist theory of development (Piaget, 1972). I discuss the traditional constructs and measurement approaches utilised in this research, I define concepts such as perspective taking, empathy, and sympathy, and I introduce how these concepts relate to research around children's early development of attributional bias. I will then describe the broadening scope of inquiry in the field, paying particular attention to the shift towards Vygotsky's sociocultural developmental perspective (Vygotsky, 1978), including a review of the concept of 'zone of proximal development' and role teachers play in scaffolding children's developing social understanding. I will home in on some of the main theories about the mechanisms by which social communication influences children's developing social understanding, including Nelson's 'community of minds' proposal.

I will transition toward expanding this review to cover the topic of how narratives, and the normative frames embedded within these narratives, influence how children pay attention to and interpret information in processes of perspective taking. To further help illustrate this complex and variable process, I will draw on cross-cultural studies of children's developing social understanding, and I will more closely consider the research around children's early development of attributional bias. I will then take a closer look at existing educational interventions which aim to promote children's social-emotional learning and/or reduce biases, spanning the fields of social emotional learning (SEL), theory of mind (ToM) intervention research, moral development, character education, and caring ethics. Finally, I will consider how this project might take a step forward in helping teachers to intentionally develop their dialogic shared-reading practices to support children to question aspects of their normative frames and to engage in more context-sensitive perspective taking in order to make fewer unsupported dispositional judgments in their talk.

I conducted a search of empirical studies about children's development of social understanding done within the last 40 years within scholarly peer reviewed journals. I have also incorporated my readings from the following three books: Carpendale and Lewis (2006), Hughes (2011), and Mercer and Littleton (2007) to gain a sense of some of the seminal historical literature and to help guide my thinking about the studies under review.

2.1.1 Setting the stage: Conceptual framework

There are four key concepts mentioned so far (frames, attributional bias, perspective taking [and context-sensitive perspective taking], and dialogue around stories) which make up the conceptual framework upon which this study builds, and which will come up at various points throughout this literature review. Please refer to Figure 1.1. for a visual representation.
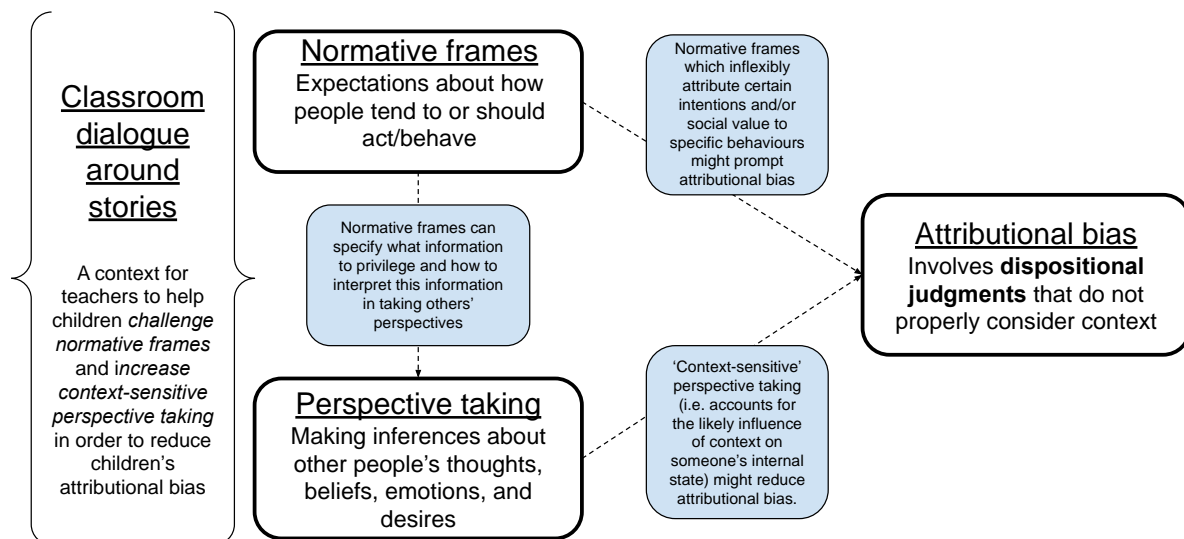
Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework

I use the term 'normative frames' to specify beliefs and expectations about 'normal' social behaviour. These frames become evident in the processes of collective meaning-making through dialogue. In this framework, I propose that normative frames are causally linked to attributional bias and perspective taking, based on the literature reviewed in this chapter (particularly in sections 2.2 and 2.3). I also use the framework to demonstrate how perspective taking which is context-sensitive (i.e. it acknowledges that someone's thoughts and motivations are uniquely influenced by specific factors in their environment) might be able to lessen children's unsupported dispositional judgments, thereby reducing attributional bias

(whereas perspective taking that does not properly take context into account my increase attributional bias). This hypothesis is based on the literature mentioned above (i.e. Bianco et al., 2016; Gawronski, 2003; Hooper et al., 2014) as well as further literature reviewed in section 4). Finally, I represent classroom dialogue around stories as a supportive context for teachers to help children question their normative frames and increase context-sensitive perspective taking (explored in section 2.3 and various parts of section 2.4).

2.2 Overview of the research in the fields of psychology and neuroscience about children's development of social understanding

2.2.1 Theory of Mind and the False Belief Task

Beginning in the 1980's, there was a surge of interest in children's developing 'Theory of Mind' (ToM) (i.e. their understanding that other people have thoughts and beliefs that differ from their own) (e.g. Astington, Harris, & Olson, 1988; Flavell, 1988; Perner, 1988, 1991; Wellman & Gelman, 1988). In this early work, children were characterised as young scientists, actively constructing their knowledge of the social world and learning to understand the mind through a process of theoretical reflection in which they formulate hypotheses and test them in their everyday social situations (Gopnik & Wellman, 1994).

Cognitive psychology researchers have typically relied on a structured 'object transfer' task, developed by Wimmer and Perner (1983), in which the child is presented with a character who is given false information (i.e. an object has been moved without their knowledge), and the child is then asked to articulate whether (s)he thinks the character will act according to the false belief or according to the child's own knowledge of where the object is. This task taps into a child's understanding of 'false belief' and successful performance on the task has been considered to be an important marker of a child's acquisition of ToM (Hughes, 2011).

2.2.2 Issues with 'acquiring' a Theory of Mind

The literature has consistently shown that children do not typically perform above chance on the traditional false belief task until about four years of age (Wellman, Cross, & Watson, 2001). However, children as young as 25 months of age have shown an implicit understanding of false belief as indicated by anticipatory looking in an object-transfer situation (Southgate, Senju, & Csibra, 2007). Further, during the first year of life, infants develop joint attention in which they

can track others' goal-directed actions (e.g. Woodward, 2003; Woodward & Sommerville, 2000). By 14 to 18 months of age, children can discriminate, at least on a basic level, between actions done 'on purpose' versus 'by accident' (Carpenter, Akhtar, & Tomasello, 1998), and they can recognize what a person is trying to do even when that person fails (Meltzoff, 1995). Thus, children may have some notion of false belief long before four years of age, and even before 25 months. Being able to explicitly demonstrate this understanding proceeds from these early foundational skills but does not manifest until children begin to acquire more domain-general skills related to language and executive control (e.g. Astington & Jenkins, 1999; Carlson & Moses, 2001; Ozonoff, Pennington & Rogers, 1991).

Wellman and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis and outlined the reasons why young children tend to fail the false belief task (2001). They found that when there were slight variations within the task which accommodated age-related shortcomings in domain general skills, children as young as 3-years-old could clearly express an understanding of false belief. Variations of the task involved enhancing the salience of the protagonist's mental state and reducing the salience of the contrasting real state of affairs. In line with this finding, it has become more widely accepted that children begin to gain a reflective understanding of mind from three years of age, in that they start to explicitly reason about and articulate others' mental states (Carpenter, Call, & Tomasello, 2002; Happé & Loth, 2002).

2.2.3 State of the Art: Conceptualisations of perspective taking, empathy, and attributional bias

2.2.3.1 Perspective Taking

Although research around ToM has tended to focus on 'false belief' as a marker of children's social understanding, there is often variation in concepts and terminology used. For example, some research focuses specifically on the cognitive aspects of social understanding; these studies often employ the term 'Theory of Mind' broadly, but the terms 'cognitive empathy', 'perspective taking', 'mentalising' and 'mind-mindedness' have also been used to refer to the understanding of the self and others' knowledge and beliefs (Carpendale & Lewis, 2006). In general, the construct of perspective taking has been plucked from the earliest social developmental literature related to visual perspective taking (e.g. Piaget & Inhelder, 1967) and re-conceptualised as a multi-dimensional umbrella concept that encompasses both cognitive and emotional dimensions, and sometimes visual/sensory components of social understanding.

It is has come to be defined as the ability to infer the thoughts, intentions, desires, emotions, and physical senses of others in order to assume a perspective or predict behaviour (Carpendale & Lewis, 2006; Mori & Cigala, 2015).

2.2.3.2 Delineation of perceptual and projective empathy: the growing sophistication and efficiency of children's empathic responses

Empathy and perspective taking can sometimes be conflated, so it is useful to define and distinguish these terms. While understanding of emotions has been included in the construct of perspective taking within the recent literature, there is also a more specific sub-construct, referred to as empathy, defined as the emotional responsiveness to the feelings experienced by another person or character. A growing number of functional MRI studies of both young children and adolescents have provided evidence that there are two partially dissociable components of empathy, demonstrated by distinctions in how social stimuli activates the amygdala compared to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC) in response to different social stimuli. This research shows that there is a basic perception-based emotional contagion system, operating in conjunction with direct exposure to another's apparent emotions, sometimes referred to as associative, receptive, or contagious empathy (demonstrated by heightened activation of the amygdala), and a more advanced cognitive perspective-taking system which is the result of assessing contextual factors and stored information to reason about another's emotions, demonstrated by heightened activation of the vmPFC (e.g. Decety, 2010; Tager-Flusberg & Sullivan, 2000).

Perception-based empathy probably plays a limited role in processing of social situations involving more complex emotions and emotional scenarios, and the level of emotional involvement seems to decrease as children develop more sophisticated social reasoning abilities. Hoffman (1988) proposed a developmental trajectory that elucidates this progression, and which has been referenced in subsequent empirical studies. That is, he claimed that first children start to show personal distress around 10 months, then at 18 months, they begin to modulate their reactions in order to be able to offer comfort and help, an ability that becomes more flexible and socially appropriate with the growing sophistication of their social understanding.

Studies that have looked at the combination of behavioural responses and patterns of brain activation in hypothetical situations triggering empathic responses in children have provided

explanatory support for Hoffman's proposed social-developmental trajectory. In a couple of particularly relevant studies, activation of the amygdala was decreased in children older than 7 years old compared to younger children; furthermore, the older the children were, the less they reported feeling pain themselves when watching other people experience pain (Decety & Michalska, 2010; Killgore & Yurgelun-Todd, 2007). Slote summarises how developmental psychologists and neuroscientists, including Hoffman and others, have explained this trend: "Genuine and mature empathy doesn't deprive the empathic individual of her sense of being separate from the person she empathizes with" (2010, p. 17).

As children get older, they exhibit more sympathy (i.e. concern or sorrow for someone else's situation), and evidently less personal distress. Further, some fMRI studies have shown increased activation of the frontal cortex after seven years of age, indicating recruitment of language and executive skills, which is useful for evaluating and deciding how to respond in more nuanced social situations (Decety & Michalska, 2010). In general, this evidence points to the idea that as children get older, they begin to develop more complex understanding involving less automaticity of emotional responding. Instead, they are likely using their existing knowledge and increased cognitive reasoning and capacity for perspective taking to appraise and respond to social situations.

2.2.3.3   The development of attributional bias

Cognitive perspective taking is necessarily a demanding process, especially for young children. It seems that while children become increasingly able to engage in cognitive reasoning to appraise and respond to social situations, they also become adept at using cognitive shortcuts, including using dispositional and trait information to make inferences about individuals in order to explain and predict behaviour (Heyman & Gelman, 1999, 2000; Boseovski & Lee, 2006). While these inferences can be accurate, as people do often act based on some universal motivations and in habitual ways, they can sometimes be incomplete, especially if they do not properly take into account the ways in which a particular situation can uniquely influence someone's internal state.

As described previously, between the ages of 4 and 6 years, children living in western cultures appear to develop attributional bias (Seiver et al., 2013). These authors asked children to complete a task which prompted them to reason about the actions of two dolls in varying

conditions, and they found that cross-sectionally, 4-year olds tended to give answers congruent with the evidence, whereas 6-year olds tended to provide primarily internal (i.e. dispositional) explanations of behaviour in all conditions. Additional studies have replicated these findings and have also shown cross-cultural variation between China and the United States (Wente et al., 2015; Seiver, 2013). That is, 6-year-olds in China do not show the same bias toward providing dispositional explanations as 6-year-olds in the US.

This cross-cultural variation in findings of children's development of attributional bias lends support to the idea that different ways of talking about people and attributing causes to behaviour within a given sociocultural context might prompt children to privilege different information (e.g. trait or dispositional information). Research which has taken a sociocultural perspective to conceptualising how children actively engage in social reasoning and perspective taking through interactions and conversations about experience helps to shed further light on where there might be key opportunities for intervention in the development of attributional bias.

2.3 A sociocultural approach to discovering processes and mechanisms of social understanding

Vygotsky's ideas have been influential in supporting researchers to think about how social-cognitive functioning is rooted in the interpersonal contexts in which it develops (Fernyhough, 2008). Firstly, researchers have emphasised Vygotsky's concept of 'intermental thinking', in which shared processes of meaning making (i.e. that take place within social interactions and conversations) become progressively internalised and transformed into the 'intramental space' (i.e. which takes place inside the individual). This process of internalisation is semiotically mediated by tools, signs, and symbols, such as language and stories (Vygotsky, 1978). Further, adults help children extend beyond what they can understand or achieve alone by working within the 'zone of proximal development', describing the space between where the child currently is in terms of understanding or ability, and where they could be (Vygotsky, 1987). Wood, Bruner, and Ross extended these ideas by introducing the term 'scaffolding', referring to the support that caregivers and teachers provide to make a task or concept more accessible to a learner (1976). Further, scaffolding has been conceptualised as a process of 'packaging' alternative perspectives on reality that children might not have readily understood or

considered, which helps children to gradually develop an internal dialogue which virtually represents these different perspectives in a coherent way (Fernyhough, 1996; 2008).

One of the first researchers to make use of Vygotskian ideas specifically in relation to children's development of social understanding was Nelson (1996). Nelson emphasised social communication with adults, siblings, and peers as supporting children to enter into a 'community of minds', which is dependent on children's abilities to engage in conversation with others about shared interests (Nelson, 2004, 2005; Nelson, Skwerer, Goldman, Henseler, Presler, & Walkenfeld, 2003). Other researchers have since adopted this perspective in order examine children's active participation in cumulative, exploratory talk, especially in the context of story reading or talk about past events, and how this supports a growing understanding that each member possesses subjective views of the world which may or may not be shared by others and which are shaped by a specific social context.

For example, Astington and Jenkins (1995), Symons (2004), Farrant, Devine, Maybery, and Fletcher (2012), Ensor and Hughes (2008), Ruffman, Slade, and Crowe (2002), and Ensor, Devine, Marks, and Hughes (2014) have focused on the unique importance of communication as a means by which the child gains access to mental state terms and concepts. In examining the relationship between different kinds of mental-state language usage in parent-child conversations and children's later mental state understanding, these studies have provided support for the importance of early exposure to rich communication, specifically with mental state terms (e.g. think, know, want) using syntax that emphasizes and clarifies opposing mental states.

2.3.1 The role of narrative and stories in children's developing social understanding

Researchers have also homed in on the ways in which mental state language is embedded within narrative structures. For example, Wareham and Salmon (2006) showed that mothers' elaborative reminiscing about personal experiences within narrative form is associated with children's social understanding. This study and others (e.g. Fivush, 1993; Reese & Cleveland, 2006) have shown how narrative is a tool for framing past experiences over time within a structured framework, often with a beginning, middle, and end (e.g. a set-up, conflict and resolution) and sometimes through the lens of a specific genre (e.g. comedy, drama). Narratives present culturally-laden social scripts and ideas about people, activities, norms and values. It

is through varying narratives within conversations that children learn basic conventions for how to talk about their own experiences and others' social behaviour, while discussing and negotiating the applications and boundaries of these social scripts (Fivush & Hamond, 1990; Hudson, 1990; Nelson, 1992). Further, narratives help children begin to develop an understanding of autobiography and in turn learn psychological models of personhood, including notions stability or malleability of personality traits across situations and how experiences might be linked together across a timeline (Richner & Nicolopoulou, 2001).

Not only do caregivers and teachers construct personal narratives with children through everyday conversation, but they also read aloud and talk aloud with children about stories that other people have written, whether these are in the form of picture books, texts, or other forms of media such as films, animations, artwork, videogames, or television. When parents engage with their children around these different forms of media, they often engage in 'extra-textual conversation', extending beyond the story itself by adding their own ideas, referring to related personal events in the child's life, and asking questions (Haden et al., 1996; Hayden & Fagan, 1987; Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2009).

This extra-textual conversation has been found to support children's social understanding when it takes place in the context of close, connected conversations in which the adults are highly responsive and attuned to the child's mental processes (Lundy, 2013). It also helps children to fill in the gaps, extract meaning, and to become aware that the text can be interpreted in multiple ways. These close, connected conversations likely provide scaffolding for children to enter into a dialogic relationship, not just with the conversational partner, but with the story itself and to potentially begin to think about the author's intentions (i.e. why the story is told in the way that it is) (Bruner, 1991). The types of texts and media that prompt these discussions also play an important role in helping children to deepen their engagement in exploring and negotiating social meaning; that is, when the texts are open-ended and ambiguous (e.g. in the way characters' interactions, thoughts, emotions, and intentions are portrayed), they can 'hook' the children into this dialogic process and stimulate children to 'push the boundaries of their own initial interpretations' (Maine, 2019, p. 345).

2.3.2 How cultural normative frames influence children's developing social understanding

Nelson has classified the different levels of stories that humans share with each other, demonstrating how personal or autobiographical stories are embedded within the stories that exist in subgroups, such as specific professions or social circles, which are also embedded in cultural and historical stories (Nelson, 2003). There has recently been a more focused investigation around how ways of talking about and telling stories about social behaviour vary across cultures and how these variations influence children's developing social understanding (e.g. Hughes, Devine, Koyasu, Mizokawa, & Ensor, 2010; Liu, Wellman, Tardif & Sabbagh, 2008). Further, some researchers have paid special attention to how narratives specify normative frames around social values, folk psychologies about the nature of mind, and ideas about individual responsibility for behaviour. I will now present findings from these studies, describing what we know about cross-cultural differences in social thinking and development, in order to lay the groundwork for theorising about how normative frames might influence processes of children's developing social understanding. For purposes of clarity, cultures will be defined here as groups that share a set of values, beliefs, and concepts based on a common background or descent, as this is the most common definition used in these studies.

2.3.2.1 Cross-cultural variations in normative frames involving motivation to understand thoughts and feelings

The ways in which caregivers talk to their children about mental and emotional states has been found to correlate with children's emerging social understanding, and researchers have begun to explore how this type of talk varies across cultures. For example, British caregivers have been found talk more often with their toddlers and ask more genuine questions about children's mental or emotional states while Italian caregivers ask more test questions (e.g. "What's that called?") (Tardif, Shatz, & Naigles, 1997). This has been posited as a primary cause for Italian children's 'lag' behind British children in their demonstration of first- and second-order false beliefs (Lecce & Hughes, 2010). More broadly, talk (or lack of talk) about mental states is likely tied to normative frames which specify how individuals within a given cultural context are expected to try to understand and explain behaviour. For example, some cultures might be more oriented than others toward explaining behaviour and might urge children to learn and exercise such skills from an early age. On the other hand, some cultures might believe that it

is difficult or impossible to know what another thinks or feels, and thus they might rarely comment on reasons for actions, even their own (Lilliard, 1998).

Further, some cultures might emphasise mental states while other cultures might emphasise social norms, moral rules or behavioural cues in explaining behaviour. For example, Naito and Koyama (2006) found that Japanese children focus more on moral and social rules (including behavioural and situational cues) rather than mental states in explaining behaviour, which has been hypothesised as a reason for children's delays in their demonstration of mental state reasoning (Hughes et al., 2010).

2.3.2.2 Cross-cultural variations in normative frames around individual responsibility for behaviour

Some cultures differ in the extent to which people are viewed as being responsible for their own behaviour. For example, children in cultures where extended families live together and where children are required to assume family responsibilities tend to show more cooperative behaviour than children in cultures with economic classes and division of labour (Edwards, 2000). Further, eastern cultures generally tend to view behaviour as being caused by social, relational and environmental factors, and view larger social groups as being responsible for individual behaviour; on the other hand, western cultures tend to attribute people's behaviour to stable and underlying traits and believe in personal responsibility and individual choice[1]. For example, in Japan, pre-schoolers are considered responsible for the actions of their classmates (Lewis, 1995). Whereas in European American culture, people are usually considered responsible for their own behaviour but not for that of others (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985/1996; Fincham & Jaspars, 1979; Hamilton & Sanders, 1992; Mischel, 1973).

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[1] It has been argued that the East/West distinction may stem from biased thinking about how people behave in collectivist and individualist cultures and that this may oversimplify intra-cultural distinctions. It may also leave out many other areas of the world with their own distinct or comparable attributional styles (Yong (2009). I will not be directly addressing this very real problem that exists within psychology research, however I aim to incorporate cross-cultural research from different parts of the world as well as acknowledge intracultural variation in the studies I review.

These differences have implications for how children attribute causes to other people's behaviour. As mentioned previously, research comparing social attributional processes in children in the US and China has demonstrated that while there is a general preference to explain behaviour in terms of a person's underlying dispositions or traits across cultural contexts, children within the United States prefer internal explanations while children in China have a stronger preference for external explanations (Seiver, 2013; Seiver et al., 2013; Wente et al., 2015). It has been hypothesised that normative conceptions of collective responsibility in China (and other eastern Asian contexts, such as Japan) might play a role in promoting children's structural or relational reasoning about behaviour and contributing to differences in their early demonstration of mental state language.

2.3.2.3 Cross-cultural variations in mental state concepts and the experience of mixed and masked emotions

Different cultures might also differ in the ways they attach certain emotions to specific situations, which influences how children label specific experiences. For example, asking a child who is afraid, "Are you afraid of the dark?" might prompt a child to label subsequent experiences of being in the dark as 'scary'. In addition to matching certain emotions with specific experiences, normative frames might involve expectations about how certain experiences can be attached to multiple emotions. For example, the Hindu Oriyas (from Orissa, India) have the concept of 'lajya', which refers to the shyness, shame and embarrassment associated with respect for someone of high esteem. When told about this emotion, people in western cultures tend to expect that it will have a negative valence, while Indians of Orissa say it is closest to the emotion of happiness (Menon & Shweder, 1994). Further, people in East Asian countries tend to report experiencing more mixed emotions than European Americans do. For example, people in Japan report more opposite-valenced emotions for one singular situation than do people in the United States (Miyamoto, Uchida, & Ellsworth, 2010).

The literature on emotion expression across cultures suggests that most East Asians are taught to regulate their facial expressions in response to social needs, whereas European Americans are encouraged to express their emotions fully (Rothbaum et al., 2000). This tendency influences children's thinking about the need to regulate expression of emotions. A study comparing emotional reactions in children in the US, Brahman, and Tamang cultures, found that Brahman children said they would show happiness in difficult situations more than did Tamang children and U.S. children. Further, Brahman children described the need for group

harmony and respect for authority, explaining that even in an unjust situation, one should not show anger but instead should sit quietly (Cole, Bruschi, & Tamang, 2002).

More broadly, children have been found to demonstrate understanding of hidden emotions and the role of beliefs and desires in emotional experience by about 7 years old. Further, they demonstrate an understanding of mixed emotions by about 9 years of age (Pons, Harris, & Rosnay, 2004). However, the evidence mentioned above makes it possible to speculate that there might be developmental differences in children's understanding of mixed and masked emotions across cultures.

2.3.2.4   Variation within cultures and classrooms

Researchers are also beginning to identify substantial variability in children's social understanding within a given cultural context and even within any given classroom of children (Devine, White, Ensor, & Hughes, 2016), which highlights that the connection between culturally-distinct normative frames and social understanding is not straightforward. That is, the concepts and expectations contained within normative frames are not passed ready-made through language or observation to children. Normative beliefs are not unitary, and children bring many values and past experiences to a social encounter or dialogue in order to construct meaning around cultural concepts and expectations within a given setting (Corsaro & Nelson, 2003). Thus, the social processes that connect culture and individual development are necessarily bidirectional and transactional in nature.

One way that researchers have described this bidirectional process of social meaning making is through a process of 'gradualism', which has overlaps with Nelson's community of minds proposal. That is, parents engage with children in interactions and conversations, which gradually introduces them to the norms and expectations of a given culture. Within these conversations, habitual use of particular phrases, verb forms, or narrative structures to convey meaning about particular experiences elicits larger socially agreed-upon normative frames; although these normative frames are not seen as being fixed, they nonetheless reflect broader cultural expectations. Researchers, especially within the field of linguistics, have labelled this process as 'indexicality', arguing that even though children engage in active construction of meaning around specific frames of meaning, parents' talk (especially about mental states) signposts certain concepts or symbols to certain contexts or situations (Budwig, 2003).

Chen and colleagues (e.g. Chen & French, 2008) have further proposed a contextual-developmental model, drawing on both sociocultural and ecological perspectives of development to elucidate the links between cultural values and social understanding. This model emphasises children's role in responding to, questioning, and expressing evaluative attitudes towards these normative frames that emerge in talk in order to make sense of and internalise these ideas in personally meaningful and contextualised ways.

2.3.3 How positioning underlies children's active engagement with and construction of narratives

Beyond responding to, questioning, and evaluating, children also begin to position themselves within and construct their own identities in relation to social and cultural narratives. This notion of 'positioning' was introduced by Davies, Harré, and Langenhove (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & Langenhove, 1991) to describe the situated, experiential unfolding of individual's identities as fluid roles within 'societal discourses' and in relationship to others (Bamberg, 2011). This term 'societal discourse' stems from Foucault's ideas about the discussions and conversation of a particular place and time that delineate status, power, legitimate knowledge and practices that people are allowed to and ought to perform (Foucault, 1969). Further, the concept of identity stands in contrast to sociological concepts which entail unitary notions of an integrated self (e.g. Erikson, 1959; Mead, 1934) and instead emphasises the fragmented diversity of self-concepts that unfold within and are tied to situated interaction, which can be likened to notions of 'identities in talk' (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998).

Positioning theory says that people position themselves in terms of storylines, which can refer to texts, to personal narratives, shared narratives of lived events, which are embedded within broader cultural narratives (as described in the previous section) (Deppermann, 2013). Positioning is fluid because there are several, potentially conflicting societal discourses that can be enacted within any single interaction (Hollway, 1984). These authors, along with Dubois (2007), propose a conceptual framework of positioning based on two levels: 1) the representational level of the story and 2) the situated level of action and interaction between speakers (Wortham, 2001).

DuBois elaborates that a person can position themselves on both levels at the same time, introducing the notion of 'stance triangle', which describes how speakers explain their own perspectives in terms of how they evaluate the 'story', position themselves and others within

this story, and align with others (i.e. around their evaluation, position, or both), dialogically (DuBois, 2007). Dubois' stance triangle has been utilised as a way to unpack speakers' construction of meaning and identity within discourse analysis, which will be further elaborated upon in the methodology section.

Considering all of this research and theory together, it seems that social norms within a given cultural context play a major role in influencing the ways in which children start to understand the importance, structure, and content of mental states, which impacts on how children begin to think about and position themselves in relation to other perspectives. In thinking about how to develop a shared-reading programme that supports children's developing social understanding and reduces bias, it was important to first wrap my head around this complexity, and to then consider how these processes and mechanisms are considered within the design of existing programs and approaches which aim to support children's developing social understanding, which I aim to do in the following section.

2.4 Reviewing existing approaches to promoting children's social understanding in classroom settings

Craig et al. (2008) advise that in the development of a complex intervention, the first step should involve consulting high quality systematic reviews of the relevant evidence, summarising existing practice and examining hypothesised processes and outcomes. However, before moving on to reviewing the literature around existing classroom-based social/emotional interventions and programmes, it is important to first explain that all of my thinking and planning for this project was anchored in the general pedagogic approach drawn primarily from The Effective Provision for Pre-school Education (EPPE) Project. This was a major five-year study funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) that explored the characteristics of effective early years practice through twelve intensive case studies. Through this project, 'sustained, shared thinking' between students (i.e. interactions in which two or more students work together in an intellectual way to solve a problem, discuss ideas, etc.) was found to be a key indicator of high-quality early years programs (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004). The teachers involved in my master's project were already using principles from the (EPPE) study to guide their practice, and we reflected on these ideas and principles when developing dialogic teaching strategies to support children's thinking around stories. The strategies we developed centred around 1) making the story come alive, 2)

following the children's lead, and 3) clarifying their ideas and asking open-ended questions to promote thinking. I shared this framework with participating teachers in this study at the start of our planning meetings in order to prompt thinking about the ways in which they might start to develop their own personalised strategies to support their students' thinking around stories. This framework is presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Framework of strategies given to teachers at the start of project

Strategy 1: Help make the story come alive	- Act out the scenes out - Have children act out characters together - Use sound effects and onomatopoeia - Spark concern and empathy for characters with vocal affect and facial expressions
Strategy 2: Follow the children's lead	- Allow the conversation to flow from children's ideas - Notice when children's tangential interests or personal experiences could be connected back to the story or to a specific theme - Reinforce inquisitive, imaginative thinking
Strategy 3: Clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions to promote thinking	- Ask open-ended questions to promote thinking and challenge children's biases or misconceptions - Clarify, synthesize children's ideas - Connect individual contributions and help children respond to one another - Reinforce imaginative thinking - Encourage children to support their ideas with evidence from the story

I will now move on to surveying existing practice specifically related to promoting social understanding in classroom settings in order to demonstrate how I extended my thinking about these ideas in the context of the broader literature. In this first part of the review, I have focused on pinpointing studies that aim to promote children's social understanding through conversational approaches, especially in the context of dialogue around stories or literature-based activities.

2.4.1 Overview of relevant studies

2.4.1.1 Studies focusing specifically on perspective-taking, empathy, and social attribution

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is an umbrella term that classifies a group of intervention strategies aimed at helping children to develop social-emotional understanding, prosocialness,

and problem-solving strategies, to build positive relationships, and to regulate their own emotions and behaviour. In the last two decades, there has been a recent wave of studies, primarily within the western hemisphere, explicitly implementing social and emotional learning programmes and analysing their effectiveness (Cohen, 2003; Humphrey, 2013).

While there is variation, there are some common features that most SEL studies share. First, there is explicit instruction in skills related to social-emotional competence, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2003). These skills are viewed as interrelated components of the interventions; however, they are often taught in separate modules. Further, there is a focus, especially in the United States, on teaching cognitive-behavioural techniques and social skills (Weare, 2010).

There is a related but separate group of studies (situated within the ToM area of research described in section 2.2) which evaluate programmes and curricula designed to foster social understanding in children, specifically focusing on promoting perspective taking, especially in the preschool and primary school years. These studies are often classified as 'training studies', focusing on promoting social reasoning through story- or narrative-based discussions and related activities, with an emphasis on active learning, practice and feedback in addition to counterfactual/imaginative thinking, modelling, and role-play (Ornaghi et al., 2011, Ornaghi et al., 2014; Ziv, Smadja, & Aram, 2013). In general, these studies prompt children, through various means, to engage in reasoning about alternative perspectives and mental states, which has been postulated as the primary mechanism by which these interventions promote ToM.

Bianco et al. (2016) have specifically focused on developing a discussion-based training programme to promote advanced ToM in primary school-aged children (building from an earlier study by Lecce et al. [2014]) and showed that the quality (rather than the simple frequency) of mental state talk that children engaged in predicted children's development of advanced ToM. This and other studies have pointed to the importance of promoting children's use of the syntax of embedded complements (e.g. sentential complements which organise second-order beliefs such as '*he thinks that* he knows…') (Wang, Ali, Frisson, & Apperly, 2016). This research also points to the importance of adults in scaffolding children's ability to make context-appropriate mental inferences, including their use of specific forms of syntax, in

order to help them to consider how knowledge and awareness varies according to different perspectives.

In reading about these intervention studies, one concern that came to mind relates to how these interventions are implemented. Many of these studies employ members of the research team to administer the intervention, while neglecting to work with or train teaching staff. Research has consistently shown the importance of repeated, consistent daily conversations about social life in children's developing social understanding (Hughes, 2011). Further, research which involves parents or teachers in implementing an intervention leads to more generalisable and long-lasting learning outcomes than activities that are introduced by outside parties (Forman et al., 2013). This raises issues about the generalisability of interventions which do not involve teachers or parents in the training. However, some of the researchers mentioned above have taken steps to work closely with teachers to adapt existing intervention approaches to specific settings.

A further follow-up study from Bianco and Lecce (2016) aimed to train teachers in a conversation-based programme to support children's mental state reasoning (based on the intervention from Lecce et al. [2014] and Bianco et al. [2016]). This programme involved training teachers to provide feedback and to confirm and expand on children's answers within group discussions around written narratives and found that teachers were effective at guiding students to discuss complex social situations. That is, they helped students to pay attention to alternative perspectives on reality, supporting them to explicitly link mental states to overt behaviour while also considering relevant contextual information within complex and ambiguous social scenarios. While I think this study has taken a positive step in the right direction, I believe more work needs to be done within the field to ensure teachers are equipped to find ways to integrate a programme into their current teaching practice.

There are two notable programmes, which might be best classified as SEL studies, called the PATHS curriculum (Greenberg & Kusché, 2006) and the 4R's Programme (Jones, Brown & Aber, 2011) which have worked closely with teachers and school staff to promote children's social understanding while also reducing children's attributional biases. Specifically, the PATHS Curriculum utilised storytelling and group discussions to introduce social dilemmas or sensitive situations, providing opportunities for teachers to guide discussion focused on solving a specific problem. Within these discussions, teachers were trained to help students

adopt different perspectives surrounding the issue, to generate possible solutions, and to hypothesise about possible consequences or obstacles. These discussions were also intended to promote role play and self-reflection, while reducing 'hostile-attribution bias' (i.e. a sub-type of attributional bias involving the tendency to interpret others' behaviours as having hostile intent, even when the behaviour is ambiguous). Relatedly, the 4R's (Reading, Writing, Respect, & Resolution) Programme targeted 'hostile-attribution bias' by working closely with teachers to deliver curricula which helped children to develop perspective taking abilities and interpersonal negotiation strategies through reading and writing activities. There have also been further studies conducted in parallel areas of work which have taken even more comprehensive approaches to school-based social-emotional learning, described in the next section.

2.4.1.2   A broader ecological perspective in social-emotional learning and moral development

The studies mentioned above tend to focus on the change that results from the introduction of a new curriculum, while often neglecting to include ecological factors in the model of change. There is, however, another group of studies that aims to promote children's social and emotional understanding by paying specific attention to how organisational and ecological features of the environment may influence learning, emphasising environmental changes as well as children's development of social understanding within intervention activities. One example of such a project is the Comer School Development Program, which focused primarily on influencing the culture and climate of schools in order to promote 'caring communities' in which children demonstrate self- and social-sensitivity and awareness (Cohen, 2001). Another similar example is the Child Development Project, a group of studies looking at the longitudinal outcomes of an intervention framework that focused on creating a caring community first, in addition to promoting children's value and character development, cooperative learning, and critical thinking within meaningful social-emotional learning opportunities. Notably, within Child Development Project, there was a shared-reading component that was devoted to helping children relate to characters in literature through learning within the group's shared thinking space (Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000). Both of these projects draw attention to the importance of pairing intervention activities within broader school or centre-wide efforts to support children's social reasoning and cooperation across all activities. The incorporation of 'character development' within these programs drew my attention to a whole field of work around character education and care

ethics, which seeks to accomplish many of the same aims as the studies described above but does not often use the terminology of 'programs' or 'interventions'.

2.4.1.3 Character education, care ethics, and social pedagogy

The field of morality and moral development has clear relevance to the field of children's social understanding, especially in relation to developing children's character and social sensitivity. Traditionally in character education approaches in the US and UK, the focus has been on children's development of specific virtues and their own personal development of 'good character', as defined by a set of values and customs established primarily by the school, family, and local community, which a child is expected to learn. However, over the last 30 years, there has been an influx of more comprehensive models of character education, which consider affective and ecological components, in addition to the rational, knowledge-based domains of character development (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). Although these models still stress the importance of moral rules, there is an increased attempt to capture the complexity of human character and to incorporate a cognitive-psychological understanding of social development. Specifically, programmes based on these progressive models pay attention to the complex interplay of children's thinking and reasoning about social behaviour, often utilising facilitated peer-group discussions of open-ended stories related to moral dilemmas, with a focus on emphasising themes of justice and community (e.g. Althof, 2003).

One notable example of this progressive model of character development is called 'care ethics', which takes an empathy-based approach to moral education, focusing on emotional engagement with and concern for others as the primary way in which anyone can know what is 'right' and 'wrong'. Care ethics is in opposition to traditional character education: instead of basing judgments and decisions on categories or rules, which often become distorted in the reality of complex social landscapes, children learn to care and be cared for, which provides a much more personal and nuanced understanding of how to behave towards family, friends, acquaintances, and strangers. The most fundamental idea of this field is that children learn to care based on their capacity for emotional engagement and on feelings of connection to others (Slote, 2007). In this way, efforts to foster abundant and supportive interactions and conversations embedded with social experiences is considered the most effective brand of moral education.

Further, in the field of care ethics, social-cognitive reasoning and empathic caring are viewed as playing a vital role in the development of adaptable moral judgment (i.e. a morality that is sensitive to the context and individuals within each situation). So, rather than referring to a set of moral imperatives, a child would be compelled to act in a situation based on an intrinsic emotional response of caring. This development is viewed as depending largely on a child's early social interactions within a caring community, likely establishing a foundation of emotional understanding and responsiveness. Thus, within these models, teachers focus on supporting children to connect, relate to, and care for others within the school context through dialogue which invites both empathic accuracy (an accurate assessment of what the other is feeling) and sympathetic response (Stueber, 2006). Care ethics incorporates concepts of children's developing 'moral identity' in which children are seen to begin to identify with new cognitive stances and ways of perspective taking which can lead to an increased sense of responsibility for their actions (Wren, 2010).

Slote (2015) says, "We need to see how both reason and empathy can enter into the moral equation… full empathic development occurs against the backdrop of increasing cognitive sophistication." Accordingly, if we are to rely on empathy in children's moral decision making, we need to also examine the subjectivities and possible flaws in projective empathic processing, perhaps looking more closely at the development of social biases and categories, in addition to context-based roles and identities, which may inhibit the type of adaptable and sensitive moral thinking that Slote and others claim to be the cornerstone of a fair and caring society.

2.4.1.4   Positioning my research within a sociocultural, ecological framework and incorporating elements of ToM training studies, SEL, character education, and care ethics

It is clear that the studies discussed here consider social-emotional learning from a very diverse range of perspectives about what matters in education. My priorities in planning and developing a shared-reading programme which could challenge normative frames, promote perspective taking and lessen attributional bias compelled me to align myself more closely to those studies that place emphasis on children's engagement in meaningful classroom conversations about alternative perspectives and mental states while paying special attention to the influence of social context on children's learning (e.g. Bianco et al., 2016; Lecce et al., 2014) with a particular focus on supporting teachers to lead these conversations (e.g. Bianco

& Lecce, 2016). These studies have helped me to think about additional strategies to incorporate into the initial dialogic teaching framework presented to teachers at the start of the project, including the use of specific grammatical constructions (e.g. sentential complements) which support children's perspective taking, in addition to the use of counterfactual/imaginative thinking, modelling, role-play, and discussions of moral dilemmas.

I was also keen to draw on approaches taken within the PATHS Curriculum and the 4R's Programme to incorporate elements of interventions which challenge attributional bias, involving the use of conversations around stories to help children to explore different perspectives surrounding the issue, to generate possible solutions, and to hypothesise about possible consequences. I also aimed to look closely at the ecological, collective, and interpersonal aspects of children's development of social reasoning, similar to the Comer Development Project. Finally, I was interested in aligning my research to moral educational and care ethics which look to develop children's social reasoning in the context of peer relations and with an explicit focus on exploring specific values and themes, such as social justice and inclusion.

2.4.2 Considering teacher professional development

In order to support teachers to take a lead role in children's social-emotional and moral development, it was useful to first look at the various conceptualisations of and approaches to teacher professional development. There are two major paradigms of teacher professional development, specifically the competency-based and the reflective- or inquiry-oriented paradigms.

The growing emphasis on standardisation of schooling has influenced the direction of educational policy in many countries, shaping a professional landscape primarily based on competency-based approaches to teacher development. However, many have criticised this emphasis, arguing that it leads to delegitimising and deskilling of the profession (Creemers, Kyriakides & Panayiotis, 2013). Reflective, inquiry-based practice is increasingly seen as a more sustainable and viable approach to teacher professional development, and collaborative consultation is heralded as a tool for those who aim to support educators in developing their practice based on pre-identified, shared values and goals (Antoniou, Kyriakides, & Creemers, 2015). However, it seems there is some discrepancy in what is meant by reflective teaching. I

identify with a broad view of reflection, outlined by Zeichner and Liston (1987), in which teachers pursue careful consideration of their educational beliefs and values, and they actively examine their pre-existing beliefs/practices in light of new experiences and ideas. Within this process of development, teachers can enter into a partnership of consultation with a researcher to help them with reflective action planning and systematic inquiry related to a specific area of teaching.

This approach fits well within a sociocultural theoretical perspective of learning, as teachers are viewed as actively constructing their professional knowledge within the settings in which they work, and as such, they bring with them prior knowledge and sets of beliefs to their interactions with students. Further, the approach to professional development parallels a similar theoretical conceptualisation of student learning: just as a consultant supports and guides teachers, teachers are encouraged to support and guide children's active meaning-making processes rather than aiming to transmit knowledge or competencies to students. They work with students in a personalised way, so they themselves can be sensitive to the existing knowledge and unique needs of individuals within their classrooms.

I aimed to incorporate notions of 'scaffolding' to identity how teachers might support children to reach a new level of knowledge or understanding by providing targeted guidance. This task of providing 'just enough' support can be quite challenging, especially within group learning activities, as teachers must be tuned into the levels of many different learners at one time, assessing the appropriate amount of support for each student. Here, I saw a valuable opportunity to act as a second observer and to provide opportunities for the teachers to reflect and adjust the amount of support given within their evolving approach to the activities. This collaborative-reflective practice could serve the purpose of helping the teachers strike just the right balance of support for children's learning. Within my project, I aimed to support teachers in this process of self-reflection and experimentation in order to tackle the complex task of guiding children's social understanding and attributional thinking.

2.5 Research questions

The initial exploration and research about how concepts of social normative frames, perspective taking, social attributional bias, and dialogic shared reading interrelate in the context of children's early development of social understanding is fragmented and fails to bring

the concepts together in a coherent way. Thus, it is only possible to try to synthesise the disparate research and to speculate about how these concepts might relate to one another, as I have done here. I aim to begin the work of bringing these concepts together in a more coherent way by investigating how normative frames influence children's context-sensitive perspective taking and dispositional judgments in the context of teacher-led shared story discussions. Further, except for care ethics, none of the programmes and approaches reviewed here explicitly incorporate concepts related to children's positioning or identity formation, which I see as a gap in the literature. Therefore, I aim to include consideration of the role of children's positioning and group identity to better understand processes of shared thinking within the discussions. I also aimed to probe teachers' and students' impressions of the reading activities, examining possible ways that these sentiments contributed to learning processes observed. Accordingly, I aimed to answer the following research questions:

Table 2.2 Research Questions

RQ1. How do normative frames influence children's context-sensitive perspective taking and dispositional judgments over the course of the shared story discussions?   i) What frames of meaning emerge in the first three shared story discussions that involve normative expectations of social behaviour?   ii) How do the children and teachers co-construct and negotiate meaning of these frames through the shared story discussions?   a. How do early normative frames (identified in RQ1/i) appear to enable or constrain children's context-sensitive perspective taking and/or dispositional judgments?   b. How do any *shifts* in the meaning of these normative frames enable or constrain children's context-sensitive perspective taking and/or dispositional judgments?   c. How do processes of positioning within the dialogue play into these shifts?   iii) What are the teachers' roles in guiding children's thinking about these normative frames in ways that promote context-sensitive perspective taking and/or lessen children's dispositional judgments?
RQ2. On reflection, how do teachers feel the project influenced their own teaching and professional learning in addition to their students' engagement and learning?

Chapter 3
Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this project, my primary aim was to examine how teacher-led classroom dialogue around stories could challenge children's normative frames of social understanding, promote children's context-sensitive perspective taking, and lessen their dispositional judgments, while shining a spotlight on the process of collaborating with teachers in this investigation. I will begin this chapter by discussing the methodological challenges associated with developing educational approaches in partnership with teachers, leading into an in-depth review of my epistemological and theoretical perspective. After I review my research aims and questions, I will describe how I planned to answer these questions through critical design ethnography, and I will consider relevant ethical implications of this methodological approach. I will then explain the process of recruitment, the participants and settings, and specific methods for data collection. Finally, I will outline my methods for analysis and the efforts I took toward promoting quality assurance throughout the project.

3.1.1   Background: Evidence-based practice and the emergence of classroom reflective inquiry

Supporting educators to develop their dialogic practices with the aim of scaffolding children's shared thinking about social situations within stories entailed a complex process of collaborative inquiry. Specifically, it involved trying to understand the processes of interaction and change that took place within the context of specific activities while contextualising this change within the surrounding processes of planning, feedback and reflection. I was eager to understand processes of learning and change that took place within small-group shared-reading activities, guided by a framework of dialogic principles and sustained, shared-thinking strategies, in order to develop instructional insights that could be useful for teachers with similar goals in other comparable settings. Thus, it was useful to consider trends within the fields of both implementation science and participatory design research in order to get a sense of the varied approaches to developing instructional programmes and interventions within educational settings.

Researchers who work within the field of implementation science in education aim to develop 'evidence-based practice', a cumulative body of knowledge about the success of individual programmes in obtaining certain learning outcomes (Bertram, Blasé, & Fixsen, 2012). Within this work, researchers have found pitfalls in many of the interventions which are designed in one controlled context and meant to be adapted to further 'messy' contexts, such as the classroom. For example, in many intervention studies, practitioners often do not feel comfortable with the material they are being asked to deliver and do not fully understand which components are essential to the success of the programme (Kelly and Perkins, 2012). Often, intervention studies do not pinpoint these essential components even in the early piloting studies, which becomes especially problematic when practitioners start to adapt and modify the interventions in ways that fit the structure and resource constraints of their individual settings (Elias et al., 2003; Fashola & Slavin, 1997; Han & Weiss, 2005). Further, these studies do not often take into account whether individual settings have sufficient programme infrastructure (e.g. training or coaching) in place to support the sustained implementation of a specific programme or intervention over time (Kelly & Perkins, 2012).

While there are advantages to using evidence to shape educational practice, the issues mentioned above are often not properly addressed, which leads to varying effects. Further, there are concerns associated with the notion of standardisation within the teaching profession, and there is a broad range of views about to what extent educational practices should be 'evidence-based'. Instead of developing an intervention in a controlled setting and then trying to adapt it to the classroom setting, many researchers build on theories from psychological research to develop an initial idea and then they begin the process of designing a programme or intervention within the classroom setting, often engaging practitioners in a form of inquiry to address a specific problem or goal. This has led to a few different methods for approaching research in ways that promote partnership and shared, reflective inquiry between researchers and practitioners. This work has also spurred a growing debate about how much evidence should play a role in this process. Specifically, criticisms have been made about research that seeks to find 'what works', and arguments around values-based education and teachers' craft knowledge have come to the fore of these debates. In the next section, I explore these arguments in more detail.

3.1.2 Finding a balance between evidence and craft knowledge

Often researchers and policymakers seek to find 'what works' in educational practice by establishing the effectiveness of specific educational programmes in order to maximize their cost-effectiveness. While basing educational decision making on evidence is necessary to an extent, a purely pragmatic 'what works' stance can be problematic, in that it has the potential to place too much value on the curricular-instructional knowledge over each individual teachers' expertise. Biesta (2010) claims that evidence-based educational practices can border on totalitarianism in that they essentially tell teachers how to teach, threatening to override their professional values and judgments. Biesta argues instead for values-based education in which evidence plays a secondary role to values and judgments of educational practitioners and the communities in which they work.

I agree with Biesta in this argument, and I see the concern about third party stakeholders or state/national governments imposing regulations on the teaching practices of schools who have their own goals and values, tied to the values of the local community. However, as Black-Hawkins and Florian (2012) assert, there are potential issues associated with overemphasising, or 'idealising' teachers' craft knowledge as the most important part of effective teaching practices, in that it can sometimes be fragmented, biased, incomplete, and insular. In order to avoid the potential dangers of relying too heavily on teachers' expertise alone, I see the appeal in developing theory and best-practice guidelines related to promoting children's learning; I believe this can be done in a way that supports teachers' professional development while accommodating flexibility and alignment with the values and goals of specific educational contexts.

In order to accomplish this balance between evidence and teachers' craft knowledge in my own project, I aimed to first define research aims which incorporated a focus on collaboration with teachers. I developed these aims alongside my research questions (i.e. each aim corresponds with a primary research question) as displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Research aims and corresponding research questions

Research aim: To partner with teachers to investigate how teacher-led classroom dialogue around stories can challenge children's normative frames of social understanding, promote children's context-sensitive perspective taking, and reduce dispositional judgments.

RQ1   How do normative frames influence children's context-sensitive perspective taking and dispositional judgments over the course of the shared story discussions?
i.   What frames of meaning emerge in the first three shared story discussions that involve normative expectations of social behaviour?
ii. How do the children and teachers co-construct and negotiate meaning of these frames through shared story discussions?
   a.   How do normative frames (identified in RQ1/i) appear to enable or constrain children's context-sensitive perspective taking and/or dispositional judgments?
   b.   How do any *shifts* in the meaning of these normative frames enable or constrain children's context-sensitive perspective taking and/or dispositional judgments?
   c.   How do processes of positioning and alignment within the dialogue play into these shifts?

Research aim: To develop a set of 'design principles' which illustrate promising dialogic moves used by teachers, instructional sequences, patterns of talk, as well as processes of teacher reflection, which can support future adaptations of this project.

(Continued from RQ1)
iii. What are the teachers' roles in guiding children's thinking about these normative frames in ways that promote context-sensitive perspective taking and/or lessen children's dispositional judgments?

Research aim: To examine teachers' general reflections on the project.

RQ2   On reflection, how do teachers feel the project influenced their own teaching and professional learning, in addition to their students' engagement and learning?

I also engaged in some preliminary thinking and planning, guided by my work in my master's project and my review of related studies in the literature review, about how certain types of clarification prompts and open-ended questioning might promote perspective taking and reduce attributional biases (see Table 3.2 below). These ideas expand upon strategy 3: 'Clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions to promote thinking' of the framework of strategies given to teachers at the start of the project (please refer back to Table 2.1). Importantly, I viewed this initial thinking as provisional and aimed to find teachers who could become my partners in investigating and further developing these ideas in light of the broader research aims.

Table 3.2 Principles for using clarification prompts and open-ended questions
- Asking about the characters' thoughts and feelings, especially questions which help children predict, hypothesise, or use counterfactual reasoning, might encourage children to more carefully infer story characters' intentions and motivations in relation to the story context

- Supporting children to clarify and build on each other's ideas, in addition helping them recall and integrate multiple ideas, might lead children to acknowledge alternative perspectives or see how their own perspectives may have changed throughout the story

- Guiding children to remember prior information or a personal experience (i.e. relate to the characters in some way) and connect this back to the topic at hand might prompt children to pay closer attention to contextual details in the story

- Prompting children to clarify the meaning of specific words or ideas and/or prompting children to support their ideas with evidence might help them to reconsider dispositional labels or judgments

- Asking open-ended questions might support children to consider more contextual factors in their explanations for characters' behaviours

- Helping children to adopt different perspectives surrounding the issue, to generate possible solutions, and to hypothesise about possible consequences or obstacles that characters face might help to support greater context-sensitive perspective taking

3.2 Epistemological and theoretical frameworks: Combining critical realism, dialogism, and ecological systems theory

Social processes are necessarily multifaceted and difficult to parse in terms of understanding causal mechanisms. I align with critical realism (CR), an epistemological position that has its origins in the early and continued work of Bhaskar and which seeks to uncover causal mechanisms of social events, activities, and phenomena (Bhaskar, 1978, 1989; Sayer, 1992). Specifically, CR posits that there are three levels of reality: the empirical level, the actual level and the causal level. The empirical level is how we experience and interpret the world, whereas the actual level of reality is what happens regardless of our engagement with it. However, critical realists acknowledge that there is no way to rise above ourselves and comprehend what this actual level of reality looks like outside of our own perspectives (cf. social constructionism; Berger & Luckmann, 1984). CR moves beyond social constructionism by arguing that we can begin to theorise about how the causal level operates through unseen mechanisms (underpinning both the empirical and actual levels) through processes of theory formation and testing, rational judgment, and empirical observation (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson, & Norrie, 1998). Critically, any understanding of these causal mechanisms is never a mirror-image and can only take the form of theories, or conditional 'works in progress'. These theories facilitate a process of analysis that can support researchers to elaborate on, modify or reject initial theories and potentially create new theories which are more 'truthlike' (Bhaskar, 1978).

This process involves identifying demi-regularities, that is 'rough and ready' patterns or partial generalities in data (Lawson, 1997, p. 204). Researchers then try to find explanations for these patterns by determining the necessary and constitutive properties of these patterns, including their relational structures, through retroductive and abductive reasoning. Retroduction involves seeking to clarify the basic conditions for social relationships, people's actions, reasoning and knowledge through transfactual or counterfactual argumentation, whereas abduction involves a process of relating an observed regularity or pattern to existing theory which in turn supports the researcher to establish a new interpretation if appropriate (Archer et al., 1998).

CR further argues that we negotiate meaning with others in an on-going consensus-building exercise, and concepts of reality are wholly dependent on the nature of this consensus. By closely observing these processes of 'consensus building', researchers can identify some of the taken-for-granted assumptions forming the foundation of ordinary social interactions in order to develop theories that help to identify the causal mechanisms driving social phenomena. Dialogism is a parallel epistemological framework which I argue can help to elaborate on how these consensus-building exercises proceed through examination of how understanding and knowledge are constructed, negotiated, and contextualised in socio-cultural contexts, and specifically within dialogue (Linell, 2003).

In order to outline how dialogism and critical realism are compatible, I must first delineate how these epistemological frameworks overlap and differ. As Linell explains, dialogism emphasises the 'communicative and cognitive construction involved in the dialogical appropriation and recognition of the world' but 'does not deny the reality of things' (2007, p 8). Further, Wegerif argues that there are different levels of dialogue, including the everyday definition of dialogic education which refers to open-ended teacher–student interactions, and more technical definitions which describe the epistemology and ontology of dialogue (2019). I take both an instrumental and epistemological view of dialogue (i.e. levels 1 and 2 of Wegerif's hierarchy of definitions of dialogue), in that I refer to the term 'dialogic education' as describing how teaching and learning takes the format of a dialogue, while also considering how children's knowledge emerges within and as dialogue, which can only be understood by observing and reflecting on the context in which the dialogue takes place.

In general, both CR and dialogism attempt to understand people's experience at the empirical level, considering the active construction of meaning and sociohistorical context of this

experience, while CR, but not dialogism, explicitly focuses on identifying the causal mechanisms of this experience (e.g. how contextual factors such as teacher reflective activities, school environment, activity format, etc. might influence children's knowledge construction and understanding in the classroom).

Both CR and dialogism assume that there are always common assumptions and norms that underlie communication, which are often unspoken and taken for granted by speakers. CR outlines a specific methodology for deconstructing these assumptions through inferential processes, such as retroduction and abduction (Glynos, Howarth, Norval, Speed, 2009; Zachariadis, Scott & Barrett, 2013), while different forms of dialogic analysis (e.g. Sociocultural Discourse Analysis; Mercer, 2007) provide tools for identifying the historical and dynamic aspects of talk in order to identify features of common knowledge upon which shared meaning making depends.

Thus, I see dialogism as complementing CR in that it provides both a specific educational format (e.g. dialogic activities) and lens for understanding the active processes of how people construct meaning through social interactions, communication and negotiation, while CR provides a more general framework for conceptualising and interpreting people's concepts and perceptions in order to hypothesise about why people think and believe what they do.

Critical realist researchers have also incorporated aspects of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory of child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) in order to identify causal mechanisms at multiple levels (i.e. the micro, meso, and macro levels) (Blom & Morén, 2011). According to Blom and Morén's model, the micro level refers to settings in which children play a direct and active role in social interactions with peers, siblings, parents, teachers, etc. Notably, these researchers also consider how children engage with social structures (e.g. normative expectations related to social roles and rules) which influence their interactions at this level. The meso level involves the social interactions between groups, networks, and organisations (e.g. the interactions between the home and school microsystems) which exert influence over children's interactions at the micro level. Finally, the macro level considers how the societal and cultural ideologies (e.g. societal views about the stability of personality) exert influence on the meso and micro subsystems.

These levels are conceptualised as being nested in a hierarchy, in which a child's microsystem is nested in the mesosystem which is nested in the macrosystem. This has been a useful framework for structuring my conceptualisation of how children's individual thinking and understanding is influenced by their social interactions which are embedded within social ideologies, structures and systems within their immediate and wider environments. See Figure 3.1 for a visual representation of Blom and Morén's model of generative mechanisms, considering the specific application to my interest in children's normative frames of meaning.

Macro social mechanisms
Consideration for how societal and cultural ideologies (e.g. societal views about the stability of personality or the role of education) influence the meso and micro social mechanisms.

Meso social mechanisms
Consideration for how social interactions between groups (e.g. between school and home) influence micro social mechanisms.

Micro social mechanisms
Consideration for how social interactions that children engage in with peers, siblings, parents, and teachers (e.g. in the classroom and home environments), material structures (e.g. classroom set-up) and social structures (e.g. expectations related to social roles and rules) influence children's normative frames, perspective taking, and attributional bias.

Figure 3.1 Blom and Morén's model of generative mechanisms (2011)

3.3 Methodological Paradigm: Critical-Design Ethnography

Both critical realism and dialogism propose that there are some specific methodological tools, such as thematic and structural analysis, discourse analysis and participatory methods such as ethnography and action research, that allow researchers to critically examine this negotiation process. These tools help researchers to parse the interaction of a multitude of patterns operating at different levels and to make claims about how a community comes to some sort of shared understanding (Groff, 2004). One existing approach which aims to use a combination

of methods to develop evidence-informed knowledge in practice, is called critical-design ethnography, which is situated within the field of Educational Design Research (EDR).

The EDR paradigm has likely emerged in response to an increased drive within the field to promote the practical relevance of educational research to policy and practice, to increase the robustness of interventions, and to further develop grounded theories of learning and instruction which are empirically tested within the relevant contexts (Van den Akker, Gravemeijer, McKenney, & Nieveen, 2006). Although there has been a focus on utilising this approach to develop technological innovations for learning, EDR generally aims to solve real educational problems by working within the context of classrooms and schools, collaborating with educators to design, study, and adapt a product (e.g. curriculum, activity, or resource) through a cyclical framework of intermediary monitoring and cumulative analysis of learning outcomes, in addition to furthering theoretical understanding of the topic under study (McKenney & Reeves, 2012).

More recently, EDR has begun to incorporate elements of participatory action research (PAR) (Hall, 1981) providing an orientation and framework for research in which researchers are not seen as the authority figure but as a co-investigator with participants, usually supporting practitioner inquiry through a close working relationship. Barab et al. (2004) have described critical design ethnography as lying at the intersection of participatory action research, educational design research, and critical ethnography. In critical design ethnography, the researcher builds a thick description of the existing context in order to attempt 'to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000, pp. 3-4), while positioning themselves in both the role of an advisor with specific expertise and a broad agenda and the role of collaborator/change agent who supports the empowerment of participants. However, there are tensions in the researcher's ever-shifting position as outside the context or organization (having 'peripheral membership' as advisor) and inside the organization (as collaborator/change agent) which requires continual critical reflection and checking in with participants to achieve the right balance (Barab et al., 2004).

This contrast between being both an advisor and a collaborator reflects the tensions inherent in ethnographic research between aiming to establish an insider ('emic') role by spending ample time observing and participating in the setting while also acknowledging that a researcher will always be an outsider 'peering in'. There is no straightforward solution to balancing these roles,

however, there have been multiple accounts of how researchers have attempted to integrate these perspectives by being thoughtful about how they build relationships with participants so that there are many opportunities to engage in open and reflexive communication about whether the researcher's interpretations closely reflect the participants' experiences (Bergman & Lindgren, 2017).

The element of using ethnographic methods provides a toolkit for researchers who want to develop complex educational programmes that require local input and collaboration in the design process. Thus, a researcher first aims to become familiar with participants in a particular setting, including their shared routines, practices and traditions by first spending time in that setting and getting a sense of what daily life is like in order to support teachers to design a programme or engage in professional learning that is meaningful and appropriate for that particular setting.

These research observations are meant to continue throughout the design process, and the goal is not to produce an ethnography per se but a 'design narrative', which is built upon the researcher's familiarity and interactions within the setting. In general, the analysis tends to be undertaken in an iterative manner in which the data (e.g. observations, field and reflection notes) are continually examined and reflected upon throughout the process to theorise about underlying causal mechanisms, reflected within 'design principles' (i.e. a set of guidelines and conditions for future adaptations of a particular programme design) (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Herrington & Reeves, 2011).

Elaborating on my previously mentioned research aims, I intended to support development of educational practices through reflective-action research processes, investigating processes of participation and change in thinking over the course of the project, and to ultimately produce knowledge that could be of benefit to the settings under investigation and that could be adapted and scaled up to other settings. Thus, it fit well to adopt a critical-design ethnographic methodological approach in which I developed close working relationships with teachers in order to develop a set of shared commitments related to the topic of challenging children's normative frames of social understanding and promoting perspective taking.

Under this broad methodological umbrella, I pursued ethnographic research methods in addition to more dialogically-focused methods (as discussed further in sections 3.5 and 3.6),

which supported a collaborative appraisal between the teachers and myself of how certain changes in children's and teachers' thinking transpired over the course of the project. This involved an abductive approach (O'Reilly, 2005), moving back and forth mentally between my field experience and my abstract theoretical explanations, referred to as 'theoretical reflexivity' in critical ethnography (Foley, 2010), which will be described further in my descriptions of how I approached thematic analysis and discourse analysis (i.e. in sections 3.5 and 3.6).

3.3.1 Ethical considerations

My research involved an intervention into the lives of the teachers and children being studied, and therefore it was important to be intentional about how I would uphold certain responsibilities toward these participants and to consider how to balance maximising the benefits and minimising any risk, based on BERA's guidelines (BERA, 2018). Firstly, it was crucial to consider issues that might arise with regard to obtaining informed consent from participants and accurately incorporating their views into the research process. I was committed to being as open as possible about my aims from the start of my engagement with teachers, children, and their families.

I discussed with teachers any privacy/consent policies that the school already had in place regarding the students, and how these requirements might fit into or supplement my plan for obtaining informed consent from the parents and children. We developed a plan together and collaboratively designed and sent information sheets and consent forms home to parents/legal guardians, detailing information about the study, including what each child's involvement would entail. Within this process, teachers and I were mindful of ways in which we could be culturally sensitive in sharing this information with families. I requested that parents sign a consent form if they were happy for their children to participate.

The forms also requested permission to video record activities in the classroom, specifying the exact personnel who will have access to these videos. Additionally, parents were reassured that I would take every precaution to ensure that their child's data remain secure and confidential (privacy/confidentiality procedures to be discussed further in the next section). There was an opportunity for parents to ask me questions in person (i.e. through scheduled information sessions at each setting) before they decided whether to let their children participate in the study. Parents were told they were not required to provide permission, and that their decision

would not affect their standing with the school in any way. Only children whose parents returned a signed consent form indicating that they provided permission for their child to participate were included in the study. Parents were also made aware of their option to withdraw from the study at any time by notifying me by email, without any penalty. I also encouraged parents to email me with any questions or concerns over the course of the project. Importantly, I also asked teachers to sign 'informed consent' forms which outlined my research aims and what the commitment of the project would entail for them. Similarly to the parents, I told them that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they no longer felt comfortable or able to participate.

The next step was to obtain assent from participating children. This involved describing the activities in age-appropriate language, with support from the teacher, and asking each child individually whether they were happy to take part and felt comfortable being video-recorded. Importantly, I checked to make sure each child understood what (s)he was being asked (with verification from the teacher) and asked him/her to verbalise or nod 'yes' or 'no'.

Children were not made aware of the exact aims of the study for two reasons: a) the children were very young, and thus this information was not likely to mean very much to them, and b) the activities in the project did not substantially differ from those of the children's everyday classroom experiences. In general, I was most concerned that children were encouraged to speak up when they felt uncomfortable with something or did not want to participate in an activity. In order to ensure that this was the case, I made certain that both the teacher and I remained sensitive to the children's subtle cues or indications that they were uncomfortable or unhappy with an activity or some aspect of the project. I set aside some time during each teacher-researcher reflection meeting to keep an ongoing discussion about each individual child's participation and engagement in the activities in order to promptly address any concerns, however minor, that arose.

I felt it was important to shine a light on both teachers' and children's experiences within the project, so I engaged in open reflection discussions with teachers throughout the research process and with each group of children at the end of the project, in which children had opportunities to describe what they liked or did not like about shared-reading activities. Within this process, I built a trusting relationship with participants (including both teachers and children) and I was as transparent as possible about my research process. In order to do this, I

focused on developing open relationships with teachers and continually shared with them how I was thinking about the project, especially as I began analysing the data, while continually checking in to ensure they (and parents) felt well-informed throughout all stages of the project, including after our work together had finished.

I was also concerned with whether my involvement with each setting would have a lasting impact and whether the practices teachers developed through the project would be sustainable even after I left. I aimed to support the development a culture of reflective inquiry instead of a one-off opportunity to engage in this reflection, and I worked to help teachers establish lasting systems and structures in their settings so that they could build on insights from the project and continue the process of collaborative reflective inquiry. At the end of my work within each setting, I led workshops, both with other staff members and parents, describing some of the preliminary findings and outcomes and supporting staff to brainstorm ways in which to extend this learning to inform future curriculum planning and staff training.

3.4 Methods for data collection

3.4.1 Participants and settings

The most important component of recruitment for the project was to find early years and reception teachers who expressed 1) a clear desire to develop their practice around promoting children's social understanding and 2) an interest in dialogic teaching approaches. Further, it was important that school management provided encouragement for teachers to develop their practice through experimentation and/or reflective activities. In general, as long as these criteria were met, I was not concerned with whether the settings were public or private. Further, I aimed to recruit at least two teachers from each setting so that there were opportunities for informal reflection and collaboration over the course of the project. In recruiting teachers for the project, I sent cold emails out to primary schools, early years and sure start centres and I put out an ad in the monthly newsletter of a network of schools and partners in Cambridgeshire, describing my research project and asking for interested schools to contact me. Finally, I put the word out by speaking to personal and professional contacts. I received expressions of interest from six different settings in total, but in the end, only three of these settings decided they were able to participate. Within these settings, six teachers (i.e. two teachers from each of these settings) agreed to participate in the project.

The first setting, which I will refer to as Setting A, is a private centre located in a small village on the outskirts of Cambridgeshire. The second setting, which I will refer to as Setting B, consists of two reception classrooms in a primary school located in Cambridge City Centre. The third setting, which I will refer to as Setting C, is a Sure Start children's centre located in a suburb of Cambridge. In each setting, there was one teacher who initially volunteered to participate and they each asked a colleague to join them. Setting A consisted of two teachers who worked together in one classroom with the same group of children, whereas Settings B and C consisted of two teachers who worked in separate classrooms with different groups of children.

It is important to note that I was constrained by a limited pool of centres who were responsive and open to the considerable commitment that would be required for involvement. Thus, the final group of centres that ultimately participated in the project will be considered a convenience sample, and this will be considered in any efforts towards making generalisable claims from my analyses.

The teachers each chose 5-7 students to participate in the project. In our early discussions, I deliberately did not lay out any specific criteria for selecting students, however I did have discussions with teachers about how this project might be best suited for particular students, based on several different factors. In Setting C, both teachers decided to include all of their 'key children' (i.e. children they are responsible for in terms of monitoring their development and learning to ensure that they meet certain milestones). They thought it made sense to involve these children in the project, especially because they knew these children well and they already had time set out during the week to work with them in a small group format. In Settings A and B, teachers explained that they chose students that they felt were 'ready' based on their language development, social knowledge, and reasoning. Both teachers in Setting B explained that they chose students who were in the 'advanced reading groups'. They said they saw value in working with many of the other students in this small-group dialogic format but that they felt that working with specific students who they already knew enjoyed reading would enable them to focus on the dialogue rather than other difficulties related to attention or comprehension.

3.4.2 Data collection

I met with the pairs of teachers together in each setting to discuss the aims of the project and to make plans, including mapping out an agenda and logistics for the shared-reading discussions, scheduling reflective meetings and observations, choosing the books, thinking about the types of strategies they would focus on developing and discussing where our aims for the project overlapped and where they might differ. We spent a large portion of these early meetings discussing various books that we thought might be suitable for the project. Specifically, both the teachers and I brought a list of a books that we thought had nuanced characters and interesting social dynamics. I also emphasised that I thought it would be important to choose books with plots and themes that were engaging and contained issues or subtopics relevant to their particular classrooms.

Because the teachers in each setting (aside from Setting C) needed to find cover for the remaining students in the classroom while they led the small-group reading discussions, I suggested that we aim for the duration of the project last no more than a term (10 weeks) in each setting. The teachers agreed that this seemed manageable, so we aimed to choose six books to be read over six weeks in order to allow a couple weeks before and afterward to conduct observational and reflective activities.

I conducted two observations in each classroom, spread apart by about a week, before we began the reading discussions. These observations were meant to allow me to get accustomed to the classroom environment and daily life in each setting and to allow the children to become comfortable being around me. During these visits, I attempted to become a part of classroom life, often staking out in a few different corners of the room or playground for about 30 minutes at a time. I did not actively try to become involved in the play, but I did stand in close approximation to their activities and was responsive to bids for help or questions from the children. I took in-depth notes in my field journal as much as possible while watching and engaging with children during daily classroom activities. After each observation, I also wrote down my thoughts in a reflective journal in order to think carefully about what I observed and what appeared to be incomplete. These ethnographic fieldnotes will be described in further detail in the next section. I video-recorded each shared-reading discussion and transcribed all of the speech and some salient physical mannerisms, which constituted the largest part of my corpus of data.

Because the primary purpose of my reflective meetings with teachers was to engage in open and collaborative reflection about what had happened during the previous reading discussion, I did not video or audio record these meetings, which I felt helped to preserve teachers' candidness. However, I did take ample notes during and after these meetings, similar to my field observations. I also provided written feedback to teachers, based on both my personal observations and our collaborative discussions. I considered this written feedback to be part of my fieldnotes. Finally, I conducted informal interviews with the pairs of teachers together in each setting at the end of the six shared reading discussions. I prepared for these interviews by creating an interview schedule (Appendix A) with questions that were not intended to be strictly adhered to but instead were meant to guide the discussions. I formulated these questions by reviewing my fieldnotes and reflection journals and looking for specific areas of interest (including areas of clarity or confusion) and junctures of tension that I observed over the course of the project.

Because these interviews were meant to act less as collaborative discussions and more as opportunities for the teachers to express their views, and because they constituted the data for my final research question, I decided to audio-record them (with permission from teachers). This enabled me to capture all of what was said, to transcribe the audio recordings, and to be able to return to the data in order to conduct a thorough thematic analysis of teachers' reflections. Please see Appendix B for a detailed illustration of the structure and timeline of my engagement within each setting and Appendix C for a summary of the books chosen in each setting. Also refer to Table 3.3 for a summary of the types of data and approach to analysis corresponding to each research question (which will be further discussed in the next section).

Table 3.3 Summary of types of data and analysis for each research question

RQ1. How do normative frames which involve prescriptive attitudes or dispositional judgments of characters enable or constrain context-sensitive perspective taking over the course of the story discussions?		
i	Type/amount of data collected	- 15 hours of video of shared-reading discussions (30 minutes per week over the course of 6 weeks x 5 settings), transcribed - 40 hours of classroom observations (classroom observations in each setting lasting approximately 1 hour per week over the course of 8 weeks x 5 settings), documented by field notes and post-observation reflective notes - 15 hours of reflection meetings (reflective meetings with teachers in each setting lasting approximately 30 minutes

		per week over the course of 6 weeks x 5 settings) documented by field notes
	Method of analysis	Thematic content analysis, based on a critical realist approach, modified from Fletcher (2007), characterised by: - An iterative process, starting with an inductive approach (i.e. looking for 'demi-regularities), and using retroductive and abductive techniques to support a constant comparative method (Grounded Theory (GT); Corbin & Strauss 1996) - Reflection upon ethnographic field notes (utilising retroductive and abductive reasoning; Archer et al., 1998)
	Presentation	Findings presented in the form of a table of themes/subthemes
ii	Type/amount of data collected	Same as above
	Method of analysis	Sociocultural Discourse Analysis (SDA), examining how knowledge is jointly constructed in talk, through: - Analysis of how word choices, phrases, and patterning within talk (e.g. repetitions or collocations) can indicate joint understanding, misunderstandings, or different points of view (Johnson and Mercer, 2019; Mercer, 2008) - Examination of how children and teachers construct and negotiate meaning around normative frames (identified in RQ1/a) (incorporating elements of Frame Analysis: Goffman, 1974; Gordon, 2008), with a special consideration for how children and teachers take up different stances throughout the dialogue (Dubois, 2007) - Reflection upon ethnographic field notes, in order to incorporate consideration for how micro, meso, and macro structures influence construction and negotiation of the meaning of frames, based on Blom and Morén's model of generative mechanisms (2011)
	Presentation	Findings presented in the form of case study narratives
iii	Type/amount of data collected	Same as above
	Method of analysis	- Identification of teachers' dialogic moves, guided by a modified version of the Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (SEDA) coding framework (condensed version) (Hennessy et al., 2016) - 'Microanalysis' of narrowed episodes of dialogue, involving identification of patterns of teachers' dialogic moves which seemed to support children's shifts in thinking
	Presentation	Findings presented in the form of narrative and 'design principles'

RQ2. On reflection, how do teachers feel the project influenced their own teaching and professional learning in addition to their students' engagement and learning?

	Type/amount of data collected	6 hours of audio recording of informal interviews with teachers (4 interviews conducted: 1 interview conducted with both teachers in Setting A, 2 interviews conducted individually with

	teachers in setting B, and 1 interview conducted with both teachers in Setting C) lasting approximately 1-1.5 hours each transcribed
Method of analysis	Thematic content analysis as described above for RQ1/i
Presentation	Findings presented in the form of a thematic narrative

I outline the specific processes I undertook for each stage of my analysis in sections 3.5 and 3.6.

3.4.3 Data confidentiality and organisation

All participants were given pseudonyms on all electronic and handwritten documents to ensure anonymity. Additionally, all identifiable information collected was de-identified using assigned participant ID's, and all documents linking ID's to names was encrypted. Raw data was seen only by the researcher, teachers, and research supervisor. Video and audio files were encrypted and were only be viewed by the researcher, teachers, and supervisor on a personal computer in a private location, such as office or home, unless the parent had given permission for use other purposes (e.g. presentations). In order to organise the large quantity and variety of data that I collected, I used NVIVO, an online software for data storage and analysis in mixed methods research, which also facilitated with transcription and text analysis (e.g. thematic and content analysis).

3.5 Methods for data analysis

3.5.1 Critical ethnography

Through both observations and participation within daily classroom activities, I aimed to get a sense of what it was like to be a member of each classroom and I took ample notes describing my impressions of how children engaged with each other within classroom routines. I was especially interested in any implied or explicit expectations about how their peers should behave. Through these extended observations, children began to get to know me and seemed increasingly comfortable with having me around. They began to engage with me more during these visits, and I felt I was slowly becoming more privy to their informal interactions and conversations; further, both the teachers and the students often explained to me 'what was going on' in terms of their understanding of the meaning of the activities they were engaged in.

These observations helped me to begin to notice the implicit rules and assumptions embedded in their activities and games and also to identify when there appeared to be breakdowns in meaning or miscommunications. I took in-vivo field notes, jotting down anything that seemed interesting or that I felt was worth noting, and then sat down for about an hour after my observations to write out these field notes more coherently and to reflect on what I had observed. This involved thinking carefully about how I may have lacked important background information to fully understand what I was observing and how my observations of or interactions with the children may have influenced their behaviour. Please refer to Appendix D for a sample of these early field notes.

I found these observations to be challenging, as I often felt like I had a lot that I wanted to write down while also wanting to continue to pay attention to the ongoing interactions between students. I also found that I wanted to be everywhere at once but had to make strategic decisions about how to split my time between areas of the classroom, especially during sessions in which there were multiple activities and stations that children were free to choose between.

I continued to observe and take field notes throughout the course of my involvement in each setting and often shared these notes during the reflection meetings with teachers to see if they had any further insights which could help me make sense of my observations. As with the initial fieldnotes, I jotted down notes during my observations, and then I spent an hour re-writing these notes in a more coherent way and reflecting on what I had written. Please see Appendix E for a sample of these ongoing fieldnotes as well as my notes from reflections with teachers.

3.5.1.1 Constructing an ongoing commentary around the dialogue and interactions within a sociocultural discourse analytic (SDA) framework

Part 1: Thematic analysis of normative frames of social understanding

In order to answer research question 1, and in keeping with my CR epistemology, I first conducted an applied thematic analysis in order to search for 'demi-regularities' or themes that emerged from children's talk. Some critical realists have employed a grounded theory (GT) approach to coding within thematic analysis (e.g. Maxwell, 2012; Oliver, 2012). However, as Fletcher (2007) argues, GT was traditionally an inductive process and was not intended to be guided by existing theory or literature on a topic. That is, it avoided active engagement with

existing theory during the analysis process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). However, Corbin and Strauss later incorporated thinking about the conditions and consequences of themes in order to trace 'paths of connectivity' within the GT approach, making it less purely inductive and more of an iterative method of both induction and deduction (Corbin & Strauss 1998, p. 199).

Corbin and Strauss also acknowledge that theory is inevitably subject to the interpretation of the researcher (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Thus, while GT starts with a primarily inductive approach, it is amenable to incorporating approaches drawn from CR which help the researcher to analyse interweaving micro, meso, and macro factors (e.g. Blom & Morén, 2011). In this way, I employed a flexible coding approach, starting with an inductive process of identifying demi-regularities and identifying categories within the text, and continually adjusting these categories through constant comparison and engagement with existing theory (i.e. through abductive and retroductive techniques, as described previously). Specifically, each emerging category was compared with the extant categories and interpreted through a lens of existing theory to determine if the emerging category made sense in the way I had initially interpreted it (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Futing Liao, 2004).

I intentionally only conducted thematic analysis on the dialogue that took place within the first three story discussions in each classroom/setting, as I was interested in the children's preliminary frames. Further, this process was meant to be a basis for subsequent discourse analysis of all six story discussions, in which I would continue to build on interpretations of these frames in a more in-depth way, looking specifically at how the meaning of frames were both evoked, constructed, and negotiated by children and teachers over the course of the discussions (described further in this section, part 2 below). The thematic analysis began with transcribing the data and double-checking these transcriptions against the videos and entering the data into NVIVO software. I then analysed the discussions separately in each group of students, first familiarising myself with the data and noting initial thoughts, interpretations, and questions about the topics of dialogue (referred to as stage 1).

I coded all relevant extracts into categories and sub-categories, iteratively refining codes when new data suggested a different meaning or overarching topic, while creating annotations about the emerging structure of the codes and about my ongoing thinking around overarching themes. I also sought to identify one or two primary themes (i.e. normative frames of social understanding), from which I could base the resulting discourse analysis. Therefore, I

conducted a third stage of analysis, which involved identifying which topics came to the fore and were carried throughout all six discussions, while making final annotations and adjustments to the content/structure of these codes. Please see Appendix F for an example of these initial codes and annotations from stages 1-3. Please also see Table 3.4 for a list of the list of themes describing children's preliminary normative frames, including sub-codes (referred to as frame elements) and examples of transcripts which correspond to each code/frame element.

Throughout this process of coding, I referred back to my field notes and field reflections in order to reflect on how the emerging themes made sense in the context of my growing knowledge of each setting. Importantly, this involved processes of retroduction, in which I developed provisional hypotheses about how some of these thematic concepts might be causally influenced both by children's social environments and individual factors (based on field notes, reflections, and discussions with teachers), and abduction, in which I tried to relate my observations to existing theory, sometimes drawing on relevant literature in order to find the simplest and most likely interpretation of the data. These reflections provided a foundation for thinking more carefully about the meaning of the frames within the Discourse Analysis (described further in the next section). Please see Appendix G for an example of this stage of retroductive and abductive reflections.

Table 3.4 Summary of normative frames selected to be included in the subsequent discourse analysis

Setting	Frame	Frame subthemes/ descriptions	Frame elements	Example(s)	
A	Emotions as anchored in specific experiences and physical expressions	Specific experiences associated with certain emotions or dispositons	**Beauty** (e.g. beautiful music, beautiful people) is associated with happiness	Teacher	When do you feel happy?
				Allison	When we make a beautiful sound.
				Scarlett	Um, I think that only beautiful people can smile, not bad people.
			Home is associated with happiness	Teacher	So do we think our piano playing bear is happy at the moment in the city?
				Scarlett	But why isn't he happy to be in his own home?
			Shyness is associated with hiding	Teacher	What do you do when you feel shy?
				Francis	I hide behind mummy's back.
			Physical body langugage or facial expression changes someone's emotional state	Teacher	So he's got friends in the city, and he's got friends in the woods. How do you think we could make the bear happy?
				Allison	He needs to make a smile.
		Physical displays of happiness and sadness	**Facial expressions** indicate someone's emotion	Teacher	Can you explain why you think he's sad?
				Scarlett	Because his mouth is like this.
			Body posture is linked to emotion (e.g. head down implies sadness)	Scarlett	Because it's, they're putting their beaks down.
				Teacher	So what does that mean?
				Allison	Sad.
				Scarlett	Sad.
	Negative traits are defined by overt behaviours and carry specific consequences	Sharing and cooperation are viewed as imperatives	**Bad labels:** You have to share and be kind, otherwise you are nasty, naughty, bad, rude (also baddies/burglars)	Teacher	Why can these be friends but the giraffes can't then?
				Francis	Because those are nasty.
				Teacher	Because they're nasty? Do you think they're nasty giraffes?
				Scarlett	Yeah because they won't let him play.

			Nasty people don't smile (linked to emotion frame)	Teacher	Allison, do you think nasty people can smile
				Allison	No.
				Teacher	You don't think nasty people can smile? Why do you not think nasty people can smile?
				Allison	Because that means they're very bad and have to go to prison.
		Punishment for not sharing or cooperating	**Punishment:** People deserve to be sent to be prison if they exclude or are mean to others	Teacher	Oh, why are they bad people?
				Allison	Because they should go in prison.
				Teacher	Oh, why should they go in prison?
				Allison	Because they won't let him play.
B, 1	A social script for kindness and making friends	There are social expectations about being kind, specifying wayss in which children should act toward peers in school	**Filling up someone's bucket** involves reaching out and doing something nice for someone elso to show them that you care; filling up somoene's bucket also fills up your own bucket; likewise, empying someone else's bucket also empties your own.	Teacher	What are they doing?
				Elliot	They're dipping into his bucket.
				Teacher	They're dipping into his bucket, and emptying their own buckets. They're not going to feel good about themselves are they?
			Reinforcement: Adults help to teach and enforce kindess	Elliot	If those children were in this class, then I would tell, I would tell the teacher.
				Teacher	Ah, would you tell me if somebody did this? Yeah, because we don't want this happening in our class, do we? We don't want anyone to feel upset.
				Elliot	No.

B, 2	Weirdness/normality	There are normative expectations for how a member of a category is meant to look or behave	**Weirdness** linked to aversion and exclusion: The students describe the qualities of weirdness and their own personal reactions to the weird characters, including anger and disgust on one hand, and sympathy and kindness on the other	Emma	Birds are supposed to fly.
				Nadia	To get some food really quickly.
				Nadia	That is really weird.
				Teacher	Why is that a weird name?
				Nadia	Something else isn't a name
				Teacher	You didn't like it? Why didn't you like it Darrin?
				Darrin	Because weird things.
				Teacher	Because it had weird things?
				Darrin	And this is weird…
				Teacher	Is he?
				Darrin	Yeah, weird.
			Being the same vs. being different: The students describe similarities and differences based on shared or contrasting physical features	Teacher	How are we different?
				Hugo	Darrin's wearing a skeleton.
				Teacher	Oh, Darrin's wearing a skeleton. But how are we different. Emma? Do you know how we're different?
				Emma	'Cause we have skin.
				Teacher	Oh we have skin, so we're a bit different from them.
				Hugo	Some of us have brown skin. It's brown.
C, 1	Belonging	Belonging to a group is necessary, and when this need is unmet, it makes you sad.	**Family** is based on physical similarities, but it is a source of protection and security.	Kyle	We need two blue ones […] Because, then the bird will be happy.
				Wade	If your mom is about to leave, you just kiss, like this.
				Teacher	Right, and is it important to do that?
				Wade	So she knows you're there.
			Conformity is conceptualised as the responsibility of the individual but they also question the practicality of	Teacher	I don't get these people, Eric. These ones still are not letting him be friends.
				Ed draw really	They are not his friends. He needs to the same pictures. He needs to jump really high.

				conforming to a subjective standard.
		Loneliness is linked to being rejected from a group	Wade	She's lonely. And lonely means nobody likes her. So nobody likes her in this picture. She doesn't like her. She doesn't like her. She doesn't like her. She doesn't like her.
C, 2	The meaning of mean behaviour	**It's not nice** to laugh or shout at others	Teacher	What do you think to that?
	Someone is being mean if they laugh or shout at someone else, and they ultimately have to say sorry to that person for being mean.		Ryan	Sad.
			Lori	Sad and mean.
			Teacher	It is. What do you mean by mean?
			Lori	'Cause he laughed at him and you don't share food.
			Teacher	Yeah, and you think that that means his brothers are being…
			Lori	Mean.
			Teacher	Mean to him, because they won't share and they're laughing. Yeah, okay, I think you might be right.
		Saying sorry: there is a need for someone to apologise if they've been mean	Lori	When people are mean, you have to say sorry.
			Teacher	Right, and then why do you say sorry?
			Lori	Because, if you laugh at someone, you say sorry.

Part 2: Discourse analysis of shifts in frames over time

Discourse analysis (DA) seeks to investigate how, through linguistic and paralinguistic means, interlocutors create and negotiate meaning and identities in everyday interaction. Sociocultural discourse analysis (SDA), first described in detail by Mercer (2007), is a type of DA primarily concerned with the ways in which shared knowledge is evoked and created in talk and how these processes are linked to learning. The analyst considers both historical (i.e. institutional and cultural) and dynamic (i.e. actively changing) aspects of shared knowledge construction and provides a commentary, concerned primarily with the lexical content and structure of talk and how joint cognitive engagement appears to be related to learning. However, there is a challenge involved with maintaining sensitivity to how shared knowledge is both invoked and actively created in dialogue (Gee & Green, 1998). Sociolinguistic studies have enacted 'frame analysis', placing special emphasis on ways in which speakers negotiate their 'frames of meaning' in-vivo, through various processes such as alignment (i.e. describing how individuals establish a common framework and vocabulary for talking about concepts) and blending (i.e. ways in which frames of meaning are reorganised or two or more frames are merged) (Goffman, 1974; Gordon, 2008; Dubois, 2007).

In this project, I aimed to incorporate elements of SDA, including temporal analysis to identify intertextual ties between stories and connections between discussions (Mercer, 2008) in addition to analysis of how word choices and specific patterning within talk demonstrate how knowledge was being jointly constructed (Johnson & Mercer, 2019). However, I also saw the social roles and positions that students and teachers took up within their interactions as a crucial part of the meaning-making process. Therefore, I also incorporated approaches within more traditional linguistic discourse analytic methods which analyse how negotiation of frames and processes of positioning guide meaning making and local understanding within social interaction (Gordon, 2015).

DuBois recently synthesised a concrete application of both framing and positioning theories to discourse analysis, in which he describes an overarching concept of 'stance' involving two or more speakers simultaneously evaluating objects (e.g. characters in story), positioning subjects

(self and others), and aligning with other subjects (i.e. around their evaluation or position, or both), dialogically through overt communicative means (Dubois, 2007). Evaluating, positioning, and alignment are three different aspects of the 'stance triangle' which is associated with a single, overarching 'stance act' (see Figure 3.2 for an illustration of the stance triangle). This process is conceptualised as taking place around a line of inquiry, often around an overarching question which can be implicit or made explicit in dialogue.

Further, positioning refers to the discursive processes whereby selves are located in conversations and within storylines, considering the different roles that speakers take in an interaction and the ways in which speakers' conceptions of 'self' (e.g. what kind of role they take on within the group) emerge in interaction. The act of evaluating involves portrayal of attitude, affect, and judgment. Alignment refers to how speakers support, associate with, or reject one another's positions or evaluations. Finally, voice is an aspect of positioning, evaluation, and alignment, referring to what happens in participants' expressive orientations and how changes in tone or pace might indicate either changes in positioning, evaluation, alignment or all three. Identifying these aspects of interactions enables the analyst to think carefully about how processes of stance-taking are interwoven in participants' ongoing construction of meaning.
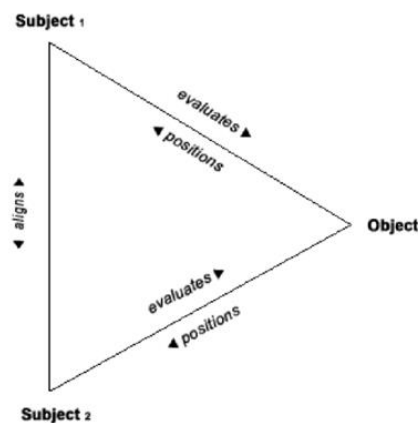
Figure 3.2 The stance triangle (Dubois, 2007)

My practical approach to analysing the dialogue in each setting involved first reading through the transcripts with a focus on the initial frames identified in my earlier thematic analysis (i.e. frames around emotions, negative traits, kindness, wierdness, belonging, and mean behaviour). Specifically, I drew on my initial retroductive and abductive reflection notes about how the students were referencing, either explicitly or implicitly, their shared experiences or concepts. Additionally, I continued to draw on my ethnographic field notes to further help make sense of this data. I paid close attention to moments in which there appeared to be conflicts, tensions, or breakdowns in meaning, in order to begin to build a commentary about how the meaning of the frames may have changed both within these specific moments and progressively over the course of the discussions. Building a commentary was an extensively iterative and multi-layered process in which I continually returned to the data and to my field notes to refine my interpretations and overarching thematic headlines describing how the initial frames appeared to be evolving, drawing on linguistic terminology such as stance, positioning, evaluation, alignment and frame blending (Gordan, 2002; 2008). Please see Appendix H for a sample of an early stage of this process of building the commentary.

This initial part of the analysis involved writing a first draft of this commentary and systematically choosing excerpts in order to illustrate my claims. Choosing excerpts involved a process of rating the relevance of children's references to the initial frame(s) on a scale of 1-5, with annotations about the level of shared meaning-making or negotiation between students. I chose a 5-point scale as I wanted to be able to make a judgment efficiently about whether the episode seemed to contextualise the frame but I also need to make sure I gave due consideration the variation in how frames were being negotiated (including episodes that might be more tangentially related to a topic). There were some instances in which I felt I had too many episodes that were relevant to include in the commentary, and so I made a hierarchy of decision criteria to choose whether to include or exclude an episode.

The first priority in this hierarchy involved my rating of relevance to the identified overarching frame(s). The second priority considered the level of interaction between students, so as to prioritise episodes that indicated shared thinking processes over individual contributions or

interactions between a teacher and only one student. The third and final criteria involved the extent to which the episode demonstrated stance-taking from one or more students or the teacher.

I designated these criteria in order to ensure that I was consistent in what I was looking to include and so I did not inadvertently overlook or exclude episodes in order to make my case stronger. In fact, I aimed to search for excerpts to include that detracted or muddled the overarching storyline. Ultimately, I assigned ratings based on each of these criteria and calculated an average code, and then I compared these ratings when there were two or more excerpts that I wanted to include in the final analysis but seemed too similar or repetitive. Please see Appendix I for examples of my ratings and decisions about choosing to include specific excerpts of dialogue.

While I pursued this process of analysing how frames changed over the course of the six story discussions for each case, it was not possible to include each case in this thesis due to space constraints. Therefore, I include two 'case study' chapters detailing the full discourse analysis that I undertook for two specific cases (Chapters 4 and 5).

3.5.1.2   Microanalysis of teachers' dialogic moves

In the next part of the analysis, I conducted a discourse analysis of the specific dialogic moves that teachers used to facilitate the discussions and to guide children's thinking. I chose to analyse one episode from each group which stood out in my initial sociocultural discourse analysis in terms of a substantial change in tone and positioning following a dispositional judgment. Further, I narrowed my choice to only episodes which contained evidence of students' divergence, disagreement, and/or questioning about these judgments and demonstrated increased reasoning about characters' perspectives, in line with the focus of my second research aim.

Finally, I began a process of identifying the dialogic moves that teachers used within these excerpts, based on the Cam-UNAM Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (SEDA)

coding framework (condensed version) (Hennessy et al., 2016). However, as I began coding the dialogue, I found that I was mainly interested in identifying the broad categories of strategies that teachers used rather than identifying the slight variations within these categories; therefore, I began to identify specific sub-codes within this scheme that I felt could be combined to fit the data better. I also identified that there were two codes that I was particularly interested in identifying within teacher's dialogic moves based on my research questions (i.e. 'Invite reasoning through possibility thinking or prediction' and 'P – taking a position/stance'). Finally, I created a modified outline of the codes I would include in my analysis, with elaborated definitions (see Table 3.5), which I used as a tool for guiding the micro-analysis.s

Table 3.5 Outline of categories of teachers' dialogic moves

B	Build	Build on, elaborate, clarify or comment on own or others' ideas expressed in previous turns or other contributions
C	Connect	Make pathway of learning explicit by linking to contributions / knowledge / experiences beyond the immediate dialogue; Can be a question - inviting students to make a connection to their own lives
CA	Coordination of ideas	Contrast and synthesise ideas, confirm agreement and consensus; Invite coordination/synthesis
CH	Challenge	A teacher asks something in a way that shows her own disagreement, e.g. asking something twice, asking a leading question
E	Express or invite ideas	Offer or invite relevant contributions to initiate or further a dialogue (ones not covered by other categories); this is used when a teacher's comment or question is introducing a new line of inquiry or discussion, not directly following up from preceding dialogue
G	Guide direction of the dialogue or activity	Guide the direction of dialogue or activity; Take responsibility for shaping activity or focusing the dialogue in a desired direction or use other scaffolding strategies to support dialogue or learning;
IB	Invite to build	Invite Building; Invite others to elaborate, clarify, comment on or improve own or others' ideas / contributions
IR	Invite reasoning	Invite reasoning through explanation and justification relating to their own or another's ideas
IR - PB	Invite reasoning through possibility thinking or prediction	Invite reasoning through speculation/imagining, hypothesis, conjecture, or prediction; Emphasise guessing over searching for right answers; use sentential complements such as 'you think that…'

R	Make reasoning explicit	Explain, justify and/or use possibility thinking relating to own or another's ideas
P	Take a position/stance	Share own personal opinion, view or experience, offering an opinion on the value or lack of value of an idea/position/argument/artefact in relation to the task at hand; explicitly acknowledging a shift of position
RD	Reflect on dialogue	Reflect on dialogue or activity; Evaluate or reflect "metacognitively" on processes of dialogue or learning activity; Invite others to do so

Adapted from SEDA (Hennessy et al., 2016)

Coding the dialogue according to this overarching framework of dialogic moves involved first assigning codes to teachers' speech (please refer to Appendix J for an example of codes assigned to an excerpt with annotations). I then conducted a 'microanalysis', which had overlaps with the discourse analysis described in the previous section, however I homed in on narrowed episodes of dialogue, and I paid closer attention to how patterns of teachers' dialogic moves seemed to support children's shifts in thinking. In this analysis, I still remained attentive to elements of students' stance-taking as part of my broad interest in how positioning played a role in children's shifts in thinking (i.e. connected to my first research question, part c). This initial coding and annotating then fed into a more elaborated commentary about these patterns within individual settings, summarising of overarching patterns, and identifying promising instructional sequences and contextual characteristics which might support future adaptations of the particular programme.

3.5.1.3   Thematic analysis of interviews with teachers

I conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers at the end of their involvement in the project in order to gauge their feelings about how the project influenced their own teaching and professional learning in addition to their students' engagement and learning. I used thematic analysis, again drawing on inductive and abductive techniques, similar to the process described in 4.4.2 (part 1), involving reviewing and commenting on the data, identifying codes within text and combining these codes to create themes and sub-themes (presented in Table 3.6), iteratively refining codes when new data suggested a different meaning or overarching topic.

Table 3.6 Themes from interviews with teachers

	Theme	Sub-themes
1	Reflections on student engagement, including surprises and challenges	Pleasant surprises in individual student engagement
		Difficulties with group engagement
2	Evolving priorities and conceptions of promoting dialogue around stories	The value of going 'back to basics'
		The challenge of taking the children's thinking further
3	Benefits from the project extending to other aspects of classroom life	Improvements in social-communication and dialogue between students
		Changes in thinking about general teaching approaches
4	Specific topics teachers took a personal interest in	Emphasis on topics of labelling, noticing differences, and social responsibility
		Emphasis on topics of friendship and exclusion and links to classroom behaviour policies
5	Reflections on chosen stories and future adaptations to classroom reading	Children's preferences for certain stories, teachers' preferences for stories, and thoughts on how utilisation of different genres might support future discussions

In this analysis, I was not aiming to choose specific themes to include in a later analysis, therefore it was slightly different than the previous thematic analysis I undertook. Specifically, I engaged in the same first two stages of 1) first familiarising myself with the data and noting initial thoughts, interpretations, and questions about the topics of dialogue, and 2) creating categories and sub-categories to describe emerging themes within the data, iteratively refining codes when new data suggested a different meaning or overarching topic, while creating annotations about the emerging structure of the codes. Throughout the entire process, I engaged in retroductive reasoning, taking into account my notes from prior meetings with teachers to make sense of and make minor adjustments to these final themes. Please see Appendix K for an example of these two stages of thematic analysis of the teachers' reflections on the project, in addition to a sample of my retroductive reflection annotations.

3.5.2 Approaches to quality assurance

Because this project was very much reliant on my situatedness and familiarity within each context, it did not make sense to engage in a process of traditional 'reliability-checking' of my

analysis. However, I felt it was necessary to engage in a process of sense-checking with a colleague in my research group in order to ensure that my analytic process adhered to the criteria I had set out and that my interpretations of the data seemed sound. I first scheduled a few informal meetings to talk through the project, including my aims and experiences within each setting. I then randomly chose a subset of data (about 10% of the total), shared my codebooks (in the case of the thematic and discourse analyses), and spent a few hours talking through my decision making and thinking processes for interpreting the dialogue in specific ways.

I encouraged my colleague to challenge anything she thought seemed unclear or contrived, in which case I either explained further or decided to change the code or way of interpreting the data. For example, in relation to the microanalysis of teachers' dialogic moves, we had an extended discussion about the difference between the codes 'invite building' and 'invite reasoning', in which I discovered I was unclear myself about the distinction. I ultimately decided that in order to make my identification of these codes as clear and consistent as possible, I would classify 'invite building' as involving a closed question (i.e. presenting a specific idea or yes/no option embedded within the question which guides the student to clarify a previous idea), whereas 'invite reasoning' would always involve an open-ended question about a previous idea (e.g. involving a 'how' or 'why' question). In this way, I was forced to explicitly define what I meant by certain codes, phrases, or themes, which lessened the risk of insularity in the research process.

There are different discourses about how to achieve quality in qualitative research. For example, there are debates about whether and how qualitative researchers should make efforts to achieve validity, reliability, and generalisability (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). Because these concepts are rooted in the positivist paradigm, in which research results are seen as needing to be objective and reproducible, they are not often appropriate for qualitative research, especially in ethnographic research which primarily aims to establish an insider (i.e. emic) perspective.

Instead, qualitative researchers often focus on demonstrating credibility, sometimes also referred to as trustworthiness, using various strategies such as extended fieldwork (i.e. prolonged engagement with research participants), triangulation (cross-checking data by using different sources and methods), low-inference descriptors (the use of descriptions phrased in a way that is very close to the participants' accounts and researchers' field notes), reflexivity (i.e. critical self-reflection by the researcher) and negative case sampling (looking for cases that disconfirm the researcher's explanations) (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Johnson, 1997).

In order to assure readers of the credibility of this research, I have attempted to adopt all of these strategies in my data collection and analysis. That is, I engaged in extended observations and participation in daily events in each setting, I spent time after each observation reflecting critically on what I had observed, and I reflected with teachers about what I thought these observations meant in the context of the setting while also reflecting on where I felt there were gaps in my understanding. Further, I utilised different sources of data (e.g. data took the form of dialogue and reflections from both children and teachers), I often used quotes from children and teachers verbatim in my thematic categories and descriptors, and I searched for disconfirming or ambiguating cases, as evident in my rating system for choosing excerpts and in my reflection around a case which did not demonstrate a shift in children's thinking. Finally, I aimed to be as transparent as possible with each stage of the data collection and analysis, as demonstrated by my presentation of examples for each stage of my analyses in the appendix.

Before moving on to the upcoming findings chapters, I highly recommend that the reader have a look through the summary of books used in this project (Appendix C) which will help contextualise children's talk as well as my interpretations of children's talk.

Chapter 4
Case Study 1: Do you think nasty people can smile? Extending ideas about the nature of emotional states and 'bad' traits

4.1 Introduction to the setting

Ellie, the manager of a private preschool in a small village on the outskirts of Cambridgeshire, contacted me to be involved in this project via email. In her initial message, she said, "I think your project looks fascinating- right up my street as I'm a HUGE lover of children's literature and literacy plays a key role in our preschool curriculum!". We quickly arranged a meeting to discuss the details project. I told her about my background, why I became interested in developing teachers' shared-reading practices, and what I thought were the big-picture questions I was trying to answer. I also gave a brief summary of my master's project and how I became interested in children's development of attributional bias. The meeting transitioned into an informal conversation, and she seemed enthusiastic about the topic and eager to be involved. She said she thought the project would be a really good fit for the centre, especially since they were going through a period of transition.

She told me that she recently took a trip to Sweden to observe a few early years settings in order to look for ways in which they might be able to adopt new strategies or methods to improve their centre's practice. Since her trip, they had made a few important adjustments to the setting aimed at developing more cross-curriculum, play-based activities. They have also changed the daily schedule, making it less structured and more child-led. They have also made stories a much more integrated component of the setting, so in addition to having shared-reading time, they make an effort to encourage teachers to engage in spontaneous small-group reading activities with the children on the carpet. Ellie also described how they are much more focused on asking open-ended questions around stories, and they talk more about thoughts and feelings on a regular basis. She said she saw the project as an opportunity to develop the entire staff's approach to guiding children's talk around stories and specifically about thoughts and emotions.

Ellie's enthusiasm carried over into our early planning. She was consistent and proactive with communication and asked to read a condensed version of my first-year proposal to prepare for our first meeting. She also wanted to involve her colleague and co-teacher, Andrea, so we set up a meeting to discuss the project altogether at the centre. I provided them with an overview of the project, including a detailed description of my aims. We also engaged in an extended discussion around the meaning of attributional bias and how it shows up in everyday life.

I then asked Ellie and Andrea what they aimed to take away from the project. They told me about how they both came from primary school teaching jobs and left intentionally to get away from the 'structured bureaucracy' of schools. They both described how they love reading stories with their students and wanted to find ways to make their discussions livelier and more open-ended. They also described a desire to develop some guidance for supporting other teachers in the centre, as they both felt that there were practical issues around getting children to sit still and not talk all at once, which restricted teachers' ability to facilitate meaningful discussions beyond merely describing what has happened in the story. We all agreed that our goals seemed to align, however I articulated that I thought it would be important to ensure that throughout the project we continued to check in with each other regularly. They agreed and we decided we would schedule informal meetings every week for 20-30 minutes as way to reflect on and develop the strategies while ensuring we continued to be on the same page.

Both Andrea and Ellie were very clearly committed to the process of co-investigation with me. I could tell both enjoyed their jobs and seemed to be close colleagues and friends. They decided that they would each alternate guiding the discussions with the same group of children every week, so that one teacher would read a story one week with the other observing and then switching roles the following week. I also checked that they were happy to receive some written feedback from me every week based on my observations of the discussions. They both agreed they were, and Ellie added that they would both read and take onboard the feedback, even if it was for the other teacher. The weekly alternation was a different arrangement than that which I had agreed with the other teachers, but it seemed to be a good option for them, especially because they saw this as a particularly valuable opportunity to be able to work together and

learn from each other. This model of alternation and close coordination between the two teachers extended the project's collaborative approach, adding in a layer of co-teaching and partnership between teachers as a tool to deepen inquiry-based reflective practice.

Children within this group engaged in six story discussions which took place over the course of six consecutive weeks, aside from half-term.

4.1.1 Overview of the analysis of the six story discussions

A normative frame emerged within the first story discussion around the experience of being happy. That is, the children initially began to build consensus around what kinds of experiences they agreed make people happy in general. There was a collective tone of confidence and ease in this first part of this discussion, however as the story became more complicated, and as Andrea drew students' attention to this complexity, the students began to take up more curious and exploratory attitudes toward the characters, considering how other factors might have come into play to cause their emotions and motivations to be less straightforward than they initially thought.

However, while there was some initial acknowledgment of this emerging complexity, especially from one student called Ingrid, the children generally demonstrated rigidity in their thinking about emotions, fixating onto the idea that emotions can be inferred from and are causally linked to people's facial expressions. This conceptualisation of emotions as straightforward and under an individual's direct control appeared to inform children's thinking about certain negative traits (i.e. mean, nasty, naughty) which they described as being linked to certain emotions (i.e. grumpy, unhappy) and deserving of specific disciplinary treatment (e.g. being sent to prison).

On the other hand, some of the children began to explore the contextualised and changeable nature of emotions, especially as Andrea began to make her own opinions and beliefs known within the discussion, which led to an emerging split in the group in which some students began to consider how emotions, dispositions and traits are linked to how people perceive and interact

with factors within the environment. In response, some students positioned themselves even more firmly in their evaluative roles of judging the characters as 'nasty' and 'naughty'. In the remainder of the discussions, there was a gradual process of negotiation of these ideas and of alignment between students, in which the students, even those who were initially more inflexible in their thinking, began to reposition themselves in more exploratory and inquisitive roles. In general, by the final two discussions, there was less of an inclination from students to jump to evaluations of the characters and more of an openness to considering the nuances and wavering nature of people's knowledge, beliefs, emotions and desires in relation to the social environment. I will now move on to exploring how these frames were constructed and negotiated by the students and teachers in more detail.

4.2 Introduction to the first frame: Emotions as anchored in specific experiences and expressions

The first discussion, led by Andrea, took place around *The Bear and the Piano*. In the first part of the discussion, Andrea introduced the activity, explaining to the children that the aim was to talk about what happens in the story. Andrea asked, "Is that okay?" pausing to gauge the reaction from the students, and the children collectively nodded their heads up and down earnestly. From my early observations in the centre, I noticed that there was a clear effort from the teachers to give the students choice and autonomy in classroom activities.

As Andrea first started to read the title of the story, it became clear that the students were keen to share their thoughts. They immediately began to call out their ideas proudly, describing the cover illustration and brainstorming about why there might be a piano in the forest. In announcing their thoughts, they started to shout over each other, and Andrea interrupted, suggesting that the students should talk one at a time so that they can listen to each other. Andrea then asked, "Should we find out who's in the forest?", establishing her own investigative positioning in relation to the story and stimulating a sense of collectivity among the group with the pronoun 'we'. Andrea then began reading the story, introducing the bear and his initial discovery of the piano, which led into the following excerpt, in which the children began to explore the characters' emotional states.

Excerpt 1: A collective sense of happiness in making music

1	Teacher	'When the bear played the piano, he felt so...'
2	Allison	[Happy!
3	Ingrid	[Happy!
4	Scarlett	[Happy!
5	Teacher	Happy? When do you feel happy?
6	Allison	When we make a beautiful sound.
7	Teacher	When you make beautiful sounds, so when you're maybe when you're singing? Or
8		maybe when you're playing musical instruments?
9	Alfred	Maybe when you're small, I wanted to play the piano. But I was too little. And, so I
10		had to grow big…
11	Teacher	So you're too little to play the piano at the moment, are you? Do you have to wait
12		until you grow up?
13	Scarlett	Yeah, and I want to play the piano, but I don't know the notes yet.
14	Teacher	So we think that this bear is happy playing his piano?
15	Allison	I think he's playing a special song.

Andrea slowed down her pace and raised her tone of voice: "When the bear played the piano, he felt so…" (line 1, Excerpt 1). By pausing before the last word, Andrea encouraged the students to guess the final word to describe how the bear is feeling. She also pointed to the bear's face in the illustration as she asked the question, as if she was searching for an answer related to this specific clue. Allison, Scarlett, and Ingrid all responded in succession, "Happy!" with emphatic and excited tones of voice (lines 2-4). In line 5, Andrea switched to using the second-person pronoun, "When do *you* feel happy?" and Allison answered with the collective 'we', positioning herself as representing the group (line 6).

Alfred and Scarlett built on Allison's comment, describing the experience of wanting to become bigger or older in order to play an instrument (lines 9-10, 13) in a manner that indicated a shared understanding of this experience. Andrea repeated the use of the pronoun 'we' (line 14), positioning herself as part of the group.

Excerpt 2: Look!

1	Teacher	How do you think he's feeling…
2	Allison	Happy!
3	Ingrid	Look!
4	Allison	Now that he's playing to all these people?
5	Ingrid	Happy.

In Excerpt 2, Andrea redirected the discussion to the characters' emotions. Before she could finish her sentence, Allison answered proudly, "Happy!" and Ingrid chimed in, "Look!" (lines 2-3). The immediacy and self-assured lyrical tone of the children's responses indicated that they thought they were answering Andrea's question with the obvious or 'right' answer. This initial discussion seemed to attune the group to a shared way of talking about the concept of happiness, both in relation to the story and in relation to their own shared experiences that they associate with being happy.

4.2.1 Further exploring shared experiences associated with specific emotions

As the story began to incorporate added elements of complexity, it became less straightforward for the children to infer the bear's emotional state. As evidenced in Excerpt 3 below, Andrea supported the children to acknowledge this emerging complexity of the situation, including the idea that the bear's conflicting feelings might be tied to the diverging aspects of the situation.

Excerpt 3: Why isn't he happy in his own home?

1	Teacher	So do we think our piano playing bear is happy at the moment in the city?
2	Scarlett	But why isn't he happy to be in his own home?
3	Teacher	Hm, why do you think it is that he's not happy in his own home? What did
4		he wanted to do?
5	Allison	To do music.
6	Teacher	He wanted to do music.
7	Teacher	But did he do music in his own home?
8	Allison	(Shakes head *no*) Uh uh.
9	Scarlett	(Shakes head *yes*) Uh huh.
10	Teacher	You think he did, and you don't? Allison, why do you not think that he was
11		making music in his own home?
12	Allison	He was making a bit of music.

By initially asking, "So do we think our piano playing bear is happy at the moment in the city?" (line 1, Excerpt 3), Andrea prompted the students to think carefully about both the bear's primary desire and his perception of his situation. Further, her use of the pronoun 'we' again affirmed a sense of group collectivity, while reinforcing her own positioning as part of the

group's investigation. Scarlett's response, "But why isn't he happy to be in his own home?" (line 2) demonstrated a change in tone from emphatic to hesitant and suggested her expectation that happiness is linked to certain settings (e.g. home) for everyone. On the other hand, this was the first acknowledgement that the bear's emotions might not be as straightforward to explain as searching the illustration for a clue.

Andrea encouraged the children to investigate why the bear wasn't happy in his own home (lines 3-4) prodding the children to consider the bear's reasoning for moving to the city. When Allison said that the bear wanted to play music (line 5), Andrea questioned this assertion (line 7), spurring the students to consider the possibility that there might be other reasons motivating his decision to move to the city. After a disagreement between Allison and Scarlett about whether he was able play music in his home in the forest (lines 8-9), Allison asserted her own positioning in claiming he made 'a bit of music' in his home (line 12). Allison's response about the amount of music that the bear was able to play at home indicated that she was evaluating the situation in relation to the bear's desire (i.e. to play a lot of music for larger crowds).

Excerpt 4: He needs to make a smile

1	Teacher	So our very happy music playing bear, is he really very happy?
2	Ingrid	No he's sad.
3	Teacher	He is sad, isn't he?
4	Ingrid	He wants to go back to his family again.
5	Teacher	He would like to go back to his friends.
6	Scarlett	But the girl wants him to stay.
7	Teacher	You think the girl wants him to stay in the city? So is the girl his friend,
8		Scarlett?
9	Scarlett	Yeah.
10	Teacher	So he's got friends in the city, and he's got friends in the woods. How do
11		you think we could make the bear happy?
12	Allison	He needs to make a smile.
13	Teacher	He needs to make a smile? How do you think we could get the bear's
14		smile back if he's missing his home?
15	Scarlett	Give him back his home.
16	Alfred	To have a bridge, how about a very big brick bridge, and he will cross it back in his
17		home, and then the brick bridge broke down to the sea, and he is back, and he will be
18		happy back in his home.

While Allison initially demonstrated a consideration for how emotions can be attributed to people's underlying desires and motivations in relation to the context, in Excerpt 4 she shifted

to a more prescriptive, problem-solving position, explaining that the character 'needs to make a smile' in order to feel happy (line 12). This comment indicated her belief that happiness is under someone's direct control and linked directly to behaviour (i.e. smiling), which appeared to inhibit her from considering the contextual cause of the bear's sadness. However, Scarlett and Ingrid both began to acknowledge elements of the story context as reasons for the character's sadness (lines 4, 6).

Andrea extended Scarlett and Ingrid's ideas, asking how the students would propose 'to get the bear's smile back', demonstrating her own positioning that smiling would not be a solution in itself but that something else would need to change in the story to make the bear happy again. Scarlett's response in line 15 indicated that she still believed that being home should make someone happy and that she still viewed the situation as relatively straightforward. Alfred then suggested the idea of building a bridge between his home and the city (lines 16-18), indicating an acknowledgment that the character had conflicting desires. However, he then hypothesised the bridge would break down and that he would in fact be happy in his own home, reverting to aligning with Scarlett's positioning about home being a place of happiness. Both Scarlett and Alfred's propositions (lines 15, 16-18) made the solution seem simple while ignoring the idea that the bear likely wouldn't be completely happy if he just returned home.

Excerpt 5: I think he's a bit stuck

1	Teacher	Or do you think he doesn't want to play music anymore?
2	Scarlett	He doesn't want to anymore.
3	Teacher	He doesn't want to play his music anymore?
4	Oliver	Yeah!
5	Teacher	You think he does Oliver? 'Cause playing his music made him…
6	Allison	Happy.
7	Teacher	Happy, but he's missing his friends. I think he's a bit stuck, isn't he? He wants to
8		play his music, and he wants to be in the city, but he's also missing his home.

Andrea refocused the discussion back to the bear's perspective and motivations by asking whether the bear might not want to play music anymore (line 1, Excerpt 5). This spurred a disagreement between Scarlett and Oliver, with Scarlett confidently stating that the bear does not want to play music anymore and Oliver stating that he does (lines 2, 4), however they did not provide support for their claims.

Andrea aligned with Oliver, and asked a follow-up question, "'Cause playing his music made him…" (line 5) pausing with an expectant tone, and Allison repeated, "Happy." (line 6) in a similarly melodious fashion to which she had responded to Andrea's earlier question (line 2, Excerpt 2). As evidenced by this response, Allison positioned herself as being certain in her inference of this character's emotion; however, Andrea added a layer of ambiguity to the discussion by asserting her own divergent positioning and outlining the bear's conflicting goals (line 7-8): "I think he's a bit stuck, isn't he? He wants to play his music, and he wants to be in the city, but he's also missing his home." This was the first instance in which Andrea explicitly joined in the discussion herself rather than merely taking a guiding role. It was also the first instance of Andrea explicitly demonstrating her own conceptualisation of emotions as involving internal conflict (i.e. described as being 'stuck'), eliciting the idea that there could be an intermingling of internal desires and situational constraints influencing someone's behaviour.

Excerpt 6: Build a boat

1	Ingrid	Maybe he could visit the city sometimes
2	Scarlett	Maybe he could sneak out.
3	Ingrid	Maybe they could help him build a boat. So he could travel across every day.
4	Teacher	That's a very good idea. So what did you want to say, you were explaining
5		something there?
6	Scarlett	Maybe, maybe he can sneak across, 'round to his home.
7	Teacher	Do you think he needs to sneak out?
8	Scarlett	He could swim there and then he's back.

In Excerpt 6, Scarlett's comment (line 2) indicated that she interpreted being 'stuck' as there being a physical constraint preventing the bear from going back home. This comment, in addition to the students' earlier solution propositions in Excerpts 4 and 5, demonstrated a tendency to focus on one aspect of the problem and to temporarily forget or ignore the other important factors. There was also an overarching confidence in the children's responses and a lack of unified acknowledgment that there was no simple solution to the bear's predicament.

There was, however, an apparent change in Ingrid's positioning, as she began to think of an imaginative solution that might solve the problem of being 'stuck', proposing to build a boat (line 3, Excerpt 6). This idea potentially built from Alfred's earlier comment about building a

bridge, however in this case, Ingrid explained her idea in a way that showed she understood how it could solve the bear's problem: "So the bear could travel back and forth more easily". On the other hand, Scarlett is still fixated on the idea that the bear needs to 'sneak' back home (line 6). The children's explanations demonstrated a distribution of awareness among the group of the varying components involved in the situation, and a slow building of ideas, however Ingrid was the first child to diverge from the rest of the group and to align herself with Andrea's idea that the bear is 'stuck' between two desires.

Excerpt 7: Look at his huge smile on his face

1	Teacher	How do you think our bear is feeling to be back home playing his piano?
2	Ingrid	[Happy
3	Scarlett	[Happy
4	Oliver	[Happy
5	Teacher	I think he is so happy to be back home. Look at his huge smile on his
6		face.

The students' belief in emotions as being straightforward and linked to specific causes was persistent, especially in the final part of the discussion around the ending of the story in which the bear did in fact decide to return home. Notably, Andrea shifted her positioning from her earlier conceptualisation of the character as 'stuck' to reinforcing the earlier mode of thinking about emotions as straightforward. Specifically, she referred to the character's facial expression as evidence for happiness (lines 5-6, Excerpt 7). Shortly after this comment, however, the children began making guesses about the characters' emotional states, and Andrea again shifted her positioning by deliberately questioning the students' comments. What followed was an important moment in the discussion in which Andrea took the opportunity to ask a broader question about the story, explicitly defining the line of inquiry she wanted the students to focus on, which I discuss further in the following section.

4.2.2 Defining the problem: Do you have to keep smiling so people know you're happy?

At this point in the discussion, it seemed that the children were inclined to explore the causes of characters' emotions, however they were mostly focused on the information provided by the illustrations rather than by the text.

Excerpt 8: Does that make me sad because I'm not smiling?		
1	Teacher	What do you think the bears are feeling now that he's playing?
2	Allison	Happy.
3	Alfred	But that cub was feeling angry, and that one too.
4	Scarlett	That one's feeling sad.
5	Teacher	Why are they feeling angry?
6	Scarlett	No, this one's sad and this one's grumpy.
7	Teacher	Why do you think they're sad?
8	Scarlett	Look. That one's sad and that one's not.
9	Teacher	Can you explain why you think he's sad?
10	Scarlett	Because his mouth is like this.
11	Alfred	That one's angry.
12	Teacher	Oh, so you think that makes him sad? Am I always like this, Scarlett
13		(*forces a smile*)? Or sometimes am I concentrated? Does that make me sad
14		because I'm not smiling?
15	Scarlett	Yes.
16	Teacher	So you have to keep smiling so people know you're happy? Or maybe
17		this bear is just concentrating on what he's listening. Maybe the music is
18		making him feel sad. Maybe it's a sad song.

For example, the final part of the story described the family and friends as being proud of the bear and happy to have him home, and while Allison said that she thought they were happy (line 2, Excerpt 8), Scarlett and Alfred argued that some of the friends and family members were in fact sad and angry that he had returned (e.g. lines 3, 4, 6), basing their reasoning primarily on the characters' facial expressions in the illustrations (e.g. line 10, "Because his mouth is like this"). Notably, the characters' facial expressions were somewhat ambiguous, and Andrea challenged the children's thinking (lines 12-13) by asking the question about whether it means someone is sad if they are not smiling. She then posed the broader question in line 16: "So you have to keep smiling so people know you're happy?" This question was provocative as it made the children's underlying assumption overt, highlighting an extreme hypothetical case that smiling all the time would be necessary to assure others you aren't angry

or grumpy. Andrea then went on to model thinking about other possibilities of reasons for the character's facial expressions (e.g. "Maybe the music is making him feel sad"), again sharing her own ideas and linking these explanations to the given story context (lines 17-18).

Excerpt 9: He didn't want him to come back

1	Alfred	Um, Andrea. That bear's angry.
2	Teacher	That bear's angry. Why do you think he's angry?
3	Alfred	Because he didn't want him to come back.
4	Teacher	Why did he not want him to come back?
5	Alfred	Because he wanted him to stay for too long, and he wanted him to stay away for
6		longer.
7	Teacher	So he wanted him to stay for longer?
8	Alfred	Yeah even longer.
9	Teacher	Why did he want him to stay away?
10	Alfred	Because he wanted him to stay for longer, again.

Andrea's previous question (line 16, Excerpt 8) was the first instance in which she overtly called into question the students' assumptions about emotions being directly linked to facial expressions. However, it seemed that this challenging questioning caused Alfred to more firmly position himself in his belief that the bears were angry, explaining that this same character didn't want the bear to come back home to the forest (line 3, Excerpt 9). Similar to the students' beliefs about emotions being linked to individual choice (i.e. choosing to smile to make yourself feel happy), the belief about emotions being straightforward and obvious seemed to direct Alfred's thinking about the characters' intentions.

In the five story discussions that followed, there was a collective building on the first discussion's initial exploration about whether emotions are always overt. That is, the group began to consider the characters' points of view more carefully, rethinking certain elements and assumptions of their frame of emotions, specifically thinking about whether emotions can also be hidden or mixed, discussed further in the following section.

4.3 A developing hypothetical stance about the subtle causes of emotions

The concept of emotions being linked to physical expressions emerged again in the very beginning of the second story discussion which took place around the *Broken Bird* and was led by Ellie. Ellie started out by reading the title of the book, and the children immediately started speculating what the story might be about, and one student suggested that the bird broke his wing by crashing.

Excerpt 10: They're putting their beaks down

1	Teacher	Break his wing? Break his wing if he crashes into something. So you think this.
2		might be a story about a broken wing?
3	Scarlett	Um, no. Because it's, they're putting their beaks down.
4	Teacher	So what does that mean?
5	Allison	Sad.
6	Scarlett	Sad.
7	Teacher	You agree with Allison? You think they feel sad?

Scarlett pointed out (line 3, Excerpt 10) that the birds' beaks are down. Ellie asked what that meant and both Allison and Scarlett responded with the one-word answer: "Sad" (lines 5-6). This excerpt introduced a new element to the frame of emotions in which physical postures (in addition to facial expressions) could be indicative of a specific emotion.

Excerpt 12: What's making him feel sad?

1	Teacher	'As went by, his brother grew big and strong. Gobbling up all the fat and juicy
2		worms, but they didn't give broken birds a chance You don't need the best
3		worms. They teased, you'll never fly with just one wing. So Broken Bird was
4		only left with the small worms.'
5	Alfred	He has a worm.
6	Teacher	A small thin worm. How do you think he's feeling about that?
7	Allison	[Sad.
8	Ingrid	[Sad.
9	Teacher	Why do you think he would be feeling sad?
10	Scarlett	'Cause he misses his family.
11	Teacher	Why would he be missing his family? Who are these birds here?
12	Allison	His brother and sisters.
13	Teacher	They're brothers aren't they? Are brothers family?
14	Scarlett	Yeah.

15	Teacher	Yeah, so this is his family.
16	Francis	Yeah, but he has brothers, but he misses his mummy and daddy and his sister and
17		brother.
18	Teacher	These are his brothers.
19	Francis	No, one brother.
20	Teacher	This birds here, these are his brothers. Do you think that's what's making him sad?
21	Francis	Yeah. One brother I mean.
22	Alfred	But maybe they took the worm and snatched it from him.
23	Teacher	And you think that's what's making him feel sad? I agree.

Ellie read the text from the story (lines 1-4, Excerpt 11). She then asked the students to think about how the bird is feeling, and Ingrid and Allison responded in unison: 'Sad.' (lines 7-8). Ellie then asked them to explain. In response, Scarlett hypothesised that Broken Bird was sad because he missed his family (line 10). This represented a change from the first discussion in that Scarlett demonstrated that she was thinking readily about the external causes for the characters' emotions, rather than solely pointing to the facial expressions in the pictures as evidence of an emotion. Ellie challenged this statement (line 11), and Alfred then positioned himself in a hypothesising role (which was notably quite distinct from his explanatory role in the end of the previous discussion), pointing to the way in which the brothers were treating Broken Bird as a possible cause for his sadness (line 22). It appeared that Ellie's challenging question helped to prompt the children to consider contextual details of the story (e.g. Francis' response in lines 16-17) which helped Alfred to speculate more carefully about the contextual causes of the character's sadness.

Excerpt 12: Maybe he's a bit shy

1	Teacher	Why does she think she'll scare broken bird?
2	Allison	I don't know.
3	Teacher	Does anybody have any ideas?
4	Allison	Maybe he's a bit shy.
5	Teacher	Maybe he's shy? You think he could be… do you ever feel like you don't want to
6		come out if you're feeling shy?
7	Francis	Yes.
8	Teacher	Yes? Do you ever feel shy Francis?
9	Francis	When I see grandma and pop.
10	Teacher	Do you, what do you do when you feel shy?
11	Francis	I hide behind mummy's back

Later in this discussion, when Broken Bird encountered another bird in the city, Ellie asked the

question, "Why does she think she'll scare Broken Bird?" (line 1, Excerpt 12). The open-ended nature of Ellie's question guided the children to focus on the situation from the character's standpoint, which seemed to be more a demanding task for the children. There was a shift in confidence as evidenced by Allison's initial response, "I don't know" in line 2 and also by her tentative positioning (i.e. her use of the word 'maybe') in her explanation about what might be causing the bird's behaviour (line 4). This episode stood in contrast to earlier instances in which the children responded confidently with one-word answers (e.g. Allison and Scarlett's responses in lines 5-6 of Excerpt 10).

Allison positioned herself in a speculative role, guessing the bird was 'a bit shy' (line 4). Here, Allison was making an inference about the character's disposition which fit both with the illustration and information provided by the story. Further, 'shy' was a word that could be used to refer to an emotion, disposition, or trait. Andrea's question about whether any of them had ever experienced feeling shy, and Francis' recollection of feeling shy in a particular situation demonstrated a personal connection to the character's experience of being shy. This also suggested that shyness might be considered a disposition or mood as opposed to a more permanent trait. In general, within these excerpts, the students demonstrated a changing orientation to thinking more carefully about the characters' perspectives in relation to the context, and this seemed to shift the children's attention away from relying solely on the illustrations in order to explain the story's events and the characters' emotions. This process also seemed to enable the children to better understand and relate to the characters, however there was still a lingering tendency to refer to the facial expressions as a primary source of information about the characters' emotions in the remaining discussions (to be further discussed in the following section).

4.4 Emergence of a second frame: negative traits as defined by overt behaviours

At the midpoint of the second discussion around Broken Bird, the children began to describe their conceptualisation of negative traits, which the students eventually described as being

linked to specific emotions. For example, the word 'mean' first came up in reference to the siblings who told the character Scary Bird that she was scary looking.

Excerpt 13: Is that mean?

1	Teacher	Would you find a bird scary with one wing?
2	Scarlett	No.
3	Allison	No.
4	Teacher	Why would her sisters have said that?
5	Scarlett	Because they're mean as well.
6	Teacher	They're mean as well? Who else is mean?
7	Scarlett	Um, his brothers.
8	Teacher	Oh, look. These ones here? They're pointing and laughing. Haha you've only got
9		one wing. Is that mean?
10	Scarlett	Mm hmm.
11	Teacher	Most definitely.
12	Ingrid	Maybe when he grows up, he can when they came back, and the mommies and
13		daddies, maybe he can snatch their wing and put it on him?
14	Teacher	Snap a wing off and put it on him?

Ellie asked why the children thought the siblings would have said that the bird is scary-looking, and Scarlett's response indicated her positioning in evaluating these characters: "They're mean as well" (line 5, Excerpt 13). In this episode, Scarlett appeared to be comparing these birds to Broken Bird's brothers who were introduced at the beginning of the story. Ellie probed this underlying assumption by asking "Who else is mean?" (line 6). While Ellie did not dispute their use of the label 'mean', she did position herself in a subtly divergent role than Scarlett by using 'mean' as a descriptor of behaviour rather than as an evaluation of the characters themselves (line 9). Ingrid aligned with Scarlett's evaluation, taking a punitive position, suggesting that once the mommies and daddies return, that Broken Bird might be able to 'snatch their wing and put it on him' (lines 12-13), suggesting that she viewed parents (or possibly adults in general) as having a mediating role in the context of someone being mean to someone else. This emphasis on the term 'mean' and Ingrid's punitive positioning elicited an overarching moral-evaluative attitude, which extended into the following discussion.

The third story discussion took place around the story *Something Else*, and within the early part of this discussion, the students introduced 'bad' traits, such as 'nasty' and 'naughty'; while the concept of negative traits seemed to be different from their concept of emotions, it appeared

to be closely tied to the concept of emotions, as evidenced when the children linked being 'mean' with specific emotional states (e.g. being 'grumpy'). As the children began to more readily take onboard the idea that emotions (and dispositions such as 'shy') need context to be interpreted, they also began to shift their thinking around traits to incorporate consideration of emotions, mental states, and context. However, some of the students persisted in their tendency to rely on facial expressions in determining and explaining emotions and were reluctant to accept that a character's emotion or disposition might have shifted as a result of the changing story context.

4.4.1 Blended frames: Emotions and traits

In the final pages of the story (still *Something Else*), the main character changed his mind, ran after the other character, and they became friends, appearing to be much happier than they were at the start of the story when they were both alone.

Excerpt 14: Why are their eyes like this?

1	Ingrid	And he's happy.
2	Teacher	He's happy. Do you think that's made him happy? Do you think that's made him
3		happy as well? Do you think they're both happy?
4	Francis	No.
5	Teacher	No? Who's not happy, Francis?
6	Francis	Uh him.
7	Ingrid	Uh he.
8	Teacher	The orange one? Why do we think he's not happy?
9	Francis	Because he's grumpy.
10	Teacher	Why is he grumpy?
11	Francis	Because he's not being nice and he left his house.
12	Teacher	But he's run after him now.
13	Scarlett	Why is his eye like this?
14	Teacher	He's happy. He's run after him now, he's run after him now and said you can
15		come and stay.
16	Scarlett	Why is his eye like this?
17	Teacher	I think he was a bit sad. But something else is saying you can stay. But do you
18		think he's still not happy?
19	Allison	Let's figure it out.
20	Scarlett	I don't know, why are their eyes like this?
21	Teacher	I think their eyes, I think they're looking at each other as he holds his hand.
22	Scarlett	That one is not happy, look.
23	Teacher	You think, why is he not happy? Because of his face?
24	Scarlett	Mm hm.
25	Teacher	I think he might be.

In Excerpt 14, Ingrid argued that the main character was happy (line 1), however Francis positioned herself in opposition to Ingrid's statement, arguing that he was not in fact happy because he was grumpy (line 9) and that he was grumpy because he was not being nice (line 11), which is the first instance of a trait being causally linked to someone's emotions.

Interestingly, Francis referred to the character's behaviour (rather than the character himself) as 'not very nice', indicating that she had aligned with Ellie's previous positioning as evaluating the characters' behaviour rather than evaluating them as characters.

Andrea continued to question the children's assumptions about the characters' emotions while bringing in relevant details of the story, which created a sense of collective investigation among the students (e.g. Allison said, "Let's figure it out", line 19).

Excerpt 15: They're bad people

1	Teacher	Do we think these are being very nice saying that he can't play?
2	Ingrid	Yeah
3	Teacher	Do we think these are friendly people?
4	Allison	No
5	Alfred	No
6	Francis	No
7	Teacher	No, I don't think they are.
8	Allison	They're bad people.
9	Teacher	Oh, why are they bad people?
10	Allison	Because they should go in prison.
11	Teacher	Oh, why should they go in prison?
12	Allison	Because they won't let him play.
13	Teacher	So you think they should go in prison because they won't let him play?
14		I'm not sure.

After reading the final page of the story, Andrea guided the group to reflect on the behaviour of the animals who excluded Something Else at the beginning by asking two questions about the characters, priming the students to make a judgment: "Do we think these are being very nice saying that he can't play?" and "Do we think these are friendly people?" (lines 1, Excerpt 15). This was one of the two times the teachers themselves encouraged the students to make a dispositional judgment about a character (the other instance being in excerpt 13 when Ellie

asks the students to clarify the statement "They're mean as well." by asking, "Who else is mean?").

Allison then took a firm stance, placing herself in alignment with Ingrid's earlier punitive role, evaluating the animals as 'bad people', stating that they must 'go to prison' because they wouldn't let Something Else join in (lines 8, 10, Excerpt 15). Throughout this discussion, different variations of 'bad' and 'mean' emerged, including descriptors such as 'nasty' and 'naughty'. Allison's argument that bad people have to go to prison became a point of contention for Andrea, who tried to first understand Allison's reasoning for this belief (lines 11, 13), but then eventually positioned herself as challenging Allison's view, saying, "I'm not sure." (line 14).

The students' evaluative positioning became even more apparent as they began to link meanness (and other attributes such as nastiness and naughtiness) to overt expressions of emotions (e.g. not smiling) linked to being unfriendly, meanwhile making claims about how certain kinds of people tend to behave. However, in the episodes explored in the following section, there were key moments in the dialogue in which Andrea helped the students to break down the logic behind their assumptions, which caused the children to struggle to resolve the gaps. This led to a gradual shift in the children's thinking in which they began to refer to the mental states of the characters that they labelled as 'bad', paying closer attention to what the characters likely knew and believed, while demonstrating less reliance on emotional expressions and trait labels to describe their behaviour. In particular, Scarlett began to shift her positioning from staunchly evaluating the characters to considering other factors in her explanation for their behaviour. She also began to question the fundamental meaning of a bad trait such as 'nasty'.

4.4.2 Considering the 'bad' characters' perspectives and possible motivations associated with behaving in nasty or naughty ways

Throughout the remainder of the third discussion, many of the children aligned in their evaluation of the animals as 'nasty', 'naughty', and 'bad', and there were initially very few

attempts to try to understand the actual situational motivation(s) behind the animals' behaviours. The students, and most predominately Scarlett, subsequently started to draw further connections between their frame of emotions and their frame of 'bad' traits.

Excerpt 16: Are they still nasty people even though they smile?

1	Teacher	Why can these be friends but the giraffes can't then?
2	Francis	Because those are nasty.
3	Teacher	Because they're nasty? Do you think they're nasty giraffes?
4	Scarlett	Yeah because they won't let him play.
5	Teacher	They won't let him play. So what makes this boy look nice then? What makes this
6		boy look nice for him to be friends with them?
7	Ingrid	Because he's smiling.
8	Teacher	Because he's smiling. Were the giraffes smiling?
9	Ingrid	No.
10	Francis	No.
11	Teacher	No? Were they not? Should we have a quick look? I didn't look at that. Where are
12		they? Are the giraffe's smiling?
13	Scarlett	No, they're grumpy.
14	Francis	Actually one of them is.
15	Teacher	Oh, one of them
16	Ingrid	They're both smiling.
17	Teacher	They're both smiling. So are they still nasty people, even though they smile?
18	Scarlett	No, but one's not smiling and one is.

Towards the end of this story discussion, when Something Else became friends with the character (called 'Something') and a new character (a human boy), Andrea prompted the students to reflect and compare this ending to the beginning of the story, asking "Why can these be friends but the giraffes can't then?" (line 1, Excerpt 16). At this point, Francis and Scarlett repeated the earlier explanation that the characters were nasty because they wouldn't let him play (lines 2, 4). However, when Andrea probed a bit deeper, asking, "So what makes this boy look nice then?" (lines 5-6), Ingrid answered, "Because he's smiling", implying that smiling in and of itself could be a sufficient clue for identifying someone as friendly. Scarlett then admitted that at least one of the giraffes was in fact smiling (line 18).

Excerpt 17: Only beautiful people can smile, not bad people

1	Scarlett	I think they are, but they're smiling at each other not at him. They're smiling at
2		each other.
3	Teacher	Oh, so are they leaving him out?
4	Ingrid	Yeah and look.
5	Teacher	So are they still nasty people even though they smile?
6	Scarlett	No they smiling at each other.
7	Ingrid	No they're not.
8	Scarlett	Yes they are.
9	Teacher	Oh they're not nasty people.
10	Ingrid	No they're not.
11	Teacher	So Ingrid, Alfred and Allison, I'd like you to listen to this a minute, so Ingrid
12		thinks that they're not nasty people because now they're smiling, they are
13		leaving him out. Do you think that, Ingrid?
14	Ingrid	Yeah.
15	Francis	No.
16	Teacher	But Scarlett thinks that they are, do you still think they are nasty people, Scarlett
17		is that right?
18	Scarlett	Yeah.
19	Ingrid	I don't think so.
20	Teacher	So Allison do you think nasty people can smile?
21	Allison	No.
22	Teacher	You don't think nasty people can smile? Why do you not think nasty people can
23		smile?
24	Allison	Because that means they're very bad and have to go to prison.

In Excerpt 17, Scarlett positioned herself as challenging Ingrid, justifying her belief that the animals were nasty by explaining that she thought they were smiling at each other but not at Something Else (line 6). This was the first instance in which Scarlett made a distinction between merely smiling as an indicator of happiness and the actual communicative meaning of smiling, including a consideration for what it conveys and for whom it is intended. In general, Scarlett's comment seemed to suggest that she was thinking about the concept of emotions through a more relational or interpersonal lens.

At this point, Ingrid positioned herself in alignment with the idea that smiling means you are friendly, but countered Scarlett's current claim, admitting that some of the animals might not deserve to be called nasty because they were in fact smiling (e.g. lines 7 and 10). Interestingly, it seemed like Scarlett appeared to be looking for new ways of interpreting the scene to support her initial claim. Allison aligned with Scarlett, confirming that nasty people can't smile, however her circular explanation (i.e. repeating her original claim about bad people needing to

be sent to prison, line 24) suggested that she was not attempting to build on the other students' evolving exploration of the meaning of smiling.

Excerpt 18: They think they are beautiful people

1	Teacher	So if you're in prison, so I've been put in prison, and the police man has locked
2		the gate and said you are very nasty and very naughty and you're going to stay
3		In jail overnight, do I never smile?
4	Scarlett	You don't.
5	Teacher	No? Scarlett what do you think? What do you think Scarlett?
6	Scarlett	Um I think that
7	Alfred	I'm smiling
8	Scarlett	Only beautiful people can smile, not bad people.
9	Teacher	Only beautiful people can smile?
10	Scarlett	Yeah.
11	Teacher	So, our something else is smiling here. He's beautiful?
12	Scarlett	Yes.
13	Teacher	What makes him beautiful?
14	Scarlett	He's smiling.
15	Teacher	Because he's smiling?
16	Scarlett	Because my mummy told that to me.
17	Teacher	Did she? So these one's who are smiling, are they beautiful people?
18	Frances	Yeah.
19	Scarlett	No, but they're not smiling.
20	Teacher	We said that he was smiling, this giraffe was smiling.
21	Scarlett	He's smiling at him.
22	Teacher	So because they're smiling together, does that make them beautiful people?
23	Scarlett	Um [pause] but they think they are beautiful people.
24	Teacher	So they think they are beautiful people together. Does our Something Else, our
25		beautiful Something Else, does he think they're beautiful now that they'
26		smiling?
27	Scarlett	No, because they are naughty children.
28	Teacher	Because they're naughty.

At this stage, Andrea began to question the children's claims by bringing herself into a hypothetical situation in which she said she had been put into prison for being nasty (lines 1-3, Excerpt 18). This prompted Scarlett to further elaborate, "Only beautiful people smile, not bad people" (line 8, Excerpt 18). As Andrea continued to follow Scarlett's logic and challenge her thinking, Scarlett changed her positioning, now demonstrating a more hesitant tone, and then switched to arguing her point from the point of view of the characters' perspectives (i.e. that they think they are beautiful people, line 23). Still, she reverted back to labelling the characters as naughty (line 27).

While there was a persistent normative expectation that meanness is an enduring trait deserving of a label like 'nasty' or 'bad', which also seemed to imply an unhappy or unfriendly emotional disposition, there was some emergent divergence, especially apparent from Ingrid (i.e. in Episode 17) and frequent shifts in positioning, as further discussed in the next section. Specifically, Scarlett continued to shift her positioning from confidently explaining towards hesitantly speculating. Through this speculation, she began to explore the categorical limits of her labelling and changed her orientation to the characters by bringing up a personal example that related to the situation in the story.

4.4.3 Defining the problem: What is a nasty person?

Up until this point, Andrea remained mostly neutral in the discussion, however in Excerpt 19, she shifted her positioning from neutral to evaluative by expressing her own opinion, indicating that someone who might be considered 'nasty' would still have things in their lives that make them happy and would cause them to smile.

Excerpt 19: Does that make her a nasty person?

1	Teacher	Ah, so that's a bit of tricky one isn't it? I think, should I tell you what I
2		think? I think nasty people can still smile. And naughty people can still
3		smile. Because there's little bits in their life that will make them happy. So
4		if I'm a nasty person, I might still have a big bowl of chocolate that makes
5		me happy. Maybe it even makes me smile. Or maybe I find some joy in a
6		walk in the park. Because things still make me happy. What is a nasty
7		person?
8	Scarlett	Um it's things that don't share and are rude, but no, no, no, and but Ariana
9		sometimes does it.
10	Teacher	Ok, so is Ariana a nasty person if sometimes she does it?
11	Scarlett	But sometimes if they don't… but Ariana only does it to get attention.
12	Teacher	So Ariana does it to get attention, so does that make her a nasty person?
13	Scarlett	No!
14	Teacher	No?
15	Scarlett	No, silly.

She hypothetically assumed the perspective of a nasty or naughty person and then asked, "What is a nasty person?" (lines 6-7, Excerpt 19). As Scarlett began to describe her definition of a nasty person, she took a moment of pause and reflection in which she realised that Ariana (her younger sister) sometimes behaves in this way (lines 8-9). When Andrea asked whether that

makes Ariana a 'nasty person', Scarlett began to contemplate the motivation behind this behaviour (i.e. line 11, when she said, "…but Ariana only does it to get attention"). This is the first time Scarlett moved beyond the label of nasty, now positioning herself as trying to understand the intention behind someone who is being rude by connecting it to her own personal experience. There was also a brief acknowledgement of doing it 'sometimes', bringing in the issue of whether people who they might consider nasty or naughty would act in this way all the time and calling into question the inherence and permanence of the trait.

Up until this point, the children were starting to consider the relational nature of emotions. Further, Scarlett's eventual shift in positioning from strictly evaluating the characters' behaviours as 'bad' to thinking about the situational context and intentions behind this behaviour seemed to perpetuate further moments in the proceeding discussions in which she and other students considered characters' underlying motivations and internal conflicts as linked to different aspects of the story context, as explored in the next section.

4.4.4 Highlighting values of kindness and understanding

Within the same discussion around *Something Else*, Andrea asked the children to make a personal connection to the story about whether they had ever felt left out like the character (Excerpt 20).

Excerpt 20: You were still kind to her even though she wasn't kind to you

1	Teacher	They're not letting him play with them. Ingrid, have you ever felt like that?
2	Ingrid	Uh, yeah.
3	Teacher	When have you felt like that?
4	Ingrid	At my granny's house. I wanted to play with her, and she said, no, I want to
5		play on my own.
6	Teacher	Who said that, your granny?
7	Ingrid	No my friend, Ella.
8	Teacher	Oh, Ella. Ella said that you can't play with her? What did that make you feel?
9	Ingrid	Really sad.
10	Teacher	Really sad? What did you do about that?
11	Ingrid	I said, the next day, I came to her house and gave her a present, to cheer her
12		up.
13	Teacher	Oh, did she let you play with her?
14	Ingrid	Yeah.
15	Teacher	So you were still kind to her even though she wasn't kind to you?

Ingrid described a time when her friend did not want to play with her and so she decided she needed to cheer her friend up (lines 4-5, 11-12, Excerpt 20). This was a key moment in which Ingrid appeared to align herself with Scarlett's new positioning around considering the motivation for someone acting in a mean or unkind way, also connecting the story to her own personal experience; in this case, she did not immediately categorise her friend as 'nasty', 'naughty' or 'bad', but instead speculated about her emotional state and possible unmet needs (i.e. needing to be cheered up). This was a demonstration of Ingrid's shifted positioning around the frame of emotions, involving an understanding that they can be masked in a way that might not be immediately apparent.

Andrea praised Ingrid, saying, "So you were still kind to her even though she wasn't kind to you?" (line 15). This emphasis on kindness brought to bear a new angle of interpretation to the frame of traits, in which kindness is emphasised as a valued response to someone who is acting in an unfriendly or mean way.

In the following discussion (again around *Something Else*, read the following week by Ellie), Allison reinstated her own positioning by reiterating her claim about the need to send the animals to prison, introducing two new labels: 'baddies' and 'burglars' (line 1, Excerpt 21).

Excerpt 21: A spell went on them and changed them into mean animals

1	Allison	I think they are baddies, or burglars, they should go to prison I think.
2	Teacher	Ingrid, what do you, you were going to say what you think Ingrid?
3	Ingrid	I think they were good before to him, but then, and then and then and then something
4		his mommy and daddy but then a spell went on them and changed them into mean
5		animals.
6	Teacher	I'm confused, why do you think there's a spell? I haven't seen any magic, I've just
7		heard what's happened in the story Alex? I've just heard that these people or these
8		characters here have said to something else that if he tried to sit with them or walk
9		with them or join in their games, sorry you're not like us, you're something else. You
10		don't belong.

Ingrid immediately presented a new alternative explanation for the characters' behaviour, explaining that she thought the animals were not always bad (lines 3-4, Excerpt 21). She presented a hypothetical story in which the characters were turned into bad animals by a spell,

suggesting a scenario in which the onus of responsibility for being mean is placed on an external source.

In this comment, Ingrid adopted an imaginative role which helped to shed light on possible alternative reasons for the characters' behaviours. She also demonstrated how she was beginning to think about the boundaries of the frame of bad traits. Ellie responded by challenging Ingrid's imaginative positioning by saying that she hadn't seen any magic in the story. In this way, Ellie she seemed to take up a more pragmatic position, indicating that she wanted the children to stay focused on the concrete details of the story.

In the remainder of this second discussion around *Something Else*, Allison again referred to the animals as 'very mean' and as 'bad boys' who needed to go to prison (not shown here). However, Oliver took a different position, suggesting that he didn't think the animals were bad, as described further in the next section.

4.5 Diverging stances: Negotiating the boundaries of 'bad'

Excerpt 22: I don't think they're bad

1	Oliver	I think he belongs to them
2	Teacher	You think they belong together?
3	Oliver	Yeah.
4	Alfred	Cause the other…
5	Teacher	We're listening Alfred. So you disagree? You think they do belong together? Why do
6		you think that?
7	Oliver	'Cause I don't think they're bad.

Oliver took a stance as inadvertently disagreeing with Allison's persistent evaluations of the animals, adopting a more sympathetic and less evaluative position toward the characters (line 7, Excerpt 22). In his suggestion, his grammar (i.e. using the sentential complement "I don't think…") suggested that he was acknowledging his own positioning in evaluating the characters.

Excerpt 23: I think they've come to say sorry

1	Alfred	I think it's a t-rex or a ghost.
2	Oliver	Or one of these characters. All of these characters.
3	Teacher	Maybe one of these characters?
4	Teacher	You think one of these characters has knocked on his door?
5	Oliver	Yeah.
6	Teacher	Why do you think that? But hold on a second, they've said you don't belong here
7		you're not like us. You're something else. And now you think they'd be knocking on
8		the door. It could be one of them.
9	Alfred	I think they've come to say sorry.
10	Teacher	Do you think? What are they going to say sorry for? What do you they need to be
11		sorry about?
12	Alfred	Sorry for being mean.
13	Teacher	Oh, how do you think he would respond?
14	Alfred	Maybe he could let them in.

At the point in the story when Something Else returned home and heard a knock on the door, Alfred began to envisage a scenario in which it could actually be some of the animals knocking on the door to say sorry (line 9, Excerpt 23). This was a significant leap from the previous discussion in which there was such certainty that the animals were altogether 'nasty' and 'bad'. It was also interesting that in both this and the previous example in which Ingrid explained that a witch could have cast a spell on the animals, the children were aligning in adopting imaginative thinking, considering how the characters might have changed in one way or another over the course of the story, and they did this even in the face of explicit discouragement from Ellie. Oliver's earlier claim about the animals not being altogether 'bad' seemed to prime Alfred to think about a scenario in which the animals reflected on their attitudes and actually changed their behaviour. In this way, the children seemed to be building on each other's ideas rather than merely arguing their own individual points.

Excerpt 24: All the other creatures weren't listening

1	Teacher	So at the beginning, did he have any friends?
2	Oliver	No
3	Teacher	What did he do about that?
4	Allison	Because all the other creatures weren't listening.
5	Teacher	Yeah, they said you're not like us, you're something else.

Importantly, throughout this discussion, Allison stuck to her claim that the animals were 'bad', however in the final part of the discussion around *Something Else*, she suggested that the

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animals were not listening (i.e. to Something Else, line 4, Excerpt 24). This was the first instance in which she shifted her positioning, putting forth an alternative explanation for their behaviour other than just labelling it as 'bad'. This comment also represented an effort to frame the situation in terms of the characters' perspectives, involving consideration of what they were (or were not) paying attention to and how they themselves were perceiving the situation.

This marked a point in the project when the children stopped referring to or labelling 'bad' character traits in the remaining discussions and began to more regularly consider the characters' points of view in exploring causes for the characters' behaviours. Importantly, in the remaining two story discussions, there was still a persistent tendency for some students (namely Scarlett) to identify to the characters' emotions based on the facial expressions in the illustrations and to think of emotions as straightforward and causally influenced by these facial expressions. Further, the teachers periodically continued to reinforce this way of thinking about emotions. Still, these same students, including Scarlett, initiated thinking about the influence of context in identifying the characters' emotions and sometimes considered multiple possible explanations for the characters' behaviours.

4.6 Adopting a more open-ended mode of reasoning about the characters' behaviours

In the penultimate discussion in the project around *The Cloud*, led by Andrea, there was an emerging exploration of the particular emotions or dispositions that might be associated with unfriendly behaviour.

Excerpt 25: Grumpy vs. nervous

1	Teacher	So no one would speak to her.
2	Allison	Why?
3	Teacher	Why do you think, Allison?
4	Scarlett	Because she's grumpy and she might fight because she's angry.
5	Teacher	Ok, so Scarlett thinks because she is grumpy and angry. Why do you think she's
6		grumpy and angry, Scarlett?
7	Scarlett	Because when you're very very angry a black cloud comes to you.
8	Teacher	Oh really? So if I'm really angry I get a black cloud above my head.
9	Scarlett	Yeah
10	Teacher	Do I?
11	Francis	Yeah, and your clothes might get soaked.
12	Teacher	Oh, that's what happened?
13	Allison	Let's find out.
14	Teacher	Let's find out what, Allison?
15	Allison	Let's find out why she's sad.
16	Teacher	So you think he's sad? Why do you think he's sad?
17	Allison	Because I think he looks a bit nervous why the black cloud is up there.

Early on in this discussion, the children tried to think about what the black cloud might signify, and Andrea prompted them to speculate about why no one was speaking to girl. In Excerpt 25, there was an initial comment that the character was grumpy and angry (e.g. when Scarlett said she might fight in line 4), however Allison presented an alternative possibility (i.e. that she's sad) and suggested trying to discover the reason for her emotional state (e.g. "Let's find out why she's sad." in line 15). Allison then considered possible alternative emotions of the character (i.e. "Because I think he looks a bit nervous why the black cloud is up there." line 17), which indicated that she was taking a more sympathetic orientation to the character in this story. In these comments, Allison positioned herself in a concerned role, putting effort into understanding some of the underlying layers of the character's perspective.

Excerpt 26: The black cloud will follow him

1	Teacher	Oscar, what do you think? What do you think our person's feeling?
2	Oscar	Maybe that one needs to go there.
3	Teacher	You think he needs to come down here and have a look at the other people's?
4		What happens if he comes down here and has a look, what do you think he'll be
5		thinking?
6	Oscar	He can.
7	Teacher	I'm asking Oliver.
8	Alfred	Maybe the black cloud follows him. Maybe the black cloud follows him.
9	Teacher	What do you think he might do with these, Oliver? He's gonna walk down here, do you
10		think he'd find a color to use?
11	Alfred	And the black cloud will follow him.
12	Teacher	Do you think the black cloud will follow him? So you think he will stay grumpy? Is that

13		what we're saying? If you've got a black cloud, you are grumpy.
14	Alfred	If you're grumpy and go to other people that painted and the black cloud will still follow
15		you.

Andrea asked Oliver what the character might have been feeling, and he responded, "Maybe that one needs to go there." (line 2, Excerpt 26). Oliver's comment indicated his prescriptive positioning which reinforced the earlier conception of emotions as being straightforward and under the individual's control. When Andrea asked him to explain what he thought would happen if he joined the group, Alfred offered a suggestion (line 8) and then elaborated in lines 14-15: "If you're grumpy and go to other people that painted and the black cloud will still follow you." This explanation indicated that he had aligned himself with Allison's sympathetic positioning, demonstrating an understanding that the cloud above the character's head represented something that was out of her control and would be persistent even in the face of efforts from the character to join in the group. Alfred's idea can be contrasted both with Oliver's claim in this excerpt and with earlier claims in the first story discussion about the nature of emotions, including Allison's claim that a character could simply change their emotion by changing their situation or facial expression (e.g. 'He needs to make a smile.' line 12, Excerpt 4).

Excerpt 27: Get happy

1	Andrea	What happens when you are cross and angry, and you've got a black
2		cloud. How do you get rid of your black cloud, Scarlett?
3	Scarlett	Get happy.
4	Teacher	Happy? So, you need to get happy and that will remove your black cloud?
5	Scarlett	Yeah.
6	Teacher	How could we make this person happy?
7	Francis	You can do, cheese.
8	Teacher	Doing a funny face? Maybe
9	Allison	Let's check on the next page.

Soon after, when Andrea asked the children how to get rid of a black cloud, Scarlett and Francis also referred back to this earlier idea of 'getting happy' as a simple solution which could be accomplished by merely making a smile (lines 3, 7, Excerpt 27)

Excerpt 28: I'm talking to myself

1	Teacher	No? Scarlett, did you feel that the other day? Remember when we had the flowers out,
2		and you said, I don't know how to draw this?
3	Scarlett	*(Shakes head yes)*
4	Teacher	Did that make you feel quite nervous, that blank piece of paper?
5	Scarlett	Yes.
6	Teacher	Did it? What were you thinking looking at that page?
7	Scarlett	So I'm talking to myself, and I said, you can do it, you can draw lines on a piece
8		of paper, you can draw something on a blank piece of paper.
9	Teacher	Oh so Scarlett you had a conversation with yourself?

The children seemed to struggle with understanding what a cloud above someone's head might signify and tended to talk about it in more literal terms, which likely inhibited their thinking about it as an abstract representation of the character's mood. However, towards the end of this discussion, Andrea reminded Scarlett of a time in which she felt overwhelmed by a blank piece of paper placed in front of her during drawing time, just as the character in the story was staring fixedly at a blank piece of paper in the art class, and this prompted Scarlett to recall what it took to help her feel better (i.e. she had to have a conversation with herself, lines 7-8, Excerpt 28). Andrea's prompt seemed to enable Scarlett to recall a situation in which she had an internal struggle and was able to self-reflect that she needed to talk herself into feeling better.

Excerpt 29: I don't think he knows how to draw

1	Scarlett	He's getting angry because she's talking more and more.
2	Teacher	Oh, so Scarlett thinks that this person is getting angrier because this person has come
3		over and is talking and talking. So do you not think…
4	Scarlett	Yeah, because, um, when I get angry, when my mom is talking so much, I sometimes get
5		more angry.
6	Teacher	Oh so you get angrier and angrier as people are telling you and telling you more things.
7	Scarlett	Yeah.
8	Teacher	So you think this is what this person's feeling?
9	Scarlett	Yeah
10	Teacher	Do you think he wanted to join in?
11	Scarlett	*(Shaking head no)*
12	Allison	Let's find out.
13	Scarlett	She doesn't think that he wants to join in, does anyone else think…
14	Scarlett	Well I don't think he knows how to draw.

In the subsequent part of the story when a classmate tried to paint with the main character, Scarlett initiated exploration of the character's emotion, suggesting that the character was getting even angrier because the girl was 'talking and talking' (line 1, Excerpt 29). Scarlett

then followed up by justifying her response with a personal example (lines 4-5). When Andrea asked Scarlett if she thought the character wanted to join in, she nodded 'no' but then speculated that she didn't think the character knew how to draw (line 14). This final line suggested that Scarlett had reconsidered the character's desire and instead presented an alternative possibility, considering what the character might know which might influence how she perceives of the situation. In this suggestion, her speculative positioning (i.e. using the sentential complement "I don't think that…") suggested that she was acknowledging her own role in hypothesising about the character's thoughts. In general, Scarlett demonstrated a sympathetic orientation to the character, similar to Allison's earlier comment about the character feeling sad and nervous about the cloud. However, she extended this idea by speculating about hidden causes that might have influenced the character's emotional state and behaviour.

Scarlett extended this exploration of hidden emotions in the final discussion around Mr. Tiger goes Wild. In Excerpt 30, Ellie prompted the children to hypothesise about what the characters might have been thinking:

Excerpt 30: I think he's saying, 'huh?' or 'what?'

1	Teacher	But his friends did not know what to think. 'How peculiar!' said one. 'Wow', said
2		the other.
3	Scarlett	Look at that one.
4	Teacher	What do you think he's thinking about Mr. Tiger?
5	Ingrid	I think he's saying, 'Huh!' Or 'What!'
6	Teacher	Oh my gosh, look at his face. What do you think he thinks about Mr. Tiger's behaviour?
7	Ingrid	Angry.
8	Teacher	He says, unacceptable! I don't think Mr. Bear is a fan of Mr. Tiger's new behaviour.
9	Scarlett	And look at the rabbit
10	Teacher	Mrs. rabbit is going, hmm, how strange.

Ellie explicitly prompted the children to look at the facial expressions in the illustration before asking them what they thought one character in particular was thinking (lines 6-7, Excerpt 30), and Ingrid gave a one-word answer, "Angry" (line 8). It seemed that even with the open-ended question about what the character was thinking, Ellie's act of drawing their attention to the character's facial expression (line 6) led to Ingrid's one-word answer and to Scarlett's additional comment about the Rabbit's expression in line 9.

Excerpt 31: All the other creatures want to be wild like him

1	Scarlett	Maybe he wants to do it as well.
2	Teacher	Who? There? Do you think so? Did you hear that Oliver?
3	Oliver	What?
4	Teacher	Scarlett said maybe Mr. Bear wants to act wild like Mr. Tiger too. Maybe he
5		wants to do it as well.
6	Scarlett	And all the other creatures want to be wild like him.

However, Scarlett quickly changed her positioning, moving toward a hypothesising role, commenting that she thought the animals actually wanted to be wild like the tiger (line 1, Excerpt 31). Thus, even though there was a lingering emphasis on facial expressions as clues for the characters' emotions, it was clear that Scarlett was inferring the potential underlying thoughts and motivations based on the contextual details of the story. Her prediction demonstrated a subtle level of insight into a more complex, masked emotional state (i.e. she acknowledged that a desire for something someone else has can be masked as anger).

Notably, there was no mention of bad (or good) character traits and there was also no mention of punishment in the final two story discussions with the teachers. Instead there was an overarching emphasis on identifying the characters' emotions and desires based on the situational details of the story. This increased emphasis on thinking about the characters' motivations as clues for understanding their behaviour may have steered the children away from this rule-based punitive thinking. Instead, the students (especially Scarlett in this instance) seemed to adapt a more sympathetic orientation towards the characters who they might have initially characterised as the 'baddies'.

4.7 Reflections with the children: Discussing the importance of kindness while acknowledging difficult situations

The closing activity did not revolve around any one book but was a chance for the children to reflect on all of the books they'd read over the course of the six weeks; this provided an opportunity for the students to voice their impressions of the stories and to demonstrate how any shifts that I observed over the previous six weeks may have persisted beyond the core story

discussions. The format of this closing activity was similar to the previous discussions, however Andrea, Ellie, and I decided that it would be a good idea for me to lead the discussion and for them to help facilitate.

I first asked all of the children individually to pick their favourite parts of their favourite books, which they each did so eagerly. A good portion of this discussion was spent talking about *The Cloud*, specifically discussing what might have made the black cloud go away. Ingrid said that when you get happy, the black cloud goes away. I then asked what makes *them* (i.e. the children) happy, and Francis replied, "When you get a white cloud" and Scarlett said, "When you smile". The students aligned in saying that they get happy when they give or get a hug from their mummies and daddies. Clearly this idea of emotions as being linked to facial expressions and specific experiences was still very much ingrained in the their thinking, and there seemed to be lasting value for the group in finding this cohesion and alignment around the common experiences linked to certain emotions, as I observed at the very start of the first discussion.

Scarlett then picked up *Something Else* and asked me to read the page she picked as her favourite part. After doing so, Scarlett then asked if I could read the story from the beginning. I asked the other children if they wanted to read the story again and they all replied "Yeah!" enthusiastically in a chorus.

Excerpt 32: An insight into the reasons for exclusion

1	Allison	That's not very kind.
2	Courtney	I think I remember talking about this before.
3	Francis	No that's not kind to say.
4	Courtney	Why isn't it kind?
5	Francis	'Cause they look angry
6	Courtney	They look angry? But why isn't it kind? Have you ever felt like Something
7		Else?
8	Allison	No.
9	Courtney	Have you ever felt like these characters?
10	Scarlett	Um I have. When Ariana always wants to play with me. Because then I
11		couldn't play with my friends.
12	Alfred	And I was sad because I wanted to talk to Scarlett but Ariana wants to talk to Scarlett.
14	Courtney	So sometimes we can't talk to everyone, is that right?
15	Scarlett	Yeah.

At the part in the story when the animals told Something Else that he doesn't belong, Allison said "That's not very kind" (line 1, Excerpt 32), indicating that she had slightly shifted her positioning from the previous discussions around the story. That is, while she had previously evaluated their dispositions and prescribed punitive treatment (i.e. she labelled the characters as 'bad people' and claimed they needed to be sent to prison), she now demonstrated more restrained appraisal of their behaviour.

In response to my prompt (lines 6-7) Scarlett then volunteered a personal experience in which she had felt similarly to the animals in the book (i.e. when she had to play with her sister, Ariana, and couldn't play with her friends, lines 10-11). Alfred also chimed, aligning with Scarlett, while describing his own role in the situation and his own feeling of being sad in this situation (lines 12), suggesting that he may have felt frustrated or left out.

This excerpt provided further evidence of a collective shift in children's conceptualisation of negative traits, involving a more cautious approach to making judgments about the characters and an increased focus on understanding the possible reasons why someone might act in a way that is seen as unfriendly. This seemed to be a significant departure from the original frame of meanness which involved a more rigid framework for evaluating and labelling people as belonging to the 'mean' category and as deserving of punishment. There was instead an increased emphasis from Allison and Alfred in this specific discussion on the contextual nature of emotions and a greater acknowledgement of the complexities and difficulties involved in social interactions.

4.8 Discussion of the shift in frames

4.8.1 Summary of initial frames

The students initially demonstrated an understanding of emotions as directly linked to people's facial expressions, and they described concrete situations and experiences as being linked to specific emotions. Further, in cases in which they had initially interpreted characters' facial expressions in one way, they overlooked other relevant story details which might have led them

to different interpretations. Some of the students fixated more than others on their interpretations of characters' facial expressions in the illustrations, and this appeared to inhibit their ability to use evidence from the story to infer the characters' mental and emotional states.

Further, within the first two story discussions, the children began to make inferences about the characters' emotions and dispositions and used these inferences to make judgments about enduring qualities of the characters. In making these inferences, some of the children used emotion terms (e.g. 'grumpy' and 'happy') which they linked to qualities of unfriendliness and friendliness respectively. In general, these references indicated an entity-based conceptualisation of emotions and traits, in which specific features are perceptually obvious (e.g. specific facial expressions or behavioural markers) and which directly identify a specific emotion or trait descriptor. The children also used the dispositional term, 'shy', and one child considered how she herself felt shy in a related situation, demonstrating some initial understanding of the external influence on internal dispositions.

In the third discussion, some of the children made dispositional attributions of characters in which they presented one possible causal scenario where someone was acting in an unfriendly way and was thus labelled as a certain kind of person. This overarching frame around 'nice' and 'mean' behaviour overpowered much of these students' thinking in this particular discussion, guiding how they paid attention to certain aspects of the story that fit in within this causal structure. Specifically, two students positioned themselves in dominant roles within the discussion, claiming firm stances on the topic, which appeared to restrict their openness to thinking in depth about the underlying thought processes or motivations of these characters.

4.8.2 Initial broadening in thinking linked to developing emotional understanding

The teachers' prompting for the children to reorient to the characters' underlying motivations and desires led one student to consider an example in which she was compelled to make a judgment about her sister's behaviour, and in doing so, she established an alternative hypothetical explanation for nasty behaviour involving someone's desire for attention. This

initial divergence appeared to lead the way for another student to take a firm position in the following discussion by disagreeing with the characterisation of the characters as 'bad'. In the dialogue that followed, the children began to take on more speculative positioning, looking at hypothetical situations in which there wasn't just one possible causal scenario, bringing to the fore different possible ways of thinking about the animals' behaviours, including attributing certain actions to more abstract causes, such as a lack of awareness or full understanding of the situation.

It seemed that the teachers' prompting enabled the students to build on their growing understanding of personal desires and beliefs in order to think more abstractly about the nature of emotions and traits. This enabled the students to consider a broader spectrum of possible scenarios which might cause someone to act in a certain 'mean' or 'bad' way.

4.8.3 Plurality and blended spaces

There was a link between the two frames of emotions and negative traits, and a complementariness in which the broadening of children's thinking about emotions, including an expanded, more contextualised (and abstract) understanding of desires and an emerging understanding of beliefs, supported children to broaden their thinking about 'bad' traits. This overlap and blending of the frames appeared to be a catalyst for children's shifting thinking and reasoning around both frames.

This shifting began within the first reading of *Something Else*, when the children encountered a state of hesitation around their understanding of the meaning of 'nasty', which then prompted them to orient to the particular perspectives of the characters in the scene. It seemed that as one particularly dominant student began to falter in her initial approach of justifying why certain types of people tend to act in certain ways, she was prompted to explain her thinking, and thus began to adapt a contextually-driven, more relational mode of perspective taking. Further, there appeared to be another significant moment of shifting in children's understanding of 'bad' traits, which may have gained momentum when one child actively took a new position which diverged from the group.

4.8.4 The emergence of a relational conception of emotions and 'bad' traits

There was evidence in the remaining discussions that the frame of negative traits took on new meaning altogether. For example, the children used increased descriptive phrases (rather than outright labels) to portray the qualities of characters' speech or behaviour and presented possibilities for how underlying emotions could be masked and could potentially function covertly to cause people to act in overtly angry or unfriendly ways. The students actively constructed explanations while searching for contextual cues and related personal examples to support their thinking around the characters' behaviours, indicating a mode of abstract, relational (rather than a top-down or category-based) reasoning around emotions and traits. In the final discussion led by me, the children further demonstrated this shift in thinking when they described their own experiences of both feeling left out and also having to leave someone else out, showing a propensity toward considering two contrasting perspectives within one type of social scenario.

4.9 Building on the literature

The students' initial normative frames directly linked emotions to specific expressions and concrete experiences, indicating a shared understanding of emotions as being overt. Further, this conceptualisation ignored the possibility that someone might be hiding their real emotions or that they may have a mixture of emotions they are experiencing. These findings call to mind Budwig's concept of indexicality (2003) in which she describes the habitual use of particular phrases, verb forms, or narrative structures (often modelled by parents, teachers or other adults) as conveying meaning about particular experiences to children. Budwig identified this process of signposting as a primary mechanism by which children learn how specific emotions might typically be associated with common experiences. I sometimes observed instances of signposting from teachers within the shared reading discussions or within daily classroom activities, however my observations were limited, and I had to make inferences about other possible shared experiences that might have contributed to this common understanding of emotions. In general, students were able to establish consensus early on in the discussions

around the significance of certain emotional experiences, and this process seemed to be broadly supported by common experiences within their shared social-cultural context.

It is also important to consider how this shared understanding might be related to the mutual developmental stages of the children in each group. As I mentioned in the literature review, 3-4 year olds appear to prefer entity-based causal schemas over relational conceptualisations of categories (e.g. Gentner, 2005; Gelman & Davidson, 2013; Keil & Batterman, 1984; Piaget, 1972), and in western cultures, children demonstrate an understanding of hidden and mixed emotions by about 7-9 years of age (Pons, Harris, & Rosnay, 2004). However, the students in this project did begin to demonstrate an emerging understanding of these concepts by the second and third story discussions, which indicates that these concepts are not altogether too complex for preschool-age children and that teachers' verbal framing and guidance may be important factors in scaffolding an early understanding of mixed and masked emotions.

In addition to their efforts to support children to expand their thinking around the complexity of emotions, teachers utilised the open-ended nature of the texts to push the boundaries of the students' initial interpretations. Specifically, they supported students to take their time in exploring the ambiguity of the texts by encouraging them to think carefully about the ways in which the characters' initial expectations were defied. They also helped students make connections to personal experiences in order to support them to develop multiple hypotheses for why the characters thought and acted as they did. This finding links to the ideas explored in the literature review around the value of open-ended and ambiguous texts in supporting children to expand their thinking about the events and characters and to enter into a conversation with the text (e.g. Maine, 2019). Further, it points to the importance of adult guidance in promoting extra-textual conversation and pushing children to identify and explore the gaps in their interpretations (Lundy, 2013). The ambiguous texts used in this project and the guidance from teachers helped to elicit plurality and divergence in thinking within the dialogue which created tension between ideas and opportunities for children to resolve any gaps in their understanding.

There were clear moments in which students positioned themselves firmly in their initial standpoints and it was often the teachers who were able to encourage children to consider their peers' positions or to recall personal experiences in which they had taken up other positions. Building on Davies and Harré's notion of positioning (1990) and Dubois' stance triangle (2007), these findings demonstrate that situational identities are manifold and layered and that alternative positioning can be evoked through targeted prompting and questioning. Therefore, while it is important to choose open-ended stories that afford different interpretations, it seems equally important that any extra-textual guidance comes from an adult who knows the students well and can elicit specific experiences or ideas that they know will motivate extended reasoning from the student(s). It seems that teachers within these specific settings developed skills which enabled them to provide this guidance in increasingly targeted ways which ultimately supported students to shift their positioning and examine contrasting perspectives within the discussions.

Chapter 5
Case Study 2: Can you feel or be two things at once? Exploring internal conflict in relation to concepts of conformity, kindness and bravery

5.1 Introduction to the context

Faye volunteered to participate in the project after hearing about it from Patricia, who was in the neighbouring reception classroom. At the start of our time working together, Faye's position was a part-time maternity cover, so she worked in conjunction with one other teacher, however they rarely overlapped in the classroom. In our early conversations, she said she found working part-time in this way to be very difficult, explaining that she had a harder time getting to know the students and feeling like there was continuity in what she was teaching. For this reason, she liked the idea of working with a smaller group over an extended period of time. She mentioned that there was a group of students who were 'advanced readers', for whom she was trying to create more opportunities to support their reading development. She said she frequently sent them off with the teaching assistant to the 'upper library' so they could have access to more advanced-level books to read on their own, and she described how she tried to always find some time here and there to talk with them about which stories they had chosen to read. She said she saw this project as an opportunity to work more closely with this particular group of students.

Faye told me that she led whole-class discussions about stories most days, but that the level of discussion was very limited due to the large size of the class. In my time spent observing the classroom, I got to watch these reading activities, and it seemed that a lot of her effort was spent managing the classroom, which took away from her ability to engage in extended interactions or discussions about the stories with the students. Faye and I met once informally and then again in a more formal meeting with Patricia to discuss the aims of the project and some of the underlying guiding principles for supporting small group dialogue. In this meeting, I provided these teachers with an overview of the project and an overview of the meaning and indicators of attribution bias. As we brainstormed stories to use, both teachers said they wanted

me to present a list of books for them to choose from, and I started to get the impression that both Patricia and Faye were keen to be given more direction than I had originally planned to give.

Faye's desire for direction became even more apparent in the beginning of the first reading discussion, when after an extended silence, she looked over to me, seemingly unsure of what to do next, and asked, 'Do you want me to ask some questions?'. I responded by asking whether the students knew that they could just call out to say when they were thinking, and in the dialogue that followed, there was a sense that the floodgates have been opened, and the students began making suggestions for what they thought the story would be about and predictions about what would happen next. It seemed that in this moment, the students realised that there were different expectations for how they participated in this specific setting compared to other activities they were used to.

About midway through the project, Faye was promoted to a full-time permanent position, which she was really happy about, but this also added a lot of work and responsibility to her role. At this transition point, she told me she needed to postpone the final few story discussions, while reassuring me that she was very committed to completing the project. We resumed the project two months later. In general, in the second half of the project, she seemed to be even more motivated than before, which was apparent in the way she took initiative each week to email me detailed points of focus and questions she was thinking about asking for the following week's story discussion. She also decided that she wanted to choose a different story for the final discussion, one that came from her home country, Canada. Throughout these final weeks, I felt like our working relationship evolved to become more of a balanced partnership in which she took an increasingly active role in leading the direction of both the story discussions and our reflective meetings.

Children within this group engaged in six story discussions which took place over the course of 16 weeks, with an intermission between 16 March 2018 and 15 May 2018.

5.1.1 Overview of the analysis of the six story discussions

In the first discussion, the students in Faye's group initially described their expectations of the category features of birds, alluding to beliefs about the set of inherent attributes that all birds have. With prompting from Faye, they began to question the ubiquity of certain bird category features and described how it would feel to deviate from a category norm, as the main character does in the story *Broken Bird*. One student acknowledged the influence of the social context, including the way in which someone is treated, as determining the nature of the experience of being on the outside. However, when the group transitioned to discussing their own perceptions of the characters in the early part of the second discussion around *Something Else*, the students themselves tended to endorse the label 'weird' and they fixated on the characters' physical differences, describing certain archetypes (e.g. 'monsters and 'aliens') as warranting reactions of anger and violence. While there was some early consideration of the social causes of exclusion from a social group, the subsequent categorisation of the characters as 'weird', indicated by certain salient physical monster-like or alien-like features, suggested a concrete conceptualisation of the meanings of normal and abnormal.

Some students positioned themselves as critical and disapproving of the characters, describing how they might have responded in indifferent or hostile ways; for example, one student said he 'wouldn't even speak to him' and would 'just walk away', and another student said he would 'stand and stare'. There was an apparent incongruity between how the students initially positioned themselves in relation to the birds' behaviours in *Broken Bird* (describing them as 'unkind') and their own dismissive ways of talking about the main characters in *Something Else*. Faye drew the students' attention to this discrepancy and asked the students directly to take a collective moral position on how they think they *should* respond to the characters.

The students subsequently began to consider how specific details within the story context might have influenced the perspectives of the characters. This drove one student to argue that it 'doesn't matter' how someone might be different. Other students began to build on this idea, exploring how perceptions of difference are dependent on social expectations, and one student argued that these social expectations might not apply in the context of someone needing help.

The students considered differences among themselves, including dimensions such as their countries of origin and skin colours, and Faye helped them to relate this discussion back to the story. However, while most of the students seemed to have begun to acknowledge the utility of being kind to those in need, one student (i.e. the student who said he would walk away from the character earlier on in the story), positioned himself away from the group, arguing that he should not have to be friends with everyone, especially someone whom he considers 'weird'. At this point in the project, it became clear that this student's concept of weirdness as an aversive quality was possibly more inflexible than the other students.

While this student maintained his divergent positioning, it seemed that other students began to position themselves in roles of moral evaluation, and there was an emergent collective acknowledgment of the plurality of values in question. During this proliferation of ideas, they argued about the importance of being kind to those who are different while simultaneously trying to understand the perspectives and motivations of the characters who were being unkind in the stories. In the following three story discussions, there were clear efforts from students to think more deeply about the main characters' experiences of being on the outside, and while there was a recurrent focus on the value of conformity, there was also an emerging tendency for the students to actively search for contextual clues to better understand the characters' mental and emotional states and reasons for not being able to join in the group (especially within the third and fourth discussions around *The Cloud* and *The Invisible Boy*).

In the fifth story discussion, the concept of bravery emerged, in which the students described their feelings about the value of being brave, and their earlier conceptualisation of conformity briefly re-emerged in describing a character as 'weird' because he 'doesn't want to try anything new'. In questioning the meaning of bravery and overtly connecting it to their evolving understanding of conformity, they began to re-establish a more sensitive orientation toward this character and to refocus on understanding the situational influences on the character's behaviours. They also shifted toward drawing on their own experiences to better understand the characters' motivations, demonstrating a clear effort to understand the reasons why someone might not be brave, including acknowledgement of the difficulty of certain situations

and the prospect of someone having conflicting desires or misinformed beliefs. In the final part of the fifth discussion and in the last story discussion, the students further acknowledged the internal struggle around trying to act bravely even in the presence of fear. Further, there was an emerging conceptualisation that certain dispositions such as 'toughness' or 'shyness' are influenced by both an individual's internal states as well as external environmental and social pressures. I will now move on to exploring how these frames were constructed by the students and teacher throughout the course of the six story discussions.

5.2 Introduction to the frame of normality: Inherent features within a category and its outliers

The first discussion took place around the story *Broken Bird*. Faye read the first couple of pages of the book aloud to the students, and the students began to predict with a sense of confidence that the bird would find his missing wing. After a succession of brainstorming, Faye asked a hypothetical question (line 1, Excerpt 1) which prompted the students to consider the alternative possibility that there might not be such a clear answer or trajectory to the story's plot.

Excerpt 1: Birds are supposed to fly

1	Teacher	Well let's see if he finds his wing. What happens if he doesn't?
2	Nadia	Then he can't fly.
3	Teacher	He can't fly? Hmm. What do you think?
4	Aria	Birds are supposed to fly.
5	Nadia	To get some food really quickly.
...		
6	Nadia	I think that's his mom.
7	Teacher	You think it's his mom, yeah?
8	Nadia	She's supposed to be the same colour, except with white dots
9	Teacher	Hm, so you think it might not be his mom because it's not the same colour?
10		And why do you think it's his mom?
11	Allen	'Cause I think, because mom birds have yellow beaks.
12		Ah very interesting, and how do you know that?

13	Allen	Because I heard it from a TV show.
14		A TV show? Hm.
15	Nadia	All baby birds have yellow beaks.
16		Hm, some birds do.

Aria's response in line 4 of Excerpt 1, and specifically the phrase 'supposed to' alluded to a normative expectation of how a member of a category (i.e. the bird category) is meant to behave. Nadia built on Aria's comment (line 5) in a way that appeared she was finishing Aria's sentence. As the discussion progressed, the students began to make claims about the physical attributes of birds. For example, Allen explained why he thought the bird in the illustration was the mom: "'Cause I think, because mom birds have yellow beaks." (line 11). Faye prompted him to make his reasoning explicit by asking how he knew this, and he responded, 'I heard it from a TV show'. Nadia also claimed, "All baby birds have yellow beaks" (line 15). Within this initial part of the discussion, there was an overarching sense of confidence and certainty in each of the students' comments. Faye countered these comments through questioning and positioning herself as being unsure, and the children subsequently begin to shift their thinking away from objectively explaining what is considered normal within the bird category toward thinking about the experience of being abnormal or different, as discussed in the following section.

5.2.1 Thinking about the experience of being different

The students continually emphasised the bird's missing wing as the reason for his sadness until Faye prompted them to explain further why missing a wing would make him sad. In response, the children began to place less emphasis on describing inherent category features of the bird category, and they instead focused on the characters' emotional states, including how the characters' experiences might have been influenced by surrounding social relationships.

Specifically, in Excerpt 2, the students began to consider the main character's subjective experience of not conforming to the group:

Excerpt 2: Would he be happier if he had another wing?

1	Teacher	Hm, why do you think he's sad?
2	Nadia	Because he has only one wing.
3	Teacher	Yeah, why does that make him sad 'cause he only has one wing?
4	Nadia	'Cause he doesn't have any more wings.
5	Teacher	Would he be happier if he had another wing?
6	Nadia	Yeah.
7	Teacher	Yeah, what do you think, Hugo?
8	Hugo	His brothers are being unkind.
9	Teacher	Why are his brothers being on unkind, or how do you know?
10	Hugo	Because, when, they gave him just the smaller thin worms, not the big ones.

While Nadia confidently pointed to the character's physical impairment as influencing his emotional state (lines 2, 4), Hugo subtly countered this idea, alluding to the fact that the character's sadness was instead influenced by the brothers' decision to be unkind to him (line 8) and to not be generous with distributing the food (line 10). Although Hugo did not explicitly disagree with Nadia, he was placing emphasis on different information in the story which helped him to describe the character's perspective in a more complete way. Within the following discussion described in the next section, Nadia further expanded on the emerging notion of normality and other students began to collectively fixate on physical differences and assign labels, namely the terms 'weird' and 'strange'. The students also began to elicit a sense of distance from and aversion to these 'weird' characters.

5.2.2   Discussing personal reactions to someone who is 'weird'

In the subsequent discussion around the book *Something Else*, the students revisited the frame of normality, with the emergence of a new concept of 'weird', which was first introduced in the students' reactions to the character's name, as demonstrated in Excerpt 3.

Faye first began to read to first few lines of the story:

Excerpt 3: Nobody plays with him

1	Teacher	'On a windy hill alone with nothing to be friends with lived something else.'
2	Nadia	*(Snickering)*
3	Allen	His name is something else?
4	Teacher	Something else?
5	Hugo	Something Else?
6	Teacher	Something Else
7	Nadia	That is really weird *(scrunches nose)*.
8	Teacher	Why is that a weird name?
9	Nadia	Something Else isn't a name
10	Teacher	It isn't a name?
11	Allen	His name is Something Else and nobody plays with him.

Nadia then began to snicker (line 2, Excerpt 3) and there was a tone of repulsion in Allen's voice as he questioned the character's name (line 3). Nadia's description 'really weird' (line 7) and her scrunched nose also indicated a sense of repulsion. Nadia then claimed that Something Else isn't a name (line 9) and Allen built on Nadia's comment (line 11), linking the character's name to the fact that no one plays with him.

Excerpt 4: They might think he's a monster

1	Teacher	Let's see. You don't belong here, they said. You're not like us, you're something else.
2		While he was getting ready for bed, there was a knock on the door. Oh. What do you
3		think about the animals, these animals, what do you think about them?
4	Hugo	They are being mean to him.
5	Teacher	Do you think they're being mean, Elliot?
6	Elliot	Yeah.
7	Teacher	Do you agree with Hugo?
8	Nadia	Yeah.
9	Aria	Yeah.
10	Allen	Yeah.
11	Teacher	Yeah? Do you think they're being anything else to him? I wonder if the animals are
12		scared. Do you think the animals might be scared of him?
13	Allen	They might think he's a monster.
14	Teacher	They think he's a monster?
15	Allen	Because look *(scrunches nose),* and also he eats slime.

Hugo described the characters as 'mean' (line 4, Excerpt 4), and the students' responses (lines 6, 8-10) indicated alignment among Elliot, Nadia, Aria, and Allen with Hugo's evaluation. Faye then prompted the students to build on this interpretation and added her own idea, shifting to focus on the characters' emotional response to Something Else. Specifically, she presented

the idea of whether the characters might have been scared of him (lines 11-12). Allen's response, 'They might think he's a monster' (line 13) indicated that he was building on Faye's suggestion, implying his conception that monsters are universally scary. Allen later scrunched up his nose (similarly to Nadia in Excerpt 3) and said, '…and also he eats slime' (line 15), which he later referred to as 'gross' (not presented here). While Allen seemed to be describing Something Else from the perspective of the animals, there was a sense that he may have been experiencing this repulsion himself, as demonstrated by his own physical reaction.

Excerpt 5: I get angry so I can punch them

1	Teacher	But do you think, is he, what are monsters?
2	Hal	They're like funny things with four eyes and two mouths.
3	Teacher	Oh, Nadia what do you think monsters are?
4	Nadia	They have, some monsters have ten eyes.
5	Teacher	Some of them have ten eyes,
6	Nadia	And some have eleven mouths.
7	Teacher	Aria how do monsters make you feel?
8	Aria	Angry.
9	Teacher	Angry, you're angry at monsters. Elliot how do monsters make you feel?
10	Elliot	Scared
11	Teacher	Monsters make you feel scared?
12	Hal	They make me laugh.
13	Teacher	They make you laugh. Darrin, do you feel scared of monsters?
14	Darrin	Angry so I can punch them.
15	Teacher	Oh, but so, is Something Else a monster.
16	Hal	[No.
17	Elliot	[No.
18	Nadia	[No.
19	Allen	He is half bear half gorilla.
20	Teacher	He is half bear half gorilla.
21	Hal	No half monkey half gorilla.
22	Teacher	So he's not a monster though?
23	Nadia	No.
24	Teacher	What do you feel when you look at him?
25	Hal	He's a beast.
26	Teacher	He's a beast.
27	Allen	No, he's an alien.
28	Nadia	Aliens have a lot of eyes
29	Allen	Aliens are monsters
30	Teacher	Aria, what do you feel when you look at him?
31	Aria	Happy about it.
32	Teacher	Aliens are monsters? Oh, um, Nadia, Aria just said that when she looks at Something
33		Else, it makes her feel happy. What do you think? When you look at him, how do you
34		feel, Elliot?

35	Elliot	Um, Happy.
36	Teacher	Why do you feel happy when you look at him?
37	Elliot	His colour is my favourite colour.
38	Allen	My favourite colour is red.
39	Teacher	Hal, what do you think when you look at him?
40	Hal	I feel he's a friend.

Faye asked the students to define 'monsters' (line 1, Excerpt 5), and there seemed to be a process of alignment in describing monsters as having manifold facial features. They also described monsters as eliciting a wide range of reactions, all of which seemed to carry some sense of personal aversion from the students. For example, Aria said monsters make her feel scared and Elliot said they make him feel angry (lines 8, 10). Hugo then said monsters make him laugh (line 12), and Darrin added that he gets 'angry so he can punch them' (line 14). In line 16, when Faye explicitly asked if they thought Something Else is a monster, there was a moment of pause, and then an effort from students in lines 19-21 to re-categorise him. Allen first tried to associate him with specific animal categories, describing him as half of one animal and half of another, but then began to apply other labels, describing him as a 'beast' and an 'alien' (lines 25, 27). So far within this episode, there was a sentiment of bewilderment in identifying what kind of animal the character actually is and a progression toward considering whether the animal could actually be a monster or an alien, like Darrin suggested the other characters might have thought he was.

Faye then invited Aria to contribute, asking how she personally felt when she looks at him, and Aria said she feels 'happy about it' (line 31) with a more concerned tone of voice. Elliot aligned with Aria's comment (line 35) although he elicited a more hesitant tone of voice. Finally, Hugo said, 'I feel he's a friend.' (line 40), matching Aria's sympathetic tone. This statement seemed to have a similar tone to his statement in the previous discussion about Broken Bird being said because of how his brothers treated him (lines 8, 10, Excerpt 2). However, in this case, there appeared to be an increased sense of righteousness and emotional charge in his voice, perhaps because he thought he was making a bold statement amidst all of the efforts from the group to place the animal into a specific category. In his statement, he was evaluating Something Else

not solely based on his appearance but instead based on how he himself would personally relate to him.

Up until this point, some of the students had positioned themselves as slightly detached from the main character, demonstrating an aloof tone of voice when describing him. However, Darrin's comment (line 14, Excerpt 5), suggested that he had taken a slightly more aggressive stance than the other students in which he claimed he is permitted to punch a monster who has made him angry.

5.2.3 Exploring the role of kindness in the face of 'weirdness'

The students subsequently continued to build on Aria and Hal's comments about the ways they might relate to and respond to Something Else:

Excerpt 6: 'I would just stand and stare at him'

1	Teacher	Nadia, what would you do if you met him?
2	Nadia	Um, I would just give him a cup of tea.
3	Teacher	Oh, you'd give him a cup of tea. What would you do if you met him. What else?
4	Hugo	I'd just hug him.
5	Teacher	You'd hug him?
6	Allen	No I would.
7	Darrin	I wouldn't do anything to him. I wouldn't even speak to him.
8	Teacher	You wouldn't even speak to him?
9	Allen	I would do nothing to him.
10	Darrin	I would just walk away.
11	Teacher	You'd walk away from him?
12	Darrin	Yeah.
13	Teacher	Oh what do we think about that?
14	Allen	I would just stand and stare at him.
15	Teacher	So you'd stand and stare and Darrin said he'd walk away. What do we think about
16		that?
17	Nadia	Um, I will just hug him for ages.
18	Teacher	Aria what do you think, what would you do?
19	Aria	I would hug him for ages.

In Excerpt 6, some of the students said they would 'hug him' (e.g. lines 4, 6) and Darrin said he would 'just walk away' (line 10). Faye initially asked, "What do we think about that?" (line 13), positioning herself as part of the group while encouraging a sense of collective

investigation. Allen then added that he would 'stand and stare' (line 14). Faye repeated these ideas and again asked "What do we think about that?" (lines 15-16). This prompted Nadia to reaffirm her original position of doing something kind for him, saying she would 'hug him for ages' (line 17), and Aria agreed, repeating Nadia's exact phrasing (line 19). There was a more detailed picture emerging of the frame in which weirdness might elicit a spectrum of responses involving walking away (e.g. callousness) on one end and sympathy or kindness on the other. In both cases, there was a sense of conviction in the children's responses but no explicit effort to extend each other's ideas or to consider how any hypothetical actions might affect the main character's perspective.

In the next part of the story, when a different creature showed up at his door, Something Else turned him away, and Faye askes the students to make judgment about the character's behaviour:

Excerpt 7: Maybe Something Else was being angry

1	Teacher	What do you think about the way he treated the creature? What do you think about the
2		way he treated the creature?
3	Nadia	He wanted him to go away and go to bed.
4	Teacher?	He wanted to send him away so that he could go to bed. What do you think Darrin? Do
5		you think something else wanted to send him away so that he could go to bed too, or?
6	Nadia	Maybe Something Else was being angry.
7	Darrin	I think the same. He wants to send him away and go to bed.
8	Teacher?	That's what Nadia said what do you think?
9	Darrin	The same as Nadia.
10	Teacher?	You agree with Nadia.
11		Sorry Hal, did you agree with Nadia?
12	Hal	Maybe he sent him to go to his home, he wanted to have his supper and go to bed.
13	Teacher	Oh so he wanted to have food before he went to bed. But what do we think about the way
14		that he treated the creature?
15	Elliot	Bad
16	Teacher	Why is that Elliot?
17	Elliot	Because he's being really cross with him
18	Teacher	Because he was being very cross with him. Is that fair that he was being cross?
19	Darrin	He sat on Something Else's supper so something else was cross with him.
20	Hal	And when he sat on his supper he was sad.

There did not seem to be an immediately clear response to Faye's question. Instead, the children demonstrated speculation about what Something Else might have been thinking or wanting

from the situation, using phrases such as 'I think' and 'maybe' to indicate their conjectural positions (lines 6, 7, 12, Excerpt 7). Elliot ultimately took a moral stance and said that the way he treated the character was 'bad' (line 15). Faye prompted the other students to build on Elliot's moral evaluation by asking, 'Is that fair?' (line 19). Darrin and Hugo's responses (lines 20, 21) appeared to be building on the earlier efforts to understand the characters' perspectives, explaining that they could identify and also sympathise with the reason for his outburst. In the remaining part of the discussion, the students began to more firmly take up divergent stances around the question of whether Something Else's behaviour was in fact 'bad' as Eddie initially suggested.

5.3 Diverging stances: Considering tensions between values in deciding how to interact with someone who is 'weird'

In Excerpt 8, Hugo made a comment which demonstrated a consideration of the character's thought process, relating it the character's earlier experience of being treated meanly (line 2, Excerpt 8):

Excerpt 8: It reminded him of how sad he was		
1	Teacher	It reminded Something Else of something but he couldn't think what.
2	Hugo	It reminded him of how sad he was when the other animals were being mean to him.
3	Teacher	So it reminded him of how sad Something Else was when the animals were mean to
4		him.
5	Hugo	Yeah
a.	Teacher	Yeah, do we agree?
6	Allen	At the end they're friends.
7	Hugo	Maybe he was hiding with the animals, maybe he was with the animals first, but then
8		they saw him and they said to him go away.
a.	Teacher	Oh they said to this one to go away? The animals did?
9	Hugo	Because maybe he was hiding because he was shy.

The students began speculating about the new character, and Hugo guessed that he was also rejected by the animals because he was 'shy' (line 8, Excerpt 8). This reference to 'shy' appeared to signify a temporary dispositional state (as indicated by the grammatical past tense) and signified a closer consideration of the reasons that someone might be excluded from the group aside from just being 'weird' or looking different. Faye then asked the students to explain Something Else's change of heart, when he decided to be friends with the creature:

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Excerpt 9: Maybe he doesn't have a home

1	Teacher	So what does it mean when he says, you're not like me, but I don't mind?
2	Darrin	I think he's saying to Something that he can stay at his home.
3	Teacher	Oh but the creature isn't like something else. But the creature isn't like something
4		else so why does he get to stay in his home even though he's not like Something
5		Else? Elliot do you know?
6	Hugo	Because it doesn't matter.
7	Elliot	Maybe the other something else doesn't have a home, so he should stay.
8	Teacher	Maybe he doesn't have a home so he will stay with him.
9	Hugo	It reminds him how sad he was when the animals were being mean to him.

In Excerpt 9, Hugo and Elliot aligned with each other in a moral-evaluative and empathetic position, emphasising what 'should' happen based on the suggestion that the creature doesn't have a home (lines 6-7). Within these responses, there was an indication that rather than looking at the salient details of why the two characters might differ or clash physically, these students were actively considering the individual characters' perspectives and needs tied to the situation at hand. This progression in the discussion enabled the students to acknowledge how the two characters were similar in their experience of being excluded and created a sense of concern and responsibility for helping.

Excerpt 10: How are we different?

1	Teacher	Are we different?
2	Nadia	Yeah.
3	Teacher	How are we different?
4	Hugo	Darrin's wearing a skeleton.
5	Teacher	Oh, Darrin's wearing a skeleton. But how are we different. Aria? Do you know
6		How we're different?
7	Aria	'Cause we have skin.
8	Teacher	Oh we have skin, so we're a bit different from them.
9	Hugo	Some of us have brown skin. It's brown.
10	Teacher	Yeah, we are different. What about Faye, am I different than you?
11	Darrin	Yeah.
12	Teacher	How am I different from you?
13	Darrin	You're bigger.
14	Allen	Because you're Australian.
15	Teacher	Oh.
16	Allen	You come from a different country.
17	Nadia	I'm brown.
18	Hugo	You're from Canada.
19	Teacher	That's right. So I'm different from you. I come from a different country.

20	Darrin	You're bigger than us.
21	Teacher	I'm bigger than you. That's right. I am bigger than you.
22	Teacher	Yeah, so we all look different. But we all play together, don't we? Yeah. We don't all
23		look the same.
24	Darrin	Me and Tom look similar, though.
25	Teacher	A little bit.
26	Darrin	Our hair does.

Faye then shifted the focus away from the story to help the students make connections to their own lives, asking 'Are we different?' (line 1, Excerpt 10). This prompted the students to think about the features that they themselves as a group do not share, first looking at their clothing, then looking at skin colour, and finally thinking about the respective countries that their families come from. There was an emerging sense that the group had begun to acknowledge how difference is a broad spectrum and that categories, especially social groups, do not necessarily involve inherent physical similarities. However, Darrin began to position himself away from the group, making a comment about how he *is* in fact similar to his friend (line 24), describing an emerging conception of friendship as a choice based on personal preference. He elaborated on in this idea in the subsequent discussion, which I discuss further in the next section.

5.3.1 Reframing a responsibility to be kind as a personal choice

Excerpt 11: Can we be friends with everyone?

1	Hal	They've never seen something like that.
2	Teacher	What do you think Nadia? Do you agree?
3	Nadia	I do.
4	Teacher	I do, what?
5	Nadia	I do, Hal, agreeing.
6	Teacher	Oh you're agreeing with Hal, yeah? Darrin? The question is why do they think that this
7		is a weird creature?
8	Darrin	Cause they're different.
9	Teacher	Because they're what?
10	Darrin	Different.
11	Teacher	Ah. They're different. They're all different. His skin was pink, and he had a trunk, and he
12		had a round nose, and right, even if you're different, you can be friends. Did you like the
13		story?
14	Hal	Yeah
15	Darrin	*(Shakes head no)*
16	Teacher	You didn't like it? Why didn't you like it Darrin?
17	Darrin	Because weird things.
18	Teacher	Because it had weird things?

19	Darrin	And this is weird…
20	Teacher	Is he?
21	Darrin	Yeah, weird.
22	Teacher	Would you be friends with him?
23	Darrin	No.
24	Nadia	I will.
25	Teacher	Why?
26	Darrin	'Cause he's weird.
27	Teacher	'Cause he's weird?
28	Nadia	I would be really kind to him.
29	Teacher	But we just read the book that says you could be friends with different people.
30	Nadia	I would be kind to him.
31	Teacher	Huh?
32	Nadia	I would be kind to him.
33	Teacher	So you would be friends with him? Elliot would you be friends with him?
34	Nadia	Yeah
35	Teacher	Elliot, would you be friends with him?
36	Elliot	Yeah
37	Teacher	Aria?
38	Aria	Yeah.
39	Teacher	Yeah? Uh, Hal would you be friends with him?
40	Hal	Yeah, I would be friends with everyone.
41	Teacher	Yeah?
42	Allen	I would be friends with everyone.
43	Teacher	So all of us would be friends, but Darrin is saying that he was thinking he wouldn't be
44		friends, because he's a bit different looking. What do we think about if Darrin doesn't
45		want to be friends with him? What do you think? Elliot what do you think?
46	Elliot	That he might walk away.
47	Teacher	That he might walk away?
48	Elliot	Yeah. And Darrin would walk away.
49	Teacher	Hmm. Can we be friends with everyone?
50	Elliot	Yeah.
51	Darrin	But I'm normally friends with Tom.
52	Teacher	But you normally play with Tom? But can you be friends with everyone, do you think,
53		Darrin?
54	Darrin	No
55	Teacher	No, why?
56	Darrin	When I see him, I really want to play with him.

When Faye asked the students if they liked the story, Darrin said 'no', because it had 'weird things' (line 17, Excerpt 11) and that he would not be friends with the creature ''Cause he's weird' (line 26). Faye urged the other students to weigh in to make a judgment about Darrin's attitude toward the creature (lines 43-45). Interestingly, Elliot positioned himself in a hypothesising role (line 46), demonstrating a neutral position in relation to Darrin by assessing the character's point of review. That is, instead of taking a personal or evaluative stance about

Darrin's claim, he instead predicted what the character might do in response to Darrin's hypothetical rejection of him. When Faye asked, 'Can we be friends with everyone?' (line 49), Darrin explained that is 'normally friends with Tom' (line 51). Darrin continued to re-affirm this personal stance in opposition to the other students in which he claimed to have freedom to be friends (or not be friends) with whomever he wants.

The students continued to discuss the concept of weirdness in the context of friendship in the following week's discussion around *The Cloud*:

Excerpt 12: It would be strange

1	Teacher	Would you want to be friends with someone who had a black cloud above their head?
2		Would you want to be friends?
3	Allen	No.
4	Teacher	I'm thinking, but I don't know, maybe you're right, but I'm thinking, she said but one girl
5		wanted to be friends. Perhaps there was a way through the black cloud. So I don't know,
6		maybe she can see the cloud. But, if you saw a cloud above someone's head, would you
7		want to be friends with them?
8	Allen	No.
9	Darrin	(Shakes head *no*)
10	Teacher	No, why?
11	Nadia	Yeah!
12	Allen	It would be strange.
13	Teacher	It would be strange?
14	Nadia	Yeah.
15	Teacher	Yeah, you'd be friends with them? Why?
16	Nadia	Because I like people.

This discussion started with the children describing the first page's illustration. Subsequently, Faye asked if the students would want to be friends with the girl on the page who has a cloud drawn over her head. Allen said that he would not (lines 3, 8, Excerpt 12) and Darrin shook his head in agreement (line 9). Allen then explained his reasoning: "It would be strange." (line 12). It seemed that in this episode of talk, Allen began to align with Darrin's earlier conception of friendship as a personal choice. However, immediately after, Nadia took a slightly different stance, on one hand positioning herself as aligning with Allen and Darrin's conception of friendship as a personal choice, while also asserting that it would be her own personal choice to be friends with the girl, explaining, 'Because I like people.'(line 16).

Instead of directly disagreeing with Allen and Darrin, Nadia aligned with their overarching frame of kindness and friendship as a personal choice, however she diverged in that she took a personal stance about what her own choice would be, which appeared to propel the group to shift towards a more prosocial attitude toward the characters in the remainder of the discussion, described in the next section.

5.3.2 Searching for contextual clues for why someone might be on the outside

The students began to delve deeper into thinking about how the character's active efforts to 'find a way in' to the girl's world would be enough to change the character's mood and make her feel included. Subsequently, the group's frame of normality appeared to shift, in that the earlier interpretation of weirdness as causing exclusion was countered with a new, more sympathetic orientation towards the characters and a conceptualisation of how factors within the environment might cause someone to be excluded or included.

Excerpt 13: She wants to turn happy

1	Teacher	What do you think will happen?
2	Hal	They'll be friends
3	Allen	[They'll be friends
4	Teacher	Yeah, they'll be friends. How will they be friends?
5	Allen	By the girl with the black cloud…
6	Teacher	Yeah?
7	Hal	Um, the black cloud will go away.
8	Teacher	You think it will go away? How can the black cloud go away?
9	Hal	She wants to turn happy.
10	Teacher	She'll turn happy?
11	Hal	Yeah, maybe she's never happy, and she's always sad and angry.
12	Teacher	Yeah? so you think that right now she's sad and angry but maybe she'll be happy?
13	Hal	For her first time.

In Excerpt 13, Hugo suggested that the main character and the classmate would become friends (line 2), however this explanation emphasised the need for the girl to conform (i.e. that her black cloud would need to go away for this to happen, line 7). Hugo then suggested that the girl wants to be happy and that maybe she has never been happy before (line 11). Hugo's comment carried an underlying assumption about the girl's emotional state as being tied to an

enduring dispositional tendency rather than being connected to the specific situation. Still, similarly to the previous depiction of the creature in Something Else as 'shy', this comment indicated that Hugo was considering an alternative explanation for exclusion from the group other than just being 'different' or 'weird'. Further, he used the term 'maybe', suggesting his tentative position, considering the possibility that there might be more going on in the character's mind than is apparent on the surface. This was also the first reference to the idea that a character might have an unmet desire.

In Excerpt, 14, while the students initially fixated on the physical characteristics of the cloud, there was a further attempt to think about the character's perspective.

Excerpt 14: She has a friend

1	Teacher	Darrin, what do you think would make the cloud go away? So that she could feel happy?
2	Darrin	She'll be happy, and then the cloud will go away.
3	Teacher	Oh so when she feels happy, then the cloud will go away. Hmm, ok, let's see. Oh what's
4		changed with her face?
5	Hal	She's happy and the cloud's turned smaller.
6	Teacher	The cloud is smaller? and what's, it says there was a…
7	Nadia	A smile.
8	Teacher	A smile, why is she smiling? Why did the girl smile? Talk to your friend. Figure out how
9		come she's smiling.
10	Allen	She didn't like the black cloud.
11	Teacher	Oh tell Darrin.
12	Aria	She has a friend.
13	Nadia	She has a friend.
14	Aria	She has a friend.
15	Teacher	She has a friend. That will make her happy.
16	Hal	She turns happier and happier, and then the cloud will turn smaller and smaller and
17		smaller.

Darrin claimed that the cloud is related to the girl's emotional state (line 2, Excerpt 14). Aria then suggested that having a friend would make her happy, and Darrin and Aria agreed (lines 12-14). This episode of talk indicated the beginning of a subtly different interpretation of normality and exclusion in which the children, especially Darrin and Allen, began to forego the fixation on certain 'weird' traits and were instead considering the interplay between a person's dispositions, desires, and the constraints within the surrounding social environment in determining whether they are included in a group.

In the following week's discussion around *The Invisible Boy*, there was a further progression within the group toward thinking carefully about the perspective of the main character, Brian.

Excerpt 15: Maybe he feels invisible because they left him

1	Teacher	But why, is he really invisible, or do you think he just feels invisible?
2	Nadia	He is invisible
3	Teacher	He feels invisible, Nadia?
4	Nadia	He IS invisible.
5	Teacher	Hal?
6	Nadia	Really, really invisible.
7	Teacher	Hang on, I want to hear what Hal was saying.
8	Hal	Maybe he feels invisible because they left him.

When Faye asked whether they thought the character is actually invisible or whether he just feels invisible, some of the students argued that he actually is invisible, while Hugo suggested that maybe he feels invisible because they've 'left him' (line 8, Excerpt 15). Interestingly, Hugo seemed to be building on his earlier idea within the first discussion around Broken Bird, in which he suggested that the Bird's sadness was not caused by his impairment but by his relationship with his brothers (i.e. in Excerpt 2).

In the ensuing dialogue, the students initiated a discussion about what it would feel like to not have any friends, to be shy, or to be all alone, and they began to recall personal experiences of when they'd personally felt invisible. Then Faye asked the students to reorient to the perspective of the character in the story:

Excerpt 16: He's not got anybody

1	Teacher	How is Brian feeling?
2	Hal	[Sad.
3	Nadia	[Sad.
4	Teacher	Why is he feeling sad? Elliot?
5	Elliot	Because he took his friend.
6	Teacher	Because he took his friend? Is he, does he, how does he feel, is he feeling like he has
7		anybody?
8	Hal	He has not got anybody. He's just on his own.
…		
9	Hal	Maybe he came from a land where everybody's invisible.

In Excerpt 16, the students paid close attention to how Brian's emotions fluctuated, and they linked these emotions to the corresponding events of losing a friend and not having anybody (lines 5, 6). Hugo also suggested that maybe Brian came from a land where everyone is invisible (line 9), building on an earlier idea that normality is a relational concept based on the expectations of the surrounding environment and the referential point of comparison. Within this excerpt, there was an apparent difference in the way the students considered the point of view of the character compared to how some of the students had upheld a more callous attitude to the excluded characters in previous discussions (e.g. Something Else).

At this point in the project, there was pause in the discussions, as described earlier. When we resumed the project, a new frame about 'bravery' emerged, however the students' conceptions of normality also became apparent within their discussion of this new frame, as described in the next section.

5.4 Emergence of a second frame: A normative expectation of bravery

The subsequent discussion took place around the book *The Koala Who Could*, and the students began to explore the concept of bravery, which appeared to be one of the school's core values. That is, bravery was one of many themes on the posters plastered throughout the school's corridors, along with other values such as 'kindness', 'respect', and 'honesty'. The students began to describe the importance of an individual's obligation to be brave in order to overcome certain barriers to participation within a group.

The students described a shared conception of bravery as the opposite of being scared, repeatedly touting the phrase 'Never give up'. They also elaborated that someone could become brave if they 'keep trying'. Faye prompted the students to describe times when they themselves had to be brave, and they began to incorporate some of their previous thinking about how external influences and circumstances might make it difficult to fulfil a desire to join in or conform to a group.

Excerpt 17: I was scared the first time I climbed up a tree

1	Hal	I was scared the first time I climbed up a tree.
2	Teacher	Oh were you? Kevin's not scared in trees because he lives there.
3	Allen	He was born there.
4	Nadia	And I was scared when I climbed up a big tree stock.

Faye emphasised the idea that while one of the students claimed to be scared to climb a tree, the character was not scared because trees are his home (line 2). Allen's response (line 3) indicated his acknowledgment that bravery is dependent on understanding someone's context and personal history. Further, Hugo, and Nadia's comments (lines 1, 4) indicated an emerging willingness to admit to being scared themselves.

Excerpt 18: It's weird not to want to change

1	Teacher	Listen to this… Kevin preferred not to move or to change. So, Kevin didn't want to
2		change.
3	Aria	So Kevin doesn't want to be brave.
4	Teacher	Maybe, I don't know, he doesn't want to change.
5	Nadia	That's weird.
6	Teacher	Is it weird?
7	Nadia	Yeah, but why does he not change? He doesn't want to go anywhere?
8	Teacher	Do you think he wants to go somewhere?
9	Darrin	No.
10	Nadia	Yeah.

Interestingly, in Excerpt 18, Nadia made an initial claim that it is 'weird' that the koala does not to want to change (line 5), which was the first explicit link between the students' frame of normality and their frame of bravery. Clearly the students had not completely relinquished their tendency to assign the 'weird' category label. However, Nadia's immediate follow-up question, 'Why does he not want to change?' (line 7) indicated curiosity about the character's internal thought process.

Excerpt 19: I always want to change

1	Hal	I always want to change.
2	Teacher	You always want to change? Wow.
3	Hal	Like when I saw a movie I wanted to change to be a ninja.
4	Teacher	Oh did you? What else? What about changing? Did somebody not want to change?
5	Elliot	I do not want to be more older.
6	Teacher	You didn't want to become older?

7	Allen	Or me
8	Teacher	Why Elliot?
9	Elliot	Because then I'll have a shorter life.
10	Teacher	Oh I see, that's very interesting. What about Allen?
11	Allen	I used to cry getting up when I was a baby and once when I discovered that all the time
12		when I say 'me up' I would get lifted up.
13	Teacher	Oh, so you didn't want to change saying 'me up' so you wanted to keep getting lifted up.
14		Yeah, 'cause you like having cuddles with mom and dad. Yeah, I like cuddles with mom
15		and dad.
16	Allen	I was crying mostly, sometimes I cry when I was a baby only because I didn't want to
17		grow up.
18	Teacher	So what you're saying everybody is that you've changed since you've been a baby?
19		You're saying you've had to change?
20	Allen	I wanted to punch my head because I wanted to stay a baby.

Hugo subsequently made the claim: 'I always want to change' (line 1, Excerpt 19), said with a sense of confidence and pride. In describing how he saw a movie which made him want to change into a ninja (line 3) he demonstrated an imaginative conception of change, referring to a kind of magical transformation into something else entirely. Elliot then positioned himself in a divergent stance, admitting that he never wanted to get older (line 5). Allen aligned himself with Elliot, also describing his reluctance to grow older (lines 11-12). By referring to the change that takes place alongside growing up and having to be more independent, there was an emerging acknowledgment of the tension between what someone might *want* to do and what they are *required* to do, illustrated most poignantly by Allen's exclamation 'I wanted to punch my head because I wanted to stay a baby.' (line 20). Elliot and Allen clearly recognised that change can be difficult and scary, a notion which stood in contrast to Hugo's initial claim about *always* being brave and Nadia's earlier classification of the character as 'weird' for not wanting to change.

5.4.1 Making personal connections and taking an evaluative stance

While the previous discussion alluded to the students' conceptualisation that there is a positive association with doing something you might not want to do, there was also an emerging sympathy for how someone might have an internal struggle. Then, Faye changed to a tone and

the students if they would choose to stay in the tree if they were a character in the story. After the students began to elaborate on the connections between bravery and change, Faye asked the group, "Is it good to give things a try?" and then later "What do we think about Kevin right now?", building on her earlier attempts to prompt the students to take a moral evaluate stance, this time about the value of bravery in general and of the characters' actions in relation to this value. Then, she transitioned into asking the students whether they like to be alone, and the students responded with varying 'yes' and 'no' answers.

Excerpt 20: I like my own time

1	Teacher	Elliot, you say yeah, why's that?
2	Elliot	Because I like my own time spending all the days all by myself.
3	Teacher	Do you like to spend time by yourself?
4	Elliot	Yeah.
5	Allen	I do a little bit.
6	Darrin	Me too.
	Teacher	Hal do you like to spend time alone?
7	Hal	No, sometimes I do, when I'm angry.
8	Teacher	Oh and that's a good way when you're angry is to spend time a lone right?
9		Yeah, what do you do when you're angry and you're trying to spend time alone.
10	Hal	I close myself in my bedroom
11	Teacher	Yeah and what else do you do?
12	Hal	And I smack my face on the pillow.
13	Teacher	Oh do you try and yell in the pillow? I want to ask Nadia now, Nadia do you like to be
14		alone?
15	Nadia	Yes, I always hide under my bed.
16	Teacher	So you like to have time alone to yourself.
17	Allen	I do.
18	Teacher	But do you like to be alone all the time?
19	Nadia	Uh, medium.

Elliot took the position that he personally likes to be alone (line 2, Excerpt 20), and the other students aligned with Elliot and built on this idea, describing how they also sometimes like to spend time alone, especially when they are angry or need to let off some steam. In thinking about their own experiences in conjunction with the koala's experience, the group collectively began to demonstrate a more explicit understanding of what it means to have multiple desires and fears that might make someone have a mixed or moderate desire, as best exemplified by Nadia's description of her desire to be alone (i.e. 'medium' line 19).

5.5 A shift in positioning around the concept of bravery: Dispositions such as 'toughness' and 'shyness' are influenced by both internal factors as well as external constraints

In the remainder of the discussion around *The Koala Who Could*, Hugo, Allen, and Elliot appeared to explore the character's thought process in greater depth, considering the multiple factors influencing his mental state at the end of the story:

Excerpt 21: He didn't know what he wanted

1	Teacher	Oh why do you think he's feeling different?
2	Hal	Because he's not on the tree.
3 4	Teacher	He's not on a tree. But I'm not on a tree and I feel springy light happy and young. Why does Kevin feel those things, Allen?
5	Allen	Well he didn't go in there because he didn't know he wanted.
6 7	Hal	He felt different because he spent all his time in the tree. He'll have to walk with his hands and feet.
8 9 10	Teacher	So you're thinking that he spent…I think that might be right. What do we think, do we think that's right. Nadia and Darrin? He was spending all his time on a tree but now he's not. What do you think Elliot?
11 12	Elliot	Maybe he just wanted to come down but he couldn't. So that's why he's feeling surprised.
13 14	Teacher	Oh, he's feeling a bit surprised he's feeling a bit different because now he's kind of off the tree.

The students described how the koala did not know what he wanted (line 5, Excerpt 21), explaining the character's surprise that he feels good once he comes down from the tree (lines 11-12). Then, Faye asked a final question, "Can you feel two things at once?" (not displayed). Faye's question prompted the students to clarify the distinction between feeling and being:

Excerpt 22: You can't be two things at once

1	Hal	But you can't do two things at once or be two things at once.
2	Teacher	Oh so I like what Hal is saying.
3	Allen	Because I want to be at home.
4	Teacher	But Hal, can you feel two things at once?
5	Hal	Yeah.
6	Teacher	You can feel two things but you can't do two things. Is that true?
7	Hal	Or be.

Hugo took the position that you can *feel* two things at once but that you can't *be* or *do* two things (line 1, Excerpt 22), indicating a conception that identity and actions are distinct from

someone's emotions. Allen built on this comment, describing his desire to be at home (line 3), drawing attention to idea that someone's desires might be an important consideration in thinking about the question of whether you can feel two things at once. In general, there seemed to be a lessening emphasis on bravery as a normalised concept and more emphasis on the emotional struggle involved in the act of trying to be brave, especially in the context of difficult circumstances. However, Hugo's idea that you cannot do or be two things at once seemed to indicate a lingering conception of people (or animals) as being tied to some inherent nature and/or their overt actions, regardless of this internal struggle. This idea was further explored in the final discussion around the story *The Little Hummingbird.*

In this final discussion, the students initially reverted to characterising bravery according to some clear identifiers, including what it looks like and what kind of animals demonstrate bravery:

Excerpt 23: What does it mean to be tough?

1	Teacher	Do you think, is he tougher than the hummingbird?
2	Allen	A little bit.
3	Teacher	What does it mean to be tough?
4	Darrin	Really strong
5	Teacher	Really strong?
6	Allen	Really strong. Fights more
7	Teacher	Hmm.
8	Allen	Be brave and fight.
9	Teacher	What do you think Elliot?
10	Elliot	Be more good at fighting.
11	Hal	Like a lion.
12	Allen	And a cheetah.
13	Teacher	Aria do you know what tough means?
14	Aria	Strong.
15	Teacher	Nadia you don't know?
16	Nadia	Yes
17	Hal	More fierce than him.

In Excerpt 23, the term 'tough' emerged as a descriptor of bravery, which seemed to be associated with specific animals (e.g. lions and cheetahs), implicating strength and fighting (lines 4, 6, 8, 10). Faye then reminded the students of their conversation that took place the previous week about how someone might be able to feel two things at once, and she then guided

the students to expand upon this idea by asking whether the hummingbird might have felt scared as well as brave (line 1, Excerpt 24):

Excerpt 24: Scared and Brave

1	Teacher	What do you think Darrin, can the hummingbird be scared but also brave?
2	Darrin	Yes.
3	Teacher	Why?
4	Elliot	Yes.
5	Darrin	Because he's scared of being caught by the fire and it's brave because he wants
6		the fire to be put out. And he's the only animal that wants to.
7	Teacher	The only animal that wants to? So all the other animals don't want to.
8	Darrin	They do but they're frightened as well.

The students agreed that Faye's suggestion could be a possibility, and Darrin explained that the character is 'scared of being caught by the fire and he's brave because he wants the fire to be put out' (lines 5-6, Excerpt 24), which demonstrated that he was thinking about the character's internal thought process, including his competing desires and emotions. In this same comment, Darrin also presented a new idea about bravery being linked to the strength of someone's desire to do something. Faye immediately questioned this claim, asking whether the other animals do not want to help, and Darrin responded, 'They do but they're frightened as well.' (line 8). In this comment, Darrin demonstrated an understanding that many different kinds of animals, even those that are traditionally considered strong or brave, might feel emotions (e.g. fear) that stop them from doing something they want to do.

Subsequently in Excerpt 25, Faye challenged the students' ideas about certain animals being naturally tough, by asking the students why the wolf wasn't being as brave as the hummingbird in the story. Allen seemed to take the position that the wolf was still tougher because he could run very fast, aligning with the earlier ideas about toughness being tied to specific animal categories and physical features:

Excerpt 26: Because when you're tough you can also sometimes be a bit afraid

1	Teacher	Finally, the big bear said, 'Little hummingbird, what are you doing?' Does he look
2		frightened?
3	Hal	Yes.
4	Allen	Yeah.
5	Teacher	He's a bear. We've learnt all about bears. Is he bigger than the hummingbird?
6	Allen	Yeah.
7	Hal	Yes, he's much more. Much, much more.
8	Allen	He can't fly.
9	Teacher	Is the bear tougher?
10	Nadia	[Yes.
11	Allen	[Yes!
12	Hal	[Yeah!
13	Teacher	Well you know what, I'm confused, because if the bear is tough, wouldn't he be brave?
14	Allen	Uh, hm, no, but, because when you're tough you can also sometimes be a bit afraid.

Darrin then explained the reason why the hummingbird is acting tougher than the wolf: "Because he can't fly" (line 8). Interestingly, this idea suggested an emerging conceptualisation of animals' qualities as being less joined to their inherent features, which stands in contrast to the ideas about animal categories described within the first discussion around *Broken Bird*. Allen's comment in line 14 about the bear ('Uh, hm, no, but, because when you're tough you can also sometimes be a bit afraid) indicated his acknowledgement that a quality of 'toughness' does not exclude someone from feeling fear. Within this episode, there was also an emerging acknowledgment that categories, especially those related to animals, do not always have set characteristics that define all members, and that there might be multiple factors at play in determining how someone behaves.

The students ultimately repeated the earlier phrases 'never give up' and 'keep trying' in describing what they thought the animals should do. While there was an emphasis on the value of bravery and individual responsibility and a tendency to judge character's behaviours according to these standards, there was also a growing effort among the group to understand the reasoning behind characters' actions (or inaction).

5.6 Reflections with the children: Discussing external influences on behaviour, internal conflicts, and the value of 'many different friends'

The final discussion did not revolve around any one book but was instead a chance for the students reflect on the books they'd read of the course of the six weeks; this provided an opportunity for the students to reflect on their impressions of the stories and to demonstrate how any frame shifts that I observed over the six weeks may have persisted beyond the core story discussions.

I led this final discussion in tandem with Faye, and we first asked the students to each pick their favourite book, to describe why it was their favourite book, and to identify their favourite part of their chosen story. Faye and I both took the opportunity to ask follow-up questions to probe deeper into their recollection and understanding of their chosen stories. There were three primary segments of dialogue within this reflection discussion that provided evidence to suggest student's generalisation of learning in relation to the frame shifts I describe in my analysis.

Firstly, Nadia described her favourite part of her chosen book (*Broken Bird*) in which Broken Bird met scary bird, who she described as shy. Allen responded, "No, Scary Bird wasn't shy. Her brothers just told her she was scary." This demonstrated a conceptualisation of how internal dispositions can be influenced by external factors, such as interactions with others.

In Allen's description of his favourite book, *The Koala Who Could*, he described the Koala's thought process of thinking about coming down but how he can't get himself to do it, and he then explained: "The top half of your body can feel one thing and the bottom half of your body can feel another". It seemed that this literal representation of how emotions can be split within the body exemplified his understanding of internal conflicts. His comment also reiterated the children's earlier conceptualisation of how this internal conflict can disrupt or stall someone's behaviour, even if they have the desire to do something.

Finally, Elliot chose *Something Else* as his favourite book, however he commented that he didn't like the part where Something Else was mean to the creature, describing a time when himself had felt left out. Faye asked if anyone else had felt left out before, and both Hugo and Allen shared their own experiences. Faye than asked what they can do when they feel left out, suggesting, 'Maybe you can be brave', and Allen added, "We can have many different friends so we always have someone to play with." This segment of discussion demonstrated Allen's alignment with Nadia's earlier comment about wanting to be friends people, even if they're 'strange'.

It is important to note that unfortunately Darrin was not present during this final discussion, and Aria did not show a great deal of participation in this dialogue. Still, this evidence from the final reflection discussion, combined with the progression of dialogue over the course of the project, suggests that there was a shift from the early narrow focus on describing characters and their behaviours as 'weird' and demonstrating repulsion to the characters to an exploration of the complexity of how environment and internal dispositions interact to influence someone's behaviour. This broader conceptualisation of behaviour seemed to support children to engage in more context-sensitive perspective taking in addition to questioning the meaning of dispositional labels, such as 'weird', 'tough' and 'shy'.

5.7 Discussion of the shift in frames

5.7.1 Entity-based categories and prescriptive judgments steered their perspective taking

The children demonstrated an early conceptualisation of animal categories as being tied to salient physical attributes. This category concept seemed to be embedded within a frame of normality, involving elements of 'strangeness' and 'weirdness', which described the state of someone not containing the essential features of their assigned category. The children initially demonstrated some relational thinking (e.g. they considered how social relationships might play into someone's experience of being outside of a category norm). While many of the students adopted an evaluative stance towards the characters, describing how they personally

would react to someone who is 'weird' (i.e. either by rejecting them or by being kind), they also began to incorporate some abstraction in their thinking about sameness and difference, especially in relation to how they themselves differ from each other within the group.

The students then began to focus on the role of personal choice in deciding whether to be kind to (or friends with) someone who is different or 'weird'. This shift in focus appeared to generate two different perspectives: one student affirmed his freedom to choose to not be friends with someone he considers weird while other students demonstrated an increased concern for the characters and a desire to help them. Finally, the children linked two seemingly distinct concepts together (i.e. normality and bravery) and began to simultaneously revisit their early entity-based conceptualisation of normality within categories. In linking these two frames, the children gradually began to characterise 'bravery' and 'toughness' as more flexible and as less tied to someone's inherent nature (i.e. than previously conceptualised). This progression also led to an emerging understanding of mixed emotions, linked to the different influences and constraints both within someone's physical nature and in their environment.

The children's initial description of birds, and their subsequent description of the characters in *Something Else* reflected a general conception of entity-based categories in which membership is determined by perceptually salient physical similarities. Further, while the children initially demonstrated some evidence of concern for these characters, much of their thinking within the first and second discussions appeared to be dominated by their conception of being different or 'weird' as the primary reason someone might feel sad. Further, some children demonstrated an orientation of hostility and otherness toward the characters that they deemed 'weird'.

5.7.2 A moral-evaluative stance and emergent abstraction in thinking about sameness and difference

Faye encouraged the students to describe how the characters made the protagonist feel and then ultimately encouraged them to take a collective moral-evaluative stance, asking them to think instead about how they *should* treat the character. This question elicited more explicitly divergent moral positioning, in which some students emphasised the responsibility to be kind

towards others on one hand and while others emphasised the value of freedom and choice (i.e. to friends with whomever you choose). Faye also encouraged the children to collectively respond to Darrin's antagonistic positioning toward the character, while challenging the students to consider the meaning of sameness and difference in their own lives. This exploration appeared to move the focus away from specific and clear-cut categories of 'in' and 'out' toward an understanding of similarity and difference as being subjective and messy. Ultimately, some of the students themselves began to take a moral-evaluative stance, indirectly opposing Darrin's positioning and aligning with each other around the belief that the character needs sympathy and support. Importantly, this discussion seemed to be dominated by an emphasis on what could be done in a generic sense for someone who is sad (e.g. make a cup of tea for someone), rather than by an emphasis on what could be done to make the particular character(s) in the story feel better or how any hypothetical actions would influence the character(s).

5.7.3 Shifted moral positioning and increased consideration of characters' dispositions, desires, and constraints within the surrounding social environment

Within the final part of the discussion about *Something Else*, Faye highlighted the emerging divergence among the students, which appeared to motivate some of the students to reframe their hypothetical decision to be friends with the character as a moral decision motivated by a personal desire to be kind rather than a general imperative. Nadia established this stance in the following discussion around *The Cloud*, in which she appeared to initiate a collective movement toward looking for contextual details to find greater understanding of the characters' situations.

Faye then prompted the students to think about what might have caused the character to shift her sad mood, which enabled further thinking about the causal influence of the situation on the character's emotions and behaviour. The students subsequently began to demonstrate a shift in their interpretation of the frame of normality, in which exclusion began to be reconceptualised by some students as the interaction of the social environment and the individual, rather than

being caused by an inherent quality of 'weirdness'. This thinking carried over into their discussion around *The Invisible Boy*, in which the students began to revisit the experience of being excluded, demonstrating an increased empathetic and less evaluative tone.

5.7.4 Conceptual blending: Questioning normative expectations around bravery

Within the final two discussions around *The Koala Who Could* and *The Little Hummingbird*, their earlier conception of normality re-emerged, as the students began to re-emphasise personal qualities and individual choice in whether or not to do something difficult or scary in order to conform to the group. This discussion was catalysed by an initial characterisation of someone not wanting to try something new as 'weird', indicating a conceptual linking of the concepts of 'weirdness' and 'bravery'.

Faye asked the students to describe personal experiences in which they did not want to try something new and some of the students explained that they did not want to change in ways that were expected of them (e.g. they did not want to grow up). Through this discussion, the children were beginning to consider how internal struggles (depicted as a physical division of desires within someone's body) might influence behaviour and how people (and animals) might change their capacity to be brave over time.

This re-examination of the frame of normality in the context of its connection to the frame of bravery appeared to reflect a process of conceptual blending. Generally, when these two frames became conceptually linked by the students in their talk, there was an opportunity for teachers to help students extend their reasoning about both frames.

5.7.5 An emerging understanding of mixed emotions

The students eventually came to a more nuanced conceptualisation that bravery is not an absence of fear, and that someone likely feels afraid even while they are acting brave. There was also a sense of appreciation for how the characters' apparent emotions or dispositions (e.g. being shy or afraid) was not necessarily lasting or inherent but was a product of a personal

history (e.g. where he was born and what he was accustomed to). In general, many of the students aligned with each other in demonstrating a more open and vulnerable mode of relating to the characters' experiences (e.g. by describing times when they themselves had felt left out or felt unsure of what to do). There was also an emerging sense that the idea of having an internal conflict stuck with the students through to the final reflection discussion and continued to play a guiding role in their thinking about the characters' perspectives.

Within the final reflection discussion, the students extended their thinking about the importance of the social environment in determining someone's characteristics (e.g. being 'shy' could be influenced by what someone has told you about yourself), in contrast to their earlier conceptions of normality and bravery in which they described behaviour as being caused by a single internally-based quality (e.g. being weird). Overall, there was an increased propensity for thinking about the characters' thought processes in more abstract and relational terms, in which they were considering internal struggles linked to the interaction between personal desires and external constraints. There was also some evidence of understanding of how mixed emotions might influence someone's behaviour.

The children demonstrated some level of generalisation of this understanding of mixed emotions within the final discussion led by me and Faye, even without direct prompting, and it seemed that they were also much less inclined to make dispositional judgments about the characters. Further, this new understanding of mixed emotions appeared to provide a template or model for thinking about the interplay of multiple factors at once by framing it in more tangible terms (e.g. someone's internal thought process can be represented by a physical split within the body), which seemed to enable the students to more easily represent the complexity of the characters' perspectives.

5.8 Building on the Literature

In the initial discussions, the students argued about the importance of certain values over other values; specifically, some students emphasised the importance of individual responsibility for behaviour while others stressed the importance of personal freedom. When the teacher brought

this tension to the foreground of the discussion by asking the students to take personal stances on the 'best' ways to interpret and respond to the story circumstances, some students began to think more carefully about specific circumstances which would make one value more dominant than the other. For example, one student suggested that when someone is in desperate need of care, this makes the value of the individual responsibility to be kind more prevalent than a need for personal freedom.

This finding builds on the literature about cross-cultural variations in normative frames and attribution of behaviour, indicating that while there are cultural factors which influence how individuals attribute causes to behaviour, there is inevitably negotiation of normative frames within any given culture. This extends Chen and French's contextual-developmental model which firstly says that socialization agents, particularly parents, teachers and peers, evaluate children's behaviours according to cultural beliefs and values and express different attitudes toward children who display these behaviours, which teaches children about how certain ways of behaving are valued. However, this model also stipulates that children play an active role in responding to, questioning, and expressing evaluative attitudes toward normative beliefs in order to make sense of these ideas. While Chen and French's contextual-developmental model of social development elucidates this process of cultural induction and negotiation in general, findings from this study begin to uncover how children negotiate their understanding in the context of vague, nuanced, or dichotomous cultural beliefs or values (e.g. when there are multiple dominant beliefs that are in tension with one another).

Further, within this exploration of the tension between the values of personal responsibility and personal freedom, there was a sense that the students became intensely personally invested in the conversation and began to fixate on their own personal experiences. This personal engagement appeared to sometimes inhibit students from thinking more broadly or abstractly about concepts within the context of the stories.

This issue relates not only to literature about the role of positioning and stance in the development of moral cognition and individual sense of self (e.g. Davies & Harré, 1990), but

it also relates to literature around how reasoning and empathy enter into the moral equation (e.g. Slote, 2015). Specifically, it seems that children's projective empathic processing, as seen in the early discussions of this case study, inhibited adaptable and flexible moral reasoning about the story characters. However, when the teachers challenged their thinking by asking students to consider the topic from multiple angles and to comment on each other's ideas, the children began to engage in more abstract, and less emotionally charged reasoning about the stories. Alongside this shift, the students also began to describe the characters and the events in the stories in more relational terms. This indicates that relational reasoning might rely on some minimal level of emotional distance from the topics under discussion. At the very least, it seems important that students are encouraged to step back and try to view the situation from a high-level, broad perspective in addition to a closer, more personal perspective.

Lastly, in the final discussion, the students demonstrated some level of generalisation of an understanding of mixed emotions. This finding builds on the discussion from the previous chapter and the research around the development of emotional understanding reviewed in the literature review (e.g. Pons, Harris, & Rosnay, 2004). Specifically, it suggests that young children not only grasp the complexity of emotions, including their often multidimensional nature, but can internalize and apply this understanding within new contexts. As in the previous case study, teachers' verbal framing and guidance appeared to be important factors in scaffolding this early understanding of emotional concepts.

However, it is important to note that the present case-study took place in a reception classroom in which the students were slightly older than the children in the early years classroom within the first case-study. Even so, there appeared to be a similar pattern in which the children initially struggled to grasp the concept of mixed emotions and then, with specific prompting and questioning from teachers, they slowly began to consider the possibility that characters could feel two things at once. However, the group in the present case study appeared to explore ideas about mixed emotions in greater depth and with more abstraction than in the previous case study. Specifically, these children more explicitly acknowledged the role of intentions in

someone's emotional experience, indicating that older students might be better able to grasp the underlying mechanisms of how someone might feel two conflicting emotions at once.

Chapter 6
Microanalysis of the teachers' dialogic moves

6.1 Context for the analysis

In this chapter, I identify 'shifts' in children's thinking, characterised by one or more initial dispositional judgments about characters, followed by divergence, disagreement, and/or questioning about these judgments and increased reasoning about characters' perspectives. I identify teachers' dialogic moves while highlighting how patterns of dialogue between teachers and students influenced children's thinking. I reflect on key insights that emerged from my ongoing reflection discussions with teachers which appeared to influence teachers' decisions within the chosen episodes of dialogue. Additionally, within one case in which there was no obvious shift in children's thinking, I engage in a similar process of analysing the teacher's dialogic moves, identifying patterns of dialogue, and considering key aspects of our reflective discussions in order to better understand why this particular group demonstrated a seemingly more fixed conceptualisation of their initial normative frame.

Finally, I outline overarching design principles, describing guidelines which illustrate promising instructional sequences and contextual characteristics which might support future adaptations of the particular programme design. I delineate these design principles based on two distinct levels: 1) links between teachers' dialogic moves and specific patterns of dialogue which appear to propel students' shifts in thinking and 2) contextual characteristics of the settings which influenced these shifts.

As described in the Methodology Chapter (chapter 2), each teacher was introduced to a general framework for supporting children's sustained shared thinking around the stories, involving ideas about how to help make the story come alive, follow the children's lead, clarify their ideas, and ask open-ended questions to promote thinking. These strategies introduced to teachers at the start of the project are listed in Table 2.1. Further, I shared with teachers my general thinking about how specific strategies might support children's thinking (outlined in

Table 3.2), which helped to stimulate our early discussions and brainstorming about specific strategies that they wanted to try out.

In these early brainstorming discussions, the teachers in Settings A and B had broad aims of supporting children to think about characters' perspectives, whereas the teachers in Setting C expressed a particular interest in supporting their students to engage in problem-solving (e.g. thinking about what might make a character feel better) in order to support them to think more carefully about the subjective experiences of the characters. In general, we discussed ways to support children to predict characters' future behaviour or events, to recall past events, and to connect personal experiences to the stories. Finally, we explored ways to broaden the discussions by drawing students' attention to the overarching topics and to ask students abstract or hypothetical questions to extend students' thinking.

As described in the methodology chapter, I chose to analyse one episode from each group which stood out in my initial discourse analysis in terms of a substantial change in tone and positioning following a dispositional judgment. That is, I built from the earlier stage of discourse analysis in which I identified how children co-constructed meaning of frames and shifted this framing over the course of the discussions, and I subsequently aimed to identify key moments in the dialogue in which there was evidence to suggest processes of divergence/alignment within the group or changes in the ways students explained the cause(s) of characters' behaviour(s). The analysis presented in this chapter involved identifying the dialogic moves that teachers used within episodes of talk, based on a modified version of Cam-UNAM Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (SEDA) coding framework (Hennessy et al., 2016) (please refer back to Table 3.5). I also paid attention to elements of students' stance-taking (e.g. how they positioned themselves in relation to the topics within the dialogue and in relation to each other) as part of my broad interest in how positioning played a role in children's shifts in thinking (i.e. connected to my second research question). This initial coding and annotating then fed into a more drawn-out commentary about these patterns within individual settings and a summary of common patterns across settings.

Please note, within this chapter, the bolded phrases in the excerpts are used to indicate specific key phrases referenced in the analysis and are meant to make it easier for the reader to reference the relevant excerpts.

6.2 Shift #1: From identifying friendliness based on appearance toward reflecting on the possible underlying motivations for acting 'nasty'

In Setting A, a shift in children's thinking took place during their third story discussion, which was led by Andrea around the story *Something Else.* The children initially made dispositional claims about the animals in the story, saying they were 'nasty' or 'naughty' because they would not let the main character, called Something Else, play with them. They also claimed that if someone is 'nasty' or 'naughty', they 'have to go to prison'.

6.2.1 Inviting reasoning through possibility thinking encouraged students to consider multiple possible causes for the characters' mean behaviour

The children repeated these claims throughout the discussion, and toward the end (starting in Excerpt 1), Andrea began to question their reasoning by prompting possibility thinking and leading students through their own logic. In response, the children began to elaborate on and eventually adjust their explanations of the characters' behavior. One student in particular, shifted her positioning when she elaborated on her definition of 'nasty' and began to consider the possible intentions and motivations behind this kind of behaviour, both in the context of the story and through a personal example.

Excerpt 1: Maybe the other friends didn't know that

1	Allison	They're bad people
2	Teacher	Oh, why are they bad people?
3	Allison	Because they should go in prison.
4	Teacher	Oh, why should they go in prison?
5	Allison	Because they won't let him play.
6	Teacher	So you think they should go in prison because they won't let him play? I'm not sure.
7	Allison	...Go in prison if they don't let him play
8	Teacher	Hmm I'm not sure they're going to prison. Maybe something else could have said something
9		to them. What could he have said?
10	Alfred	He said you're too tall.

11	Teacher	He might have said, you're so tall, could you make it lower so I could play? Do you think
12		they would have been friends then?
13	Ingrid	No.
14	Teacher	***Do you just think these are not the right sort of people to be friends with for him?***
15	Ingrid	No.
16	Teacher	Why not?
17	Ingrid	You need more people than that group.
18	Teacher	You need more people in the group?
19	Alfred	Maybe he needs to have, maybe he said you're too high, maybe he said you're too tall, and
20		you have to just shoot even more and you have to grow big like us and play.
21	Teacher	Hmm, Scarlett what do you think? You had your hand up.
22	Scarlett	Maybe the other friends didn't know that.
23	Teacher	Maybe, that's a very good point, maybe they aren't looking at how small he is. Do you think
24		that's what's happened?
25	Scarlett	*(Nods head yes)*

In response to Andrea's initial questioning (lines 2, 4, 6), Allison demonstrated her assumption that the act of not letting someone play is considered bad and should be responded to with punishment (lines 3, 5). Andrea began inviting reasoning through possibility thinking (lines 8-9) about whether Something Else could have done anything to change the situation, which propelled Alfred to suggest a hypothetical solution (line 10). Andrea's prompting for the students to extend this idea by asking whether this hypothetical action (i.e. of saying, 'You're too tall) would change the outcome of the story (line 11-12) prompted the children to begin to think about the underlying causes of the animals' behaviour (lines 13 onward).

Ingrid asserted that it would not change the outcome if Something Else asked the animals to make the game more inclusive (line 13), and Andrea subsequently invited the children to build further: ***Do you just think these are not the right sort of people to be friends with for him?*** (line 14). On one hand, this question indirectly reinforced the children's initial judgment of the characters as certain 'kinds of people' however it also reframed their dispositional judgment in more relational terms (i.e. they just aren't right *for him*). Scarlett eventually made a new suggestion, explaining that the animals' lack of awareness for how their behaviour affected Something Else could be a reason for their mean behaviour (line 22).

In general, Andrea's hypothetical questioning and follow-up invitations for the children to build on and extend their reasoning spurred a period brainstorming. This led Scarlett to initially begin to establish her stance, first positioning herself in opposition to Allison's dispositional

judgment of the animals as 'nasty' by framing the events instead in terms of the epistemic mental states of the animals (i.e. what the characters know or believe). Interestingly, she subsequently referred to the animals as 'the other friends' (line 22), which further established her stance as sympathetic to the animals

6.2.2 Inviting children to make their reasoning explicit and coordinating ideas helped them to explore the boundaries of their beliefs

Excerpt 2: So are they still nasty people even though they smile?

1	Teacher	*Why can these be friends but the giraffes can't then?*
2	Francis	Because those are nasty.
3	Teacher	Because they're nasty. *Do you think they're nasty giraffes?*
4	Scarlett	Yeah, because they won't let him play.
5	Teacher	They won't let him play. *So what makes this boy look nice then? What makes this boy look*
6		*nice for him to be friends with them?*
7	Ingrid	Because he's smiling.
8	Teacher	Because he's smiling. *Were the giraffes smiling?*
9	Francis	No.
10	Teacher	No. Were they not? Should we have a quick look? I didn't look at that. Where are they? Are the
11		giraffe's smiling?
12	Scarlett	No, they're grumpy.
13	Ingrid	Actually one of them is, see.
14	Francis	Oh!
15	Teacher	Oh, one of them
16	Francis	They're both smiling.
17	Teacher	They're both smiling. *So are they still nasty people?*
18	Scarlett	No…
19	Teacher	Even though they smile?
20	Scarlett	No but one's not smiling, one is.
21	Teacher	Oh!
22	Scarlett	I think they're, but they're smiling at each other, not at him. They're smiling at each other.
23	Teacher	Oh, so are they leaving him out.
24	Ingrid	Yeah and look! Look!
25	Teacher	So are they still nasty people even though they smile?
26	Scarlett	No, they're smiling at each other, not at him.
27	Ingrid	No, they're not.
28	Scarlett	Yes, they are.

Andrea subsequently began inviting the children to reason about the characters' behaviours while drawing a parallel to the earlier part of the story: ***Why can these be friends but the giraffes can't then?*** (line 1, Excerpt 2). She also repeated Francis' initial answer, reformulating it with a sentential complement construction: ***Do you think they're nasty giraffes?*** (line 3). Scarlett shifted her positioning, now aligning with the other students in their judgment of the

animals as 'nasty' based on the fact that they wouldn't let the character play (line 4). Andrea asked a more directive question to invite the children to apply this thinking to a later scene in the story: ***What makes this boy look nice for him to be friends with them?*** (lines 5-6). Although this question functioned to invite reasoning, it was phrased in such a way that emphasised the physical appearance of the character (i.e. his appearance of niceness), and this prompted Ingrid to interpret the question on an objective, physical level (i.e. by referring to the characters' smiling facial expressions as proof of their niceness, line 7).

Andrea continued to invite the children to build their reasoning and challenged them to test the reliability of the explanation that smiling implies friendliness by looking back to an earlier moment in the story. Her questioning about whether the giraffes were in fact smiling prompted the children to apply their previous logic to a new situation. After Andrea turned to an earlier page in the story and the children scanned the illustration of the giraffes, Ingrid admitted that actually one of the giraffes did in fact appear to be smiling. Francis shifted her tone of voice to convey a sense of surprise and concession and continued by pointing out that actually both of them appeared to be smiling. Andrea's follow-up question about whether this new insight provided any implication for their original dispositional judgment (***So are they still nasty people?)*** (line 17) encouraged the students to either stand by their original claim or take a new stance with this new information in mind.

Up until this point, Andrea had continually invited the students to build their ideas and to verbalise and test their reasoning by guiding them through their own logic and helping them to search for supporting or non-supporting evidence to check their claims. When some of the students did in fact find evidence which countered one of their claims and began to shift their stances, Scarlett became more firmly grounded in her judgment, again repositioning herself as diverging from the group. Interestingly, as Scarlett became the main proponent for characterising the animals as nasty, her tone of voice became increasingly defensive. She argued an exception to the rule (i.e. that smiling implies friendliness), considering the role of intentions in determining the meaning of a smile (i.e. that it matters who you are smiling at, line 22) using this new relational interpretation as a way to support her dispositional judgment

about the animals. Andrea made this reasoning explicit and encouraged the other students to consider whether they agreed with Scarlett's interpretation (***Oh, so are they leaving him out, line 23/ So are they still nasty people even though they smile****? line 25).* This led to a combative disagreement between Scarlett and Ingrid in which they raised their voices in the final lines of Excerpt 2 (lines 27-28). Andrea interceded and helped the students take stock of their ideas in the following part of the discussion.

Excerpt 3: Do you still think they are nasty people?

1	Teacher	So, Ingrid, Alfred, and Allison, I'd like you to listen to this a minute, so Ingrid thinks that they're
2		not nasty people because now they're smiling, they are just leaving him out. Do you think that,
3		Ingrid?
4	Ingrid	Yeah.
5	Scarlett	No.
6	Teacher	But Scarlett thinks that they are, do you still think they are nasty people, Scarlett is that right?
7	Scarlet	Yes.
8	Ingrid	I don't think so.

In Excerpt 3, Andrea drew the students' attention to their divergence by coordinating the students' ideas, first summarising Ingrid's stance in her own words and then checking in with Ingrid to confirm whether her summary was accurate (lines 1-2). She then did a similar reiteration and checking of Scarlett's understanding (line 6). Overall, there was an emerging analytical nature to Andrea's dialogic moves, with a focus on breaking down the children's statements into their component parts, promoting explanation and justification in turn, and then coordinating their ideas. This sequence appeared to help them respond to each other's ideas in a constructive way that built on one coherent line of inquiry.

6.2.3 Continuing to invite possibility thinking while taking a stance within the dialogue supported a student to distill general meaning from specific claims

Excerpt 4: Only beautiful people can smile

1	Teacher	*Allison, do you think nasty people can smile?*
2	Allison	No.
3	Teacher	You don't think nasty people can smile?
4		Why do you not think nasty people can smile?
5	Allison	*Because that means they're very bad and have to go to prison.*
6	Teacher	So if you're in prison, so I've been put in prison, and the police man has locked the gate
7		and said you are very nasty and very naughty and you're going to stay in jail overnight, do
8		I never smile?
9	Scarlett	You don't
10	Teacher	No? Scarlett what do you think? What do you think Scarlett?
11	Scarlett	Um I think that…
12	Alfred	I'm smiling.
13	Scarlett	Only beautiful people can smile, not bad people.
14	Teacher	Only beautiful people can smile?
15	Scarlett	Yeah.
16	Teacher	So, our something else is smiling here. He's beautiful?
17	Scarlett	Yes
18	Teacher	What makes him beautiful?
19	Scarlett	He's smiling.
20	Teacher	Because he's smiling?
21	Scarlett	Because my mummy told that to me.
22	Teacher	Did she? So these one's who are smiling, are they beautiful people?
23	Francis	Yeah.
24	Scarlett	No, but they're not smiling.
25	Teacher	We said that he was smiling, this giraffe was smiling.
26	Scarlett	He's smiling at him.
27	Teacher	So because they're smiling together, does that make them beautiful people?
28	Scarlett	*Um, but they think they are beautiful people.*
29	Teacher	So they think they are beautiful people together. Does our Something Else, our beautiful
30		Something Else, does he think they're beautiful now that their smiling?
31	Scarlett	No, because they are naughty children.
32	Teacher	Because they're naughty.

In Excerpt 4, Andrea asked Allison to build upon her reasoning about whether the nasty characters would be able to smile, this time framing her question in a more abstract, hypothetical way (***Do you think nasty people can smile?***, line 1). There was a subsequent moment of pause and stagnation in the discussion, and Andrea again invited further reasoning (line 4). When Allison reverted to her earlier explanation ***(Because that means they're very bad and have to go to prison)*** (line 5), Andrea changed her own positioning, now using first- and second- person pronouns (i.e. 'I' and 'you'), inviting the students to reason about a hypothetical scenario in which she herself was put in prison for being a 'nasty person' (lines 6-7). By starting with the pronoun 'you' and then switching to 'I', she brought both the children and herself into the hypothetical scenario. This shift in positioning appeared to create an

opening for Alfred to briefly join the discussion (line 12), which seemed significant, as this was a segment of dialogue that was heavily dominated by Scarlett and Allison. However, his comment was not explicitly acknowledged by the group, and Scarlett continued to take the lead in the remaining discussion.

In the dialogue that followed, there was a sense that Scarlett's tone of voice became increasingly hesitant as she attempted to reconcile her present claim (i.e. only beautiful people smile) with her previous claim (nasty people don't smile) in the face of contradictory evidence (characters she has deemed as nasty *are* in fact smiling). This prompted her to reorient to the particular perspectives of the characters in the scene, again referring to the character's epistemic mental states (i.e. what they believe): ***Um, but <u>they think</u> they are beautiful people*** (line 28). However, Scarlett's subsequent reference to the original dispositional judgment (line 31) highlighted the possibility that while she had begun to consider the point of view of the animals, this was done not in an attempt to make sense or discover the real cause of the events in the story, but more-so in an attempt to look for evidence to support her original claim.

Excerpt 5: What is a nasty person?

1	Teacher	Ah so that's a bit of tricky one isn't it? I think, should I tell you what I think? I think nasty
2		people can still smile. And naughty people can still smile. Because there's little bits in their
3		life that can make them happy. So if I'm a nasty person, I might still have a big bowl of
4		chocolate that makes me smile. Because things still make me happy. ***What is a nasty***
5		***person?***
6	Scarlett	***Um it's things that don't share and are rude, but no, no, no, but Allegra sometimes***
7		***does it.***
8	Teacher	Ok, so is Allegra a nasty person if sometimes she does it?
9	Scarlett	But sometimes if they don't. but Allegra only does it to get attention.
10	Teacher	So, Allegra does it to get attention, so does that make her a nasty person?
11	Scarlett	No!
12	Teacher	No.
13	Scarlett	***Silly***!

In Excerpt 5, Andrea asserted her opinion, elaborating her own reasoning (lines 1-4). She then re-opened up the discussion, again reinforcing her investigative positioning by using increased abstract and moral-evaluative language: ***What is a nasty person?*** (lines 4-5). As Scarlett began to elaborate, she paused for a moment, and then made a personal connection to the discussion: ***Um it's things that don't share and are rude, but no no no, and but Allegra sometimes does***

it (lines 6-7). This comment was the first indication that she had begun to concede her original argument.

Andrea then invited Scarlett to build and extend her reasoning with regard to the example of her sister Allegra, supporting her to make the premise of her argument explicit and leading her through her own logic (lines 8, 10). Ultimately, Scarlett began to reconcile her definition of 'nasty' (i.e. as someone who doesn't share and is rude) with an apparent realisation that her sister's behaviour might fall into this definition (i.e. as the definition stands). Scarlett then attempted to resolve this dissonance by changing her positioning, incorporating the underlying motivation and frequency of the behaviour as added considerations in defining someone's behaviour as nasty (or naughty). This change in positioning was especially apparent when she relaxed her oppositional tone (*Silly!*, line 12). Importantly, the discussion becomes a back-and-forth dialogue just between Andrea and Scarlett, and the other students appeared to slightly lose interest. It seemed that in order to reach a point at which there was a real shift in Scarlett's conceptualisation of 'nasty', there was a trade-off in terms engagement from the group as a whole.

6.2.4 Summary of the teacher's dialogic moves within shift #1 and relevant reflections with the teachers

The way in which Andrea prompted the students to think imaginatively about how the characters might have acted in a slightly different scenario than the one presented in the story oriented the students towards a thought experiment (i.e. an imagined intervention), forcing them to distill the real causal drivers of the characters' behaviour in the story. This supported the children to consider the characters' perspectives, intentions, and the contents of their knowledge and awareness. Further, pushing the students to look for evidence to justify their claims led to a breakdown in meaning in the group with regard to interpreting characters' behaviours and led the students to reorient toward thinking about the social functions of smiling. This emphasis on finding supporting evidence for claims appeared to also have the effect of pushing one student to pay attention to and frame information in a way that supported her initial ideas. As soon as Scarlett encountered a conflict between two of her claims, which

appeared to cause internal conflict, she finally relaxed her grip on her original claim, and ultimately began to re-conceptualise the definition of a 'nasty person'.

The way in which Andrea clearly defined the problem of inquiry for each normative frame in a hypothetical way (e.g. emotions: "Do you have to keep smiling so people know you're happy?" and traits: "What is a nasty person?") created a proliferation of different ideas among the students while also establishing a sense of shared motivation among the group to find shared meaning and intersubjectivity.

Andrea explained in our reflection meeting on 1 February 2018 in relation to the first story discussion around *The Bear and the Piano*, that she felt that even as she tried to get Scarlett and Alfred to consider alternative explanations, they seemed to have already made up their minds. In our later reflection meeting on 15 February 2018 after the first discussion around *Something Else*, she described watching herself getting worked up over the comment that 'only beautiful people smile' because Scarlett seemed so determined that it was right. She also said she felt like she initially didn't know how to respond. She explained that she was almost positive Scarlett had heard this from her mother at home and thus it was hard to challenge something that came from elsewhere and didn't have a contextual basis within the discussion.

I brought up my ideas about how children 'try out' phrases and ideas that they hear, either in the home or other settings, and another staff member chimed into the discussion, explaining that she was hearing words like 'nasty' and 'naughty' in her classroom as well. The discussion became more informal, and the teachers began to describe their frustrations with not having control over what happens in the home, while describing the need to take control over how behaviour is framed in the centre. I mentioned that I noticed that Ellie had labelled a character's behaviour (rather than the character) as 'not nice' and that this subtle distinction of labelling behaviour rather than people might reduce children's spontaneous use of labelling. Ellie agreed and tentatively planned to bring this as a strategy for challenging children's labels in the next centre-wide development meeting.

Ellie also reflected that it helped her to ask a more general question about the children's broader understanding of the meaning of 'nasty', to broaden the discussion to see if she could gauge what they believed was important criteria to be labelled nasty. She said it helped when Scarlett presented a straightforward answer so she could then question it in a more targeted way.

Because the teacher's questions were quite open-ended, they generated somewhat chaotic periods of children calling out their own ideas with little building or connecting on what was previously said. However, while these periods of disorder seemed to create some distress for the teachers, as reflected on in our meeting (22 February 2018), they appeared to be a necessary antecedent to the shifts in dialogue that followed. Specifically, teachers explained that the divergence enabled them to frame the inquiry in a way that considered opposing possibilities which emerged directly from the students' ideas, which in turn gave the students the opportunity to consider other perspectives, take up different positions, and find junctures of alignment even within divergent stances.

6.3 Shift #2: From a punitive stance around mean behaviour toward considering obstacles to being kind

The second example of a shift in children's thinking came from Patricia's group in Setting B, taking place in the fourth story discussion, which involved a second reading of the story *Broken Bird*. The first discussion around the story took place the week before, during which the children claimed that both brothers were mean and should be tied up as punishment. In the beginning of the following week's discussion around the story, Patricia reflected on this earlier topic of discussion, asking the students to recall that they made a distinction between the appearance of two brothers in one of the illustrations (excerpt 1), using this as a springboard to elicit further reasoning about the perspectives of these characters.

6.3.1 Inviting reasoning through possibility thinking and speculation prompted relational thinking

Excerpt 1: What do you think this bird is thinking?

1	Teacher	Yeah. What do you think's happening, who can remember? Should I read the words? It
2		was only when his brothers began to point and laugh at him that he realized he only had
3		one wing. Broken Bird looked inside his shell to make sure he had not left it behind, but
4		the other wing was nowhere to be found. *So last week, some of you thought that this*
5		*brother was laughing, but this brother wasn't laughing. Do you remember that?*
6	Eddie	And that one is cross.
7	Teacher	Oh, and you think this one is cross?
8	Eddie	No, that one.
9	Teacher	Oh, yes. The worm is cross.
10	Eddie	About the one that is laughing.
11	Teacher	*Ok, so what do you think this bird is thinking?*
12	Eddie	*I think he's thinking about that it's not very nice to laugh at somebody that's your little*
13		*brother.*
14	Teacher	*Oh. So you think that he's thinking that this brother is not being very kind to their little*
15		*Brother.*
16	Eddie	Yeah.
17	Teacher	That's interesting. What else do you think he might be thinking? Randy?
18	Hal	Not sure.
19	Teacher	You're not sure?
20	Randy	**Maybe he's thinking that the other bird's stronger than him.**
21	Teacher	Oh!
22	Randy	Because he does this *(raises his arms, demonstrating flexing muscles)*
23	Teacher	*Oh, he thinks he's stronger than everybody else. Wow, interesting, because he's doing*
24		*that with his wings. And is that a sign of strength?*
25	Randy	Yeah

Patricia used hypothetical questioning to extend the children's reasoning and coordinated the students' diverging ideas. Firstly, Patricia asked the students to recall their previous discussion, drawing their attention specifically to their earlier contrasting of two of the characters (*So last week, some of you thought that this brother was laughing, but this brother wasn't laughing. Do you remember that?*) (lines 4-5, Excerpt 1). She then guided the students to focus to the main characters: *Ok, so what do you think <u>this bird</u> is thinking?* (line 11). Her emphasis on the phrase 'this bird' and her physical pointing to one of the birds in the picture encouraged the students to consider the brothers independently, and Elliot subsequently gave an elaborate explanation of one of the bird's thought process, describing how this brother might interpret his brother's behaviour: *I think he's thinking about that it's not very nice to laugh at somebody that's your little brother (lines 12-13).* His use of the sentential complement 'I think

(that) he's thinking' reflected Patricia's early sentential complement use (line 11) and indicated his own position in speculating about the character's mental state.

This was also the first time over the course of this and the previous discussion that a student considered the brothers' perspectives (as opposed to Broken Bird's perspective). Patricia repeated Eddie's statement back, reformulating it in a way that made his reasoning more explicit: ***Oh. So you think that he's thinking that this brother is not being very kind to their little brother*** (lines 14-15). When she invited the other students to extend this idea, asking what else they think the bird is thinking, Randy made a suggestion which further built on Elliot's stance: ***Maybe he's thinking that the other bird's stronger than him*** (line 20). She also repeated Randy's explanation, explicitly extracting the underlying chain of logic: ***Oh, he thinks he's stronger than everybody else. Wow, interesting, because he's doing that with his wings. And is that a sign of strength?*** (lines 23-24).

Excerpt 2: If you could hear him speak, what do you think he might be thinking?

1	Teacher	***Oh, what else do you think he might be thinking? We don't know what he's thinking, who else would like to have a guess? Melia?***
2	Melia	Um, he's laughing while he's doing that.
3	Teacher	He's laughing? Yeah, do you think he's laughing a little bit? ***What do you think he's***
4		***thinking?***
5	Melia	Hmm [*pause*]. He's strong.
6	Teacher	He's strong, he thinks he's strong. What do you think this bird is thinking or saying?
7		What do you think this one is thinking or saying? Remember, there aren't any right
8		answers, we can guess, it's okay to guess. Hal?
9	Hal	***The one that's laughing is like Sean because Sean is always mean.***
10	Teacher	Oh, you think Sean in our class is like this one? And Sean's mean. ***He's always mean?***
11		***Do you think he's mean?***
12	Hal	Uh, no he's a little bit.
13	Teacher	You think he's a little bit mean? So this one reminds you of Sean?
14	Hal	[*Shakes head yes*]
15	Teacher	Okay, and what else do you think this one might be thinking? Or why do you think he's
16		laughing? Or saying, what do you think he's saying? If we could hear him speak, what do
17		you think he might be saying? Carly, what do you think?
18	Carly	He might be saying, I don't know.
19	Teacher	You don't know? It's okay. Mandy, have you got any ideas?
20	Mandy	[*Shakes head no*]
21	Teacher	Anyone else, Charlie, have you got some ideas?
22	Charlie	No.

In Excerpt 2, Patricia asked the students once again to build their reasoning, guiding the direction of the dialogue to focus on the birds' thoughts and emphasising the hypothetical nature of the task: ***What else do you think he might be thinking? We don't know what he's thinking, who else would like to have a guess?*** (lines 1-2). Melia responded that the other bird was laughing, referencing the character's overt behaviour rather than his mental state, and Patricia redirected the discussion to focus on the character's subjectivity: ***What do you think he's <u>thinking</u>?*** (lines 3-4). She continually reframed the discussion in this way, guiding the discussion to focus on speculating about the characters' thoughts and speech while reiterating that there aren't any right answers. This seemed to encourage more of the students to participate, perhaps because it lessened their emphasis on the need to come up with a correct answer.

Hal responded by making a personal connection, comparing the bird who was laughing to another student in the class who was not present in this group: ***The one that's laughing is like Sean because Sean is always mean*** (line 9). By making this personal connection, Hal took up a moral-evaluative position in relation to both the character and his peer's behaviour. Patricia challenged this statement, heightening the pitch of her voice in a way that suggested she was challenging his idea: ***He's always mean? Do you think he's mean?*** (lines 10-11). This particular student pulled back, and attenuated his confident tone, now shifting his positioning away from such an evaluative position. Patricia drew the discussion back to the focus on the birds' thoughts, and in Excerpt 2, there was an emerging expression of hesitation and uncertainty from Hal, Carly, and Mandy (lines 13-23).

6.3.2 Challenging children and coordinating diverging ideas prompted students to portray the character's behaviour in a new light

Excerpt 3: Do you think this bird is wanting to be kind?

1	Teacher	***Do you think this bird is wanting to be kind?***
2		*[Hal shakes head yes, Mandy shakes head yes, Melia shakes head no]*
3	Teacher	No from Melia, yes from Mandy, yes from Hal. Oh yes? You think he does want to be
4		kind? Oh why do you think he might be wanting to be kind? Why do you think that,
5		Melia?
6	Melia	***Because the little bird has lost a wing.***
7	Teacher	***So this one's wanting to be kind to the one that's lost his wing. Yeah?***
8	Charlie	***Maybe he can't be kind. Maybe it's tricky for him.***

After a pause in the discussion, Patricia invited the students to further build their ideas with a direct question about the character's intention: ***Do you think this bird is wanting to be kind?*** (line 1, Excerpt 3). This question sparked a shift toward a more animated tone in the students' voices as they began to disagree. Patricia then coordinated the responses, making the emerging disagreement explicit and then inviting further reasoning about why the bird might want to be kind. Melia's response (***Because the little bird has lost a wing,*** line 6) conveyed a tone of objectivity, and when Patricia rephrased Melia's idea within a subjective orientation, notably inserting volitional language ***(So this one's <u>wanting</u> to be kind to the one that's lost his wing),*** Charlie reoriented the focus back to the perspectives of the characters, hypothesising that one brother might be experiencing an internal struggle: ***Maybe he can't be kind. Maybe it's tricky for him*** (line 8). In this final statement, Charlie presented a new way of explaining he character's behaviour, with her unprompted use of the word 'maybe' demonstrating an acknowledgment of her own role in hypothesising about the characters' intentions.

6.3.3 Summary of the teacher's dialogic moves within shift #2 and relevant reflections with the teachers

Patricia's emphasis on using possibility thinking to guess what one of the characters might have been thinking or saying to the other character prompted the students to think about the characters' interactions with one another, and Patricia further guided them to factor these specific interactions and relationships into speculating about the character's thought processes and inner monologues. Patricia asked a direct question which implied her own positioning about the intention of the character which then prompted the students to make their own judgments and establish their own stances in relation to the story. Patricia's subsequent coordination of ideas encouraged the students to elaborate on their reasoning. Generally, Patricia's emphasis on the hypothetical nature of the activity and the subjective orientation of the characters prompted the students to consider the characters' intentions and helped them to connect these to features of the social context, namely the dynamic of the brothers' relationship with one another.

In our final reflection meeting (19 March 2018), Patricia emphasised her core values of kindness, acceptance and promoting empathy as running through all of her teaching. This emphasis on values seemed to be a key thread in our collaboration, and I noticed some tensions in how emphasising the tenants of these values sometimes dominated her focus (especially within the earliest discussion) and may have made her hesitant to promote children's perspective taking in some cases (e.g. in the case of empathising with a bully in a story).

However, in our reflection after the third story discussion (5 February 2018), I brought up my interest in the children's emphasis on 'tying the birds up' because they were mean to Broken Bird. She said she found this idea to be very punitive and expressed an interest in following up on this point. We decided to reintroduce the story the following week. In our reflection after the fourth discussion (12 February 2018), Patricia explained that she found it really useful to read the same story twice, as it enabled her to think a little bit more creatively about the types of questions she asked. I also shared with her my observation that she seemed much more focused on asking questions about the characters' thoughts and feelings which seemed to get the conversation flowing more naturally. Patricia said she found this interesting and that she also felt like the children were contributing in a more organic way. Finally, she reflected that she found it useful to tell the children "there is no correct answer" to support them to express their ideas and disagreements more confidently, especially for those students that tended to want to be seen as being right. I reflected back that I thought her emphasis on there being no right answers was a key component of children's willingness to put new ideas forward and I encouraged her to continue to emphasise this in the following discussions.

6.4 Shift #3: From judging a reluctance to try new things as 'weird' to investigating possible internal conflicts that stop someone from acting bravely

In Faye's group (Setting B), a critical shift took place during the fifth story discussion around the story *The Koala Who Could*. In the beginning of the discussion, in describing the Koala's reluctance to come down from the tree, the children made the claim that it is weird not to want to change.

6.4.1 Supporting children to connect relevant personal experiences while guiding the direction of the dialogue helped them to think more broadly about the character's thought process

Excerpt 1: You think he might be brave and give it a try?

1	Teacher	Do you think he's 'gonna come down to play?
2	Hugo	No, he's going to stay still.
3	Aria	I think he's 'gonna give it a try.
4	Teacher	You think he might be brave and give it a try? Why?
5	Allen	And if he doesn't like it he won't…
6	Teacher	*Okay, is it good to give things a try?*
7	Hugo	At the end he will. It's on the cover.
8	Darrin	He will he will he will.
9	Teacher	**Ah good inferring**, let's see… 'I've clinging to do but thanks for the thought.'
10	Nadia	Clinging
11	Teacher	*Cling, he wants to cling to the tree. But his friends want him to come, don't they?*
12	Hugo	Yeah
13	Teacher	*Have you had a friend who hasn't wanted to come and try and do something new*
14		*with you?*
15	Allen	Yes.
16	Hugo	Yes.
17	Teacher	Can you talk to the person next to you about your friends who haven't wanted to do
18		anything new once? Your friends. Make sure you both get a chance to share. What did
19		you have to do when your friends didn't want to try anything new? Tell your friend.
20	Darrin	I forgot.
21	Teacher	You forgot? Okay, well if you remember, Darrin, just shout it out.
22	Hugo	My friend turtle that my grandpa has didn't want to walk.
23	Allen	That's never happened to me.
24	Teacher	I see Elliot shared a lot of stuff with Emma. Elliot, do you want to share with us?
25	Elliot	Once I had a friend over the river Thames and he didn't want to play with something
26		else, only water pistols.
27	Teacher	He only wanted to ever play with water pistols, he didn't want to ever try something
28		new?
29	Elliot	Yeah
30	Teacher	Do you think, why is that?
31	Elliot	I don't know why.
32	Teacher	You don't know why? That's alright. Nadia, have you had a friend that never wanted
33		to try anything new? What happened?
34	Nadia	My sister, my sister did not want me to move my room.
35	Teacher	Your sister didn't want you to try moving your room? Why was that?
36	Nadia	Because she was really sad if just do my toys and she just does this?
37	Teacher	Emma, did you have a friend who didn't want to try something new?
38	Emma	No
39	Teacher	No? Anybody else? Allen?
40	Allen	When my brother didn't want to move house.
41	Teacher	Your brother didn't want to move house. Why do you think he didn't want to move
42		house?

43	Allen	I don't know.
44	Hugo	I know why. Because he didn't want to be late at school. Because they live very close.
45	Teacher	Oh, you live very close and your brother didn't want to be late at school.
46	Allen	I think.
47	Teacher	*Why would you not want to move your house?*
48	Allen	We moved school when that happened.
49	Teacher	Oh so you had to go to a new school.
50	Allen	He went to St. Paul's.
51	Teacher	*Do you think he had to be brave?*
52	Allen	No
53	Teacher	You don't think he had to be brave going to a new school?
54	Allen	No
55	Teacher	Wait, you think he was brave or you think he wasn't brave?
56	Allen	Um I think he was.

In Excerpt 1, Faye continually drew the students' attention to the main character's perspective, prompting them to make personal connections to the story while supporting them to extend these personal insights to think differently about the characters' behaviours. This enabled them to hypothesise about the character's internal conflict and to relate his conflicting motivations to key aspects of the story context. She invited the children's ideas by initially asking them to make a prediction (line 1), which spurred a disagreement among the students (lines 2-3). Faye then guided the direction of the dialogue: *Okay, is it good to give things a try?* (line 6). The students appeared to initially overlook her question while continuing to argue for their initial predictions (i.e. about whether he will stay in the tree or come down), referring to the cover illustration (lines 7, 8), and Faye praised these responses in her comment: *Ah, good inferring* (line 9).

Faye then shifted the focus of the discussion toward considering the character's perspective by positioning herself as speculating about his thought process: *Cling, he wants to cling to the tree. But his friends want him to come, don't they?* (line 11). She continued by asking a question which connected the story to the students' own lives: *Have you had a friend who hasn't wanted to come and try and do something new with you?* (lines 13-14) This appeared to open up the discussion, as the students began presenting a range of relevant personal examples.

Faye then helped the students to think further about Allen's example of his brother not wanting to move to a new house, again using a second-person point of reference: *Why would <u>you</u> not*

want to move your house? (line 47), encouraging the students to put themselves in the hypothetical scenario, rather than just hypothesising about their siblings' or friends' perspectives. Faye guided the direction of the dialogue by asking a leading question, using a sentential complement which emphasised the students' subjectivity: ***Do you think he had to be brave?*** (line 51). She then challenged Allen, which prompted his hesitation and reconsideration of his initial answer (lines 54, 56). The students' consideration of these personal examples seemed to open up the space for thinking more broadly and hypothetically about the thought process of the koala, especially when Faye helped them to utilise their own experiences as ways to make predictions, as demonstrated further in Excerpts 2 and 3, explored in the next section.

6.4.2 Guiding and challenging, inviting possibility thinking and connecting personal examples helped the children acknowledge multiple reasons someone might want to be alone

Excerpt 2: What if he just came and sat with them?

1	Teacher	*Oh what do we think about Kevin right now?*
2	Hugo	*He didn't… he wanted to come down but he was scared from the wild animals*
3		*down there.*
4	Teacher	*Was he scared, these weren't wild animals were they? These are what?*
5	Hugo	Well the crocodile, because look…
6	Teacher	Oh yeah, well that is a bit scary. But he wanted to come down, *why doesn't he come*
7		*down?* He really wants to be with his friends. Why doesn't he? Talk to the person
8		next to you. Find out why he doesn't want to.
9	Darrin	Because there's animals that want to eat him.
10	Teacher	Yeah, maybe those ones. But do these animals want to eat him?
11	Elliot	Maybe he might get hurt.
12	Darrin	But look, crocodiles.
13	Teacher	*Yeah, but what about them? What if he just came and sat with them? Would he be*
14		*safe?*
15	Elliot	Yes.

In Excerpt 2, Faye continued to read the story, and as she guided the discussion, she broadened the focus by asking an open-ended question to invite reasoning, while positioning herself as part of the collective 'we': ***What do we think about Kevin right now*** (line 1). This question prompted one of the children to give a detailed explanation of the character's internal thought process: ***He didn't… he wanted to come down but he was scared from the wild animals down there (lines 2-3)***, which Faye challenged while raising the pitch of her voice, indicating a sense

of heightened interest (***Was he scared, these weren't wild animals were they?)*** (line 4). Faye continually gave hints to draw the students' attention back to Hugo's earlier explanation of the character's internal conflict. She also made her own reasoning explicit and continued to challenge the students' ideas, making certain information in the story salient by inviting possibility thinking about specific hypothetical scenarios: (e.g. ***Yeah, but look, what about them? What if he just came and sat with them? Would he be safe?***) (lines 13-14).

Excerpt 3: Do you like to spend time by yourself?

1	Teacher	Yeah… so whatever the invite…he just can't let go, but he really wants to spend time
2		with his friends. ***Would you like to live in the tree all the time?***
3	All	[Children shake their heads and call out: 'no' and 'yeah' all at once]
4	Teacher	Elliot, you say yeah, why's that?
5	Elliot	Because I could have my own time spending all the days all by myself.
6	Teacher	Do you like to spend time by yourself?
7	Allen	I do a little bit.
8	Teacher	You do a little bit. But not…
9	Darren	Me too.
10	Teacher	You do a little bit as well? ***Hugo, do you like to spend time alone?***
11	Hugo	No, sometimes I do, when I'm angry.
12	Teacher	***Oh okay, and that's a good way when you're angry is to spend time alone, right?***
13		***Yeah, what do you do when you're angry and you're trying to spend time alone?***
14	Hugo	I close myself in my bedroom
15	Teacher	Yeah and what else do you do?
16	Hugo	And I smack my face on the pillow.
17	Teacher	Oh, do you try and yell in the pillow? I want to ask Nadia now, Nadia do you like to be
18		alone?
19	Nadia	Yes, I always hide under my bed.
20	Teacher	So you like to have time alone to yourself.
21	Allen	I do
22	Teacher	***But do you like to be alone all the time?***
23	Nadia	Medium.
24	Teacher	Medium? That's a good answer.

At the start of Excerpt 3, Faye again re-opened up the discussion, shifting back to second-person pronouns, explicitly asking the students again to connect the story to their own personal experiences: ***Would you like to live in the tree all the time?*** (line 2) and ***Do you like spending time alone?*** (line 10). These questions spurred a wave of comments from the students, including a multiplicity of ideas (lines 14, 19, 23), and Faye asked each student individually to explain (lines 15, 17-18, 22). Specifically, Faye reinforced Hugo's idea by asking follow-up questions to build his reasoning: ***Oh and that's a good way when you're angry is to spend time alone right? Yeah, what do you do when you're angry and you're trying to spend time***

alone? (lines 12-13). After Nadia presented her own example (line 19) Faye challenged her with a question that connected this response to Hugo's previous comment about wanting to be alone at specific points in time: ***But do you like to spend time alone all the time?*** (line 22). Faye generally gave each student space to describe their own thoughts and experiences and asked them to elaborate, which created a sense that each was valid in its own way. This appeared to help the students to acknowledge that there could be many reasons someone might want to spend time alone, as was demonstrated in the final part of the discussion (exhibited in excerpt 4 below) in which the students further explored the character's conflicted state of mind.

6.4.3 Inviting reasoning through possibility thinking prompted one student to take a hypothetical stance

Excerpt 4: Why do you think he's feeling different?

1	Teacher	Oh why do you think he's feeling different?
2	Hugo	Because he's not on the tree.
3	Teacher	*He's not on a tree. But I'm not on a tree and I feel springy light happy and*
4		*young. Why does Kevin feel those things, Allen?*
5	Allen	Because he didn't… well he didn't go in there because he didn't know he wanted.
6	Teacher	He didn't know…
7	Hugo	He felt different because he spent all his time in the tree, and he'll have to walk
8		with his hands and feet
9	Teacher	That's right. Because he spent…I think that might be right. What do we think, do
10		we think that's right? Nadia and Darren? He was spending all his time on a tree but
11		now he's not. What do you think Elliot?
12	Elliot	Maybe he just wanted to come down but he couldn't. So that's why he's feeling
13		surprised.

Faye invited the children to extend their reasoning about the character's perspective at the end of the story (line 1, Excerpt 4), and then demonstrated her own reasoning by bringing herself into the discussion, ***He's not on a tree. But I'm not on a tree and I feel springy light happy and young. Why does Kevin feel those things, Allen?*** (lines 3-4). This question led Allen to take up a new position around the meaning of bravery, describing the epistemic mental state of the character, explaining that he did not know what he wanted. Faye's subjective framing of the question, which built on the students' earlier exploration of related personal experiences, appeared to catalyse the exploration of the character's internal thought process. Ultimately, Faye reinforced the children's ideas and asked the other students to take a stance (lines 10-12).

Elliot's final response *(Maybe he just wanted to come down but he couldn't. So that's why he's feeling surprised*, lines 12-13*)* provided an even more elaborate explanation of the character's inner conflict, with the term 'maybe' indicating that was taking a hypothetical stance about the character's perspective.

6.4.4 Summary of the teacher's dialogic moves within shift #3 and relevant reflections with the teacher

Early on in my reflections with Faye, she described her observation that the children tended to agree with and repeat back whatever Hal said, and that she felt frustrated that the other children weren't thinking for themselves (2 March 2018). We brainstormed different ways to support the other children to express their own ideas, and she decided that she would try a buddy system of sharing with a partner and then calling on students to express their ideas out-loud to the group. This strategy seemed to work well, and in our reflection meeting after the third story discussion (16 May 2018), she said she felt really pleased about how the children were beginning to share their ideas more willingly, and that she felt like the children were starting to see things in less 'black and white' terms.

In this reflection, we also talked about some of my previous observations in the classroom about children fixating the concept of 'evil' in their play and sorting each other into good and bad groups. She reflected that she also observed the children playing games in this way on different occasions. She said that it was something that concerned her, especially the tendency for this type of play (i.e. what she called 'sorting play') to be exclusionary and sometimes violent.

This transitioned into a discussion about the difficulty of dealing with concepts of good vs. evil, especially because they come up a lot in children's media. We also talked about the nature of children's understanding of the fluidity of personality. We reflected on the discussion that took place that day around *The Cloud*, about how Hal said that maybe the character has never been happy before in her life, that maybe this is the first time she's ever felt happy. She related this to an exhibit she saw in Amsterdam called 'Body Worlds: The Happiness Project',

explaining how this really made her think about how happiness is not engrained in us but so intertwined with our environment and what we do. In general, it felt like we established a really strong professional relationship. She demonstrated a sincere interest in trying to deconstruct children's rigid concepts and labels.

It seemed that way in which Faye subsequently emphasised giving each student an opportunity to express their own related experiences opened up the remaining discussions and enabled the students to see that there might be multiple possible reasons someone might behave in one particular way. She later described her approach (e.g. in our reflective discussion on 14 June 2018) as enabling the children to consider a broad spectrum of collective experiences. She also explained that by modelling her own thinking about the story through a personal lens, she hoped to enable the students to draw on their personal experiences in order to articulate the characters' perspectives more clearly. In general, I felt that Faye's interest in the subject of the malleability of personality and our more informal discussions on this topic helped to establish a close working relationship. This rapport helped us to effectively brainstorm together and test different strategies with a sense of creativity and experimentation.

6.5 Shift #4: From advocating conformity to exploring the subjectivity of exclusion

The fourth example of a shift comes from Phoebe's group in Setting C around the story Something Else which constituted the third story discussion. In this discussion, the children began to build on their frame of belonging, elaborating on the notion of conformity. Specifically, they explained that the character Something Else needed to draw the same pictures and jump really high in order to belong to the group.

6.5.1 Taking a stance and expressing ideas propelled students to initiate their own questioning of the characters' motivations

Excerpt 1: Why do you think he's feeling sad?

1	Teacher	Yeah, he can't quite play the same way as they play. And he can't quite draw the same
2		pictures. And he's really trying to be like them, but he can't quite do it the same. *I*
3		*wonder what he's feeling now.*
4	Nayla	Sad.
5	Teacher	You think so?
6	Nayla	Yeah
7	Teacher	*What makes him feel sad?*
8	Wade	Sad in that picture.
9	Teacher	Why do you think he's still feeling sad?
10	Nayla	They are not his friends, and he is only on his own. He doesn't have friends.
11	Teacher	*I don't get these people, Ed. These ones still are not letting him be friends.*
12	Ed	They are not his friends. He needs to draw the same pictures. He needs to jump really
13		really high.
14	Teacher	So if he could just jump a bit higher, then maybe they would let him join in do you
15		think? Shall we see? Actually, you don't belong here, they said, you are not like us
16		because you are something else. Something else went home. He goes home, look,
17		they've said to him, you're not like us.
18	Ed	*If someone told that to me, you're not like us and you've got to go home, that would make*
19		*me go to bed.*
20	Teacher	*Did you hear what he said, Kyle? I think that's really important. If something said*
21		*something like that to me too I think, I'd think I'd feel like you as well. Cause I would*
22		*want to go home and go to bed too.*
23	Nayla	Me too.
24	Teacher	With Something Else? Kyle what were you going to say?
25	Kyle	*That giraffe here is just really angry.*
26	Teacher	Yeah, and why is he so angry? Why is he so angry at something else?
27	Kyle	Because he didn't like him because he was so blue.
28	Teacher	*He thinks it's got something to do with his colour.* Kyle's said something really
29		interesting, you know. He's said, he's so blue, it's made him angry. Because his
30		colour is so blue.
31	Wade	I know. If there's another of them, of these, then they're be two. But they would just
32		not know there were two.
33	Teacher	*Would that make a difference?*
34	Wade	Yeah.
35	Ed	These giraffes have got glasses, but they are still in.
36	Teacher	They have got glasses!
37	Ed	Why?
38	Teacher	Well, I dunno. I wear glasses so that I can see more clearly. I was just thinking about
39		what Ed said. Because this one isn't angry at them because they've got glasses. It
40		doesn't say, you've got glasses so you don't belong. But you think maybe
41		saying that to him because he's blue.

In Excerpt 1, Phoebe began this episode by making her own reasoning explicit, and then used the phrase 'I wonder' to invite the students' ideas about the character's emotional state (***I wonder what he's feeling now***, lines 2-3 and ***What makes him feel sad?***, line 7***)***. Phoebe positioned herself as an active member of the dialogue, making it clear that she was herself invested in finding an explanation, and she encouraged further reasoning by exclaiming her own lack of understanding, ***I don't get these people, Ed. These ones still are not letting him be friends*** (line 11). Notably, up until this point, Phoebe guided the direction of the discussion, making specific information salient, however the students subsequently began to take the lead in guiding the discussion.

Ed initially reiterated his original idea about the character needing to conform, however after Phoebe encouraged possibility thinking, asking whether his suggestion would change the animals' behaviour (lines 14-17), he then took a personal stance, as evidenced by his comment ***If someone told that to me, you're not like us and you've got to go home, that would make me go to bed*** *(lines 18-19).* Phoebe reiterated this response to the other students, highlighting his idea and exhibiting a sympathetic tone of voice. She then shifted to first-person positioning, bringing herself into the hypothetical situation: ***Did you hear what he said, Kyle? I think that's really important. If something said something like that to me too, I think I'd feel like you as well. Cause I would want to go home and go to bed too*** (lines 20-22).

Kyle then presented a different explanation for the animals' behaviour, claiming: ***That giraffe here is just really angry*** (line 25). Phoebe invited him to further his reasoning while using a sentential complement to rephrase the explanation: <u>***He thinks***</u> ***it's got something to do with his colou***r (lines 28-30). Wade then took the initiative to present a hypothetical scenario in which there was another creature like Something Else that the animals just were not aware of (lines 31-32). Phoebe invited Wade to build his reasoning, asking about the influence of this hypothetical scenario on the children's mounting chain of logic (***Would that make a difference?***, *line 33)*. This question appeared to prompt Ed to also take the initiative to challenge the logic of the characters' exclusionary behaviour when he says: ***These giraffes have got glasses, but they are still in.*** (line 35). This appeared to be a key moment of the

discussion in which both Ed and Wade took up positions in which they actively took the lead in exploring and questioning the reasons behind the characters' behaviours.

6.5.2 Summary of the teacher's dialogic moves within shift #4 and relevant reflections with the teacher

Phoebe's emphasis on making her own reasoning explicit and involving herself as an active and curious member of the discussion appeared to motivate the students to shift from describing how they thought the character should behave to thinking about how they themselves might react in a similar situation, while taking into consideration the specific details of the story. Phoebe's rephrasing of the children's individual responses appeared to help clarify their ideas to the rest of the group which supported children to build on previous ideas. Further, Phoebe's own affective engagement and concerned questioning around the characters' perspectives and behaviours appeared to foster genuine interest from the students and catalysed them to take the initiative in taking the reins in driving the investigation.

In our first reflection discussion on 30 April 2018, Phoebe told me about some of the children's families' broad financial circumstances, explaining that many of their parents have to work two jobs and leave them at the centre for 10 hours a day out of necessity. We reflected together about how some of these underlying issues at home (e.g. occupational or financial stress) might influence children's engagement with the PSHE curriculum. She said that one of her primary aims in this project was to take the opportunity to respond sensitively to each of the students' ideas, especially when students opened up about their own experiences or emotions. Building on this emerging focus, she said it would be useful for me to provide feedback around helping her to ask good follow-up questions in order to better help students be able to articulate their ideas and emotions more clearly.

After a day spent observing at the centre early on in the project on 14 May 2018, I brought up some of my observations to Phoebe. I told her about two boys that were playing together and asked me to play with them. They began pretending that I was a monster, saying I was the 'naughtiest monster' and that they were going to call the police and put me in jail. I played

along for a while, trying to convince them that I was a friendly monster and that I just wanted to play with them. I told Phoebe about how I had observed other students playing in similar ways (e.g. with this idea of categorising 'good' vs. 'bad') in this and other settings, and that I always found it interesting to observe but also felt a little bit uncomfortable participating as I felt I might be reinforcing these labels.

She said that she understood this concern but that she felt like it was a really common part of children's play. She said her worry was not so much about how these concepts of naughty or evil came out in their talk or play but more about how the PSHE curriculum might focus too heavily on a rule-based notion of acceptable behaviour and adult intervention. She said that rather than telling children their behaviour was bad or good, she wanted them to be able to recognise that there is a 'spectrum of behaviour' and to work out for themselves how they think specific behaviour or ways of interacting might be received or interpreted by their peers. She also expressed her concern over some children who might begin to identify themselves as 'bad' if they are constantly being disciplined by adults. She said she wanted to take the opportunity within this project to help students focus on the variety of possible motivations for the characters' behaviours, especially those characters who were on the giving end (rather than receiving end) of mean behaviour. This focus became especially evident in how she modelled her own curiosity and investigatory thinking around the characters' intentions and motivations, putting forth her own ideas about the possible motivations for characters' behaviours, which seemed to help the children to begin to initiate this sort of investigatory thinking themselves.

6.6   Reflections on Case #5

Within the story discussions that took place in Setting C, led by Erin, there did not seem to be a shift in the children's thinking, and so I felt it would be important to reflect on why this might have been the case. Firstly, it is important to note that this teacher was ill on the final scheduled story discussion and was unable to reschedule. Therefore, the students in this group only participated in five discussions, whereas all of the other groups participated in six story discussions. Like the other cases, the children in this group did demonstrate a normative frame within the first half of the project, describing words 'mean' and 'naughty' as referring to

someone who laughs at someone else and doesn't share. Erin asked the students what they thought 'mean' meant, and Lori explained that it refers to the characters' behaviour of laughing at and not sharing with the other character. Before the discussion presented here, there was little explanation or clarification of the meaning of meanness, except for a brief reference to the possibility that someone might feel bad and say sorry about being mean. In the fourth story discussion around the story *Giraffes Can't Dance,* the concept of meanness emerged again, and Erin took the opportunity to question the children's thinking.

In contrast to the previous analysis of episodes from the other four cases, I aim to reflect broadly on some of the characteristics of the dialogue in this setting which may have contributed to the apparent absence of a shift in children's thinking.

6.6.1 Children engaged in hypothetical thinking about the characters, but they appeared to be inhibited in exploring the characters' perspectives

Erin guided the direction of the dialogue by asking a direct question (line 1, Excerpt 1) and then invited the children to reason about the characters' motivations for being mean (line 3). Lori referred to one specific detail of the story (line 4) as indicating the reason why the character was being laughed at, but she did not elaborate on how or why this detail specifically caused the characters' mean response. Erin reinforced Lori's response by saying 'Right' and then shifted her positioning to a hypothetical stance, encouraging possibility thinking by prompting the students to think about what they themselves would do in this situation (line 5). She also used second-person language to address the students as if they were characters in the story. However, this hypothetical question only gave the students a yes/no option, which elicited a head nod from Lori at first, and then one-word responses of 'no' from both Lori and Ryan (lines 8, 9).

Excerpt 1: But I'm not mean to anybody

1	Teacher	Do you think they want to be his friend?
2	Lori	No
3	Teacher	Why do you think that is, Lori? Why are they laughing at him?
4	Lori	'Cause he can't dance.
5	Teacher	Because he can't dance. Right. Would you laugh at Gerald if he couldn't dance?
6	Lori	(Shakes head no)
7	Teacher	***Do you think that's a nice thing to do?***
8	Lori	No.
9	Ryan	No.
10	Lori	I'd like to stroke him.
11	Teacher	You'd like to stroke him. And that would probably, how would that make him feel?
12	Ryan	Happy.
13	Teacher	Yeah. Do you think it's nice to laugh at somebody that can't do something?
14	Lori	No.
15	Teacher	Hmm. Hey, look at clumsy Gerald. And the animals all laughed. Giraffes can't dance you silly
16		fool, oh Gerald don't be daft. Ah, look, are they all laughing at him? What do you think they
17		could do to make Gerald feel better?
18	Lori	Be their friend.
19	Teacher	They could be his friend. And what could they do instead of laughing? What else could they
20		do to make him feel better?
21	Lori	When people are mean, you have to say sorry.
22	Teacher	Right, and then why do you say sorry?
23	Lori	Because, if you laugh at someone, you say sorry.
24	Teacher	Okay, so if someone was being mean to you, how would that make you feel?
25	Lori	Um, sad.
26	Teacher	Hmm. And would you say sorry if you were mean to somebody?
27	Lori	(shakes head yes)
28	Teacher	Hmm, makes him feel better.
29	Lori	***But I'm not mean to anybody.***
30	Teacher	Well, that's good, isn't it? It's nice. Then you have lots of friends, don't you? But these
31		animals, look they're all laughing at Gerald.

Erin further invited reasoning about the meaning of nice and mean behaviour by asking, ***Do you think that's a nice thing to do***? (line 7) which prompted Lori to initiate her own hypothetical thinking about what she would have liked to do if she were a character in the story (line 10). Erin built on Lori's idea (lines 16-17), guiding Lori through a causal chain of reasoning about how her hypothetical actions would make the characters feel, similar to the other teachers' hypothetical questioning and efforts to guide children to make their logic explicit. However, in this case, Lori's responses became increasingly tangential and less directly connected to the story. This was especially evident when Lori began to describe her own general conceptualisation of what mean behaviour looks like and what someone is required to do when they behave in this way (line 21, 23), demonstrating a generic, circular explanation without relating it to the specific details of the story context.

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Importantly, Lori dominated this episode of dialogue, and Erin did not yet try to draw the other students into the conversation. Erin then guided the direction of the discussion, asking Lori to instead reason about how she would *feel* in a hypothetical scenario related to the story (line 24). However, Lori said: ***But I'm not mean to anybody***, suggesting that she was taking up a moral position of someone who is generally kind, and she may have found it difficult to entertain a hypothetical scenario that conflicted with this idea of herself. Erin praised Lori's response and then guided the discussion back to the story, but there was a subsequent lull in the students' responses (i.e. after line 31).

Excerpt 2: 'Cause that made him feel…

1	Teacher	They shouted, 'It's a miracle, it must be in a dream. Gerald's the best dancer that we've ever
2		ever seen.' What did they say earlier when they saw him dance?
3	Lori	Laughed.
4	Teacher	They laughed. What did they say?
5	Jersey	You can't dance.
6	Teacher	That's right, they did, didn't they?
7	Lori	You can't dance.
8	Teacher	That's right. Cause that made him feel…
9	Lori	Sad.
10	Teacher	Because they weren't being very kind to him. But now they're saying… what are they saying
11		now? They're saying, wow, he's the best! And why do you think he's the best dancer now?
12	Ryan	From the music.
13	Teacher	From the music, you're right, Ryan. From the music. He's found the right music. Oh, how is
14		it you can dance like that? Please, Gerald tell us how, but Gerald simply twizzled around and
15		finished with a bow. Look, they're saying, how can you dance like that? They're asking him.
16		They don't know. Do you know why he can dance like that now?
17	Ryan	Music.
18	Teacher	From the music. What about you Kian? Maralyn?
19	Maralyn	***Because he learned.***
20	Teacher	He…
21	Lori	Learned.

Erin redirected the dialogue by asking a question about a previous part of the story, and Lori eventually reoriented to thinking about the characters, however she only gave one-word responses (lines 3, 9, Excerpt 2). Erin's follow-up comment (lines 10-11) demonstrated her own attempt to explain the characters' behaviours in the story. More of the students began to contribute to the dialogue, and Erin's invitations to reason supported them to recapitulate the chain of events in the story. In response, they focused on describing the concrete causes of characters' behaviours (e.g. lines 5, 12), but they did not consider the links between events or characters' subjectivity in interpreting these events (i.e. characters' interpretations or reactions

to these events). Marilyn's response to Erin's question about why the giraffe got better at dancing (***Because he learned***, line 19) was the first indication in this discussion of a student's effort to relate the outcome of the story to the character's perspective. Lori repeated part of Marilyn's response, demonstrating some effort toward alignment. However, throughout this episode, there was a sense that the students were responding to Erin and not to each other, with generally very few efforts to build or elaborate on each other's previous ideas.

While Erin did make clear efforts to guide the direction of the dialogue and continually reoriented the children's thinking to the topic of what it means to be 'mean', there did not appear to be one coherent line of inquiry that threaded through the discussion. The fragmented nature of this discussion seemed to inhibit the students from progressing past a recounting of events and in turn, they did not engage in extended episodes of exploration around the characters' perspectives like the other cases presented in this chapter.

6.6.2 Summary of dialogic moves within Case #5 and relevant reflections with the teacher

In general, these episodes provided examples for how Erin encouraged possibility thinking which prompted the students to connect their own experiences to the story and which appeared to help them engage empathetically with the characters. However, the conversation was mostly dominated by Lori, and there was little evidence that the children were listening to or building on each other's ideas. Further, Lori responded to Erin's questioning with generic explanations for how people should behave in general, and while Erin challenged these explanations and tried to relate them back to the story context, the children did not seem to make these connections themselves.

Although some of the other children joined in towards the end of the discussion (i.e. in Excerpt 2), there appeared to be a general lack of dialogue and interaction between students, especially when compared to the discussions that took place in both groups in Settings B (i.e. with Patricia and Faye). The back-and-forth pattern of dialogue (i.e. between the teacher and one student) resembled the discussion presented in Setting A in this chapter in which the dialogue was

dominated by an extended interaction between Andrea and Scarlett. Further, in both cases, Andrea and Erin invited reasoning through possibility thinking and guided the direction of the dialogue. However, in contrast to Andrea, it seemed that Erin focused less on directing the children to draw conclusions about the causes of characters' behaviours from their hypothetical thinking. Further, while Erin subtly indicated her own positioning around the conception of 'kind behaviour', she appeared to be more hesitant to express her own ideas or interpretations of the stories than the teachers in the other settings.

After the third story discussion (4 June 2018), Erin reflected that she felt surprised that certain students who she knew really enjoyed reading and whom she'd expected to actively engage in these discussions were quiet and reserved. She reflected that she generally felt like the students enjoyed reading the stories together but that they were reluctant to share their ideas, except for when she asked students directly. Erin also explained that in general she was hesitant to guide the students' dialogue too much or be too explicit about her own thoughts or opinions, as she did not want to sway their thinking too much. She also expressed a worry that her dominance in the conversation might cause the other students pull back and that she really wanted the children to express their own ideas without too much influence or direction from her.

I related some of the conversation around 'mean' behaviour to an interaction I had observed on the playground between Lori, from this reading group, and another child (from my observation on 14 May 2018). They were fighting over a toy and Lori said, "If you don't share, that means you're mean!" which caused the other girl to get even angrier. I also recalled from the first story discussion that Erin had asked a child, "What do you mean by mean?". I asked if Erin would be willing to probe this a little further, as I felt like this might support the student to elaborate on and potentially question her concept of meanness, and she said she was open to the idea. I explained that this type of direct questioning about what children perceived to be the meaning of certain concepts had been a useful tactic in other settings to help students be more explicit in describing the definitions (and possible limitations) of certain labels or social expectations. In the fourth discussion around *Giraffes Can't Dance* (discussed here), she tried asking the students what they meant by 'mean', and she reflected afterward that this type of

direct questioning didn't feel very natural for her. I told her that I also observed that the students didn't seem very responsive to this question and that she shouldn't do anything she isn't comfortable with.

In general, I made the conscious decision to loosen my own emphasis on supporting Erin to question the children's thinking in order to support Erin to develop her practice in a way that felt more natural and authentic to her. I articulated this to Erin and elaborated that I felt it might be good to shift our reflection discussions to concentrate on how to best support overall engagement from the group. She agreed but also said she still wanted to preserve our focus on supporting children's perspective taking. In general, I felt that there may have been more work that could have been done at the beginning of our collaboration together to establish a clearer set of shared goals and priorities, although it felt good to be able to be flexible and adaptable and to have a good working relationship that allowed for this flexibility. It was also important to acknowledge that priorities can change over the course of a collaborative partnership, and my collaboration with Erin was a good example for how continual checking in and negotiation of priorities with teachers was crucial for maintaining the integrity of the working relationship and the project more generally.

6.7   Overarching design principles: How specific patterns of dialogic moves can be adopted by teachers to propel students' shifts in thinking

While the teachers differed in their approaches to guiding the discussions, there were a few overarching patterns surrounding the ways in which teachers' dialogic moves supported shifts in thinking across the four cases.

6.7.1   Inviting possibility thinking by guiding students through their own logic through both open-ended and closed questioning to challenge dispositional judgments

Open-ended questions, including 'why' and 'how' questions prompted students to pay attention to the underlying thought processes of characters and to think about the varying situational factors that might influence their motivation for behaving in a certain way. Further,

phrasing a question about the characters' perspectives in possibility thinking terms (e.g. 'What might he think if…?' or 'What might he say to the other character if…?') opened up the space for children to creatively consider the characters' mental states in relation to a hypothetical social situation and how this type of informed speculation could be useful to predict a character's future behaviour. Prompting the students to think imaginatively about how the characters might have acted if the circumstances of the situation were to change only slightly prompted even more fine-tuned conjecture about the characters' perspectives and compelled students to examine any unsupported underlying assumptions.

In general, questions which prompted possibility thinking functioned as thought experiments, or imagined interventions in a causal chain of events. These thought experiments appeared to motivate the students to investigate and compelled them to consider the characters' intentions rather than merely assuming certain behaviours carry inherent meaning and/or imply certain consequences. This hypothetical questioning also encouraged the students to view the characters' perspectives through a relational lens, in which they considered previous or present interactions with other characters and the various ways in which characters might subjectively interpret elements of their environment.

The teachers' emphasis on guiding students through their own logic and helping them to search for supporting or non-supporting evidence for their claims led to uncertainty, disagreement and occasionally fragmentation of ideas. When children struggled to find evidence for an overarching claim, this prompted students to reorient to the information about the particular circumstances of the situation. Further, drawing students' attention to disagreement and helping students to synthesise and connect emerging ideas made the dialogue more accessible for other students to join in and take up specific positions within the discussion. It also seemed that beyond the types of questions that teachers asked, it was important that teachers actually had the desire to know what the children thought, which in turn created a sense of persistence and continuity in the teachers' questioning.

Based on my conversations with teachers, it seemed that while teachers tried to use open-ended questions, they often felt the need to also use closed-questioning in order to guide or extend the children's thinking. In general, I tried to stay away from classifying specific kinds of questions as 'good' or 'bad' and found that it was useful to identify how these different kinds of questions might be useful at different points in a dialogue. Based on the analysis presented in this chapter, closed questions sometimes enabled students to extend their reasoning, however this seemed to only be the case when there was already an open-ended discussion that preceded this narrower focus – usually toward the end of the excerpts presented in each case in this chapter. For example, the question: *Do you think this bird is wanting to be kind?* (asked by Faye in Setting B) appeared to facilitate the children's thinking because they had already explored the idea of how someone can have an internal conflict, and so this question seemed to act as a nudge which helped them to extend their reasoning further.

6.7.2 Supporting students to make personal connections and connecting these experiences back to the story to encourage perspective taking

Guiding the students to make their own personal connections to the discussions, either by explicitly asking them to do so or by modelling teachers' own personal connections, prompted the students to demonstrate more concern for the particular challenges within the characters' situations. Further, when the teachers took a stand and elaborated on their own reasoning and became an active part of the dialogue themselves (e.g. by displaying affect, curiosity and personal investment in the investigation), the students were more likely to instigate exploration of and even question the characters' perspectives.

When teachers asked students about personal connections to the story while supporting them to think about the variability of their own experiences, it led the students to think more broadly about the characters' points of view. Teachers' prompts and the students' varied responses served to demonstrate that there might be many possible reasons for one specific behaviour, which led to increased consideration of nuances in their explanations of the characters' behaviours. Also, when teachers demonstrated a subjective orientation in the story, students were more likely to orient to the characters with a sensitive, sympathetic stance.

6.7.3 Making use of illustrations as a springboard for imagining the characters' perspectives rather than as a tool for comprehension

It seemed that the story illustrations were generally salient and memorable for the students and sometimes took precedence over information provided by the story text. Teachers' reinforcement around referencing the illustrations to explain the story events appeared to encourage children to argue for a 'correct' answer rather than imagining the characters' perspectives. However, one teacher asked questions about the illustrations, framed within a hypothetical inquiry (i.e. about how the characters might perceive of one another), which prompted the children to engage in an extended exploration of the characters' thoughts and emotions. It seems that this hypothetical framing was the key ingredient for enabling the children to interpret the characters' attitudes and to imagine what might be possible within the margins of both the illustration and the text. In this way, the illustrations became a springboard for imagining the characters' perspectives within the context of that particular moment in the story.

In general, it is important to acknowledge the teacher's intentions in referring to and asking these questions about the illustrations. For example, while some teachers referenced the illustrations in hypothetical ways, there was sometimes an underlying attitude from a teacher that conveyed there was a right or best answer that could be inferred based on the illustration. Further, there are issues to consider about the kinds of expectations that teachers had conveyed in the past. That is, children may have interpreted teachers' questions based on what kinds of responses teachers had previously praised or reinforced, which may have then made it difficult for teachers to subsequently guide children to more imaginative or hypothetical thinking about the characters' perspectives based on the illustrations at a later point.

6.7.4 Using sentential complements and open-ended, hypothetical positioning to support context-sensitive perspective taking

The use of sentential complements in questions about a characters' perspectives (e.g. *What do you think he might be thinking*?) helped to frame children's thinking as a mental exercise rather

than an objective problem-solving activity. This conjectural framing was evident in students' efforts to make their own positioning explicit in the process of taking the characters' perspectives (i.e. by repeating sentential complement constructions in their own responses, such as 'I think that…'). This framing was also evident, albeit more implicitly, in their demonstration of uncertainty or hesitance (e.g. by making suggestions with prepositional phrases such as 'maybe' rather than directly asserting their points). It is also interesting to note that in general, it seemed that asking questions about the characters' epistemic mental states (i.e. what they know and believe) prompted this speculative positioning more often than asking questions about the characters' affective mental states (i.e. how they are feeling).

Also, in some cases, often following prompts to relate personal experiences to the story, teachers broadened the scope of the dialogue by asking theoretical questions about the wider topics or values under discussion, such as bravery or what it means to be 'nasty'. In this way, they were bringing children's implicit normative frames that had emerged in the children's talk to the spotlight, prompting the students to articulate and elaborate their conceptual meanings, which enabled inconsistencies and incongruities within or disagreements between students' definitions to be made explicit. This strategy also appeared to enable students to repair some of these discrepancies by considering exceptions and ultimately modifying these definitions so that they came to an agreement or at least a definition that made sense in light of multiple considerations. Importantly, it seemed that the students' ultimate ability to engage in deeper discussions about these abstract questions depended on their earlier discussions of these terms within the context of specific, concrete examples.

While there was a general increase in perspective taking across all three examples, it seemed that one student made claims about the characters' thoughts and emotions as ways to support or confirm her initial argument (i.e. Scarlett in in Case A). This type of confirmatory perspective taking came across as qualitatively different from when students were inferring the characters' perspectives as a way to sincerely investigate and understand their behaviour. Specifically, there appeared to be a tone of insistence in the former case, when the student referred to the characters' intentions as a way to support her initial claim, while there was a

tone of caution and hesitation in the cases in which students did not appear to have a specific agenda or established position. In general, a useful strategy for dealing with this confirmatory perspective taking involved prompting and even modelling possibility thinking in addition to reiterating the students' own subjectivity in relation to the story with sentential complements (You think that…). Specifically, the consistent reminder for students to 'make a guess' and use their imaginations, rather than search for a correct answer seemed to prompt more students to share their ideas, which ultimately created the sense that there was less of a clear right answer, which in turn compelled the group to try to reconcile their differences with more flexibility and openness to changing their positions.

6.8   Reflections on some of the contextual factors that influenced planning and reflection with teachers

Within this project, there were some unexpected and sometimes subtle conflicts between the aims of the project and certain values or policies within the school. For example, while one of the teacher's core values of 'promoting empathy and kindness' initially seemed to be highly compatible with the project's aims, there were tensions associated with the sometimes-prescriptive nature of these values (e.g. limited conceptions of what 'kind' behaviour looks like).

In a few of the settings, there were issues around supporting children's engagement and balancing participation in the discussions. In one case in particular (Setting B, Faye), I had developed a lot of trust and rapport with the teacher by engaging in informal discussions related to the project (e.g. about the philosophical aspects of our conceptions of personality). In general, it seemed that these open discussions sparked creativity and generally supported the teacher's willingness to take more of a lead in the project and to try out new strategies. For example, she suggested having the children talk in pairs before responding to the whole group in order to allow for more thinking time for the children who weren't as quick to respond as others.

In general, an important component of this project was my early and continued observations in each setting and my constant checking-in with teachers. This close engagement with the settings enabled me to work with the teachers to connect the topics that emerged within the discussions to classroom life and to help the teachers make decisions about which topics to focus on or return to throughout the discussions. It also gave me a sense of when it was best to take a step back and let the teachers take the lead in deciding what was most important to them in guiding the discussions. Building open and honest working relationships with teachers in which we could have frank conversations about what seemed to be working or not working appeared to be an integral component in fulfilling the aims of the project.

6.9   Building on the Literature

The analysis of teachers' dialogic moves enabled me to identify the key strategies that teachers used to guide students to discuss complex social situations and the specific ways in which these strategies supported children's reasoning. Through this analysis, I also identified a few key design principles describing how specific patterns of dialogic moves can be adopted by teachers in the future to challenge normative frames and support children's context-sensitive perspective taking within the context of dialogue around stories. These findings build on the pedagogic principles discussed in the literature review about conversation-based programmes which aim to support children's mental state reasoning (e.g. Bianco & Lecce, 2016; Bianco et al., 2016; Lecce et al., 2014).

Specifically, many the studies discussed in the literature review focused on training teachers to provide feedback and to expand upon children's answers to open-ended questions about the stories. Further, these studies emphasised the role of teachers' use of grammatical constructions, such as sentential complements, in extending children's social reasoning. However, findings from this project elaborated on how feedback, open-ended questions, and sentential complements might operate in conjunction in order to support and extend children's social reasoning about the stories. Further, while the primary focus of this project and these related intervention studies involved encouraging context-sensitive perspective taking from students, teachers from this project showed how identifying specific judgments about

characters (i.e. guided by the definition of attributional bias) could be used as focal points to probe children's thinking in targeted ways.

Additionally, few of the intervention studies discussed in the literature review stressed supporting students to make personal connections to the stories. In general, these studies mentioned above and other ToM training studies in the preschool and primary school years (Ornaghi et al., 2011, Ornaghi et al., 2014; Ziv, Smadja, & Aram, 2013) tend to focus on mental state talk about fiction, without consideration for the ways in which students can integrate their emerging reasoning about hypothetical characters' behaviours into their reasoning about their own and others' behaviour in their personal lives. This is surprising, because many studies that have looked at development of social understanding in infancy and toddlerhood focus on parents' guidance of children's thinking around their own personal experiences within narrative form (e.g. Fivush, 1993; Reese & Cleveland, 2006). Further, it is interesting that authors of the school-based studies have argued that the interventions can provide teachers with a platform to help their students to successfully deal with social challenges in the school context; however, it is unclear whether teachers' conversations about fictional stories in the intervention settings do in fact translate to productive conversations about social scenarios in everyday activities within the classroom. Findings from this study elaborate on how reasoning about story characters might be translated to reasoning about personal experiences and how a focus on learning transfer and generalization could be more intentionally incorporated into structured intervention studies.

As discussed in the previous chapter (Case Study 2), projective empathic processing can inhibit adaptable and flexible moral reasoning about the story characters if this comes before efforts to understand the distinct factors about the characters' unique circumstances or if students' personal emotions overpower the discussion. Thus, although it may be important for teachers to help students make connections between stories and their personal lives, teachers need to consider how to support children to maintain a focus on the characters in the story under discussion and the ways in which students' own personal experiences might add to (but should not define) their developing understanding.

Further, teachers' use of sentential complements supported students to acknowledge their own subjectivity in thinking about the characters' mental and emotional states, which opened up the space for acknowledging their peers' differing perspectives. This acknowledgment of differing perspectives appeared to be a key element in supporting children to coordinate ideas and reconcile breakdowns in understanding among the group. Importantly, the use of sentential complements has been a key focal point in the ToM intervention studies mentioned above (Lecce et al., 2014; Bianco et al., 2016). Additionally, these intervention studies have emphasised the importance of highlighting different possible perspectives around one single event. However, these studies have only presented brief explanations about the possible mechanisms by which sentential complements might support children to acknowledge multiple perspectives within the group. Findings from this chapter help to further illustrate how the use of specific grammatical constructions that emphasise the indeterminate process of hypothesising and guessing about characters might support students to remain open to other possible ways of interpreting the stories, which in turn can support a wider consideration of the possible explanations for the characters' behaviours.

Another important finding from the discussions that took place in this project involved the authentic engagement of teachers with students, specifically involving their sincere interest in the students' ideas and their efforts to guide the students' thinking in ways that flowed with the natural direction of the dialogue. Further, it was significant that over time the teachers began to gain confidence in their abilities to lead the discussions and ask probing questions; this growing confidence appeared to contribute to the teachers' roles in challenging and shifting the children's thinking. Interestingly, all of the ToM training studies mentioned in the literature review were conducted via a training protocol in which teachers were asked to deliver the programme in systematic and structured ways. For example, in the study by Bianco and Lecce (2016), teachers were given written guidelines containing instructions and scripts about group discussions. Researchers in the field of dialogic education have emphasised that an important aspect of teachers' questioning is whether it signals to the students that teachers are sincerely interested in what they think, which encourages students to express their ideas freely and

openly (Nystrand, Wu, Gamoran, Zeiser, & Long, 2003). It seems that while structured intervention approaches are more conducive to systematic evaluation, they may limit the depth and generalizability of the learning that occurs within the conversations and may stunt teachers abilities to engage authentically with students.

Chapter 7
Teachers Reflections

7.1 Introduction

At the end of the project, after all of the story discussions had taken place, I set up final meetings with teachers to ask them about how they felt the project influenced their own teaching and professional development and students' engagement and learning. This was done in an informal way, and it ultimately felt like an extension of our many prior reflection meetings; however, the primary differences were that I came prepared with some pre-planned questions to help guide the discussions (presented in Appendix A) and I audio-recorded these final meetings in order to be able to systematically identify the primary themes that emerged. While I generally asked most of the questions I had planned beforehand, I aimed to keep the interviews conversational and open-ended. In this effort, I sought to recognise areas or topics that appeared to spark interest and then asked follow-up questions in these areas to encourage teachers to elaborate further.

In setting A, I sat down with Andrea and Ellie together, which worked well since they had collaborated closely with each other throughout the entirety of the project, and they planned to work together to implement a professional development programme for other staff members around shared reading based on their learning from the project. In Setting B, I sat down with Faye and Patricia separately due to the fact that they ended up working somewhat separately over the course of the project, and my time working with Faye extended past the period in which I worked with Patricia. Also, Faye became actively involved in the delivery of a parent workshop which I conducted as a part of a public engagement project alongside the research, and so I also included some of the reflections on the project that she communicated to parents during the start of the workshop. Finally, in Setting C, I sat down with Phoebe and Erin together, and although they each facilitated story discussions separately with different groups of children, they had developed a close collaborative relationship over the course of the project and seemed to find value in coming together to share their experiences as they had done regularly over the course of the project.

Based on my thematic analysis, there were five overarching themes that I interpreted as emerging from these meetings: (1) reflections on student engagement, including surprises and challenges, (2) evolving priorities and conceptions of promoting dialogue around stories, (3) benefits from the project extending to other aspects of classroom life, (4) specific topics teachers took a personal interest in and (5) reflections on chosen stories and thoughts about the future.

7.2 Theme: Reflections on student engagement, including surprises and challenges

Teachers within each setting reflected on the engagement of both individual students and the group as a whole. They described the benefit of the small-group format and how some students seemed to find their voices and became more confident in saying what they thought, while others had a more difficult time engaging and contributing to the group. They observed positive changes in how individuals listened and related to each other's ideas, and teachers described an emerging orientation among some of the students toward explicitly expressing agreement or disagreement both in and outside the discussions. The teachers referred to the difficulties involved with managing the whole group's engagement and the importance of the 'warming-up' process, with the reception teachers specifically highlighting the challenge of balancing participation while allowing students to speak out.

7.2.1 Pleasant surprises in individual student engagement

Teachers reflected on individual students' engagement with the project, including the ways in which some students took to the small-group format and flourished while other students had more of a difficult time engaging.

In all three settings, the teachers described one or more children who they felt flourished within this project, describing both how the format of the discussions enabled them to demonstrate their existing abilities and how these children developed their capabilities and confidence through the weekly discussions. For example, in Setting B, Patricia emphasised that Carly

became more confident in her thinking and was much more vocal toward the end of the project. She also described how the discussions highlighted Hal's self-reflective nature, giving him the opportunity to show how he could take the stories and transfer what was happening into his own life. She also described how she felt Randy had changed to become much calmer and more at ease with his peers, speculating that while there may have been a benefit from engaging with his peers in a small group through the project, there were likely other confounding factors that contributed to this change. On the other hand, she described Eddie as being limited by his attention to the details in the illustrations and a general focus on looking for the right answer. She described this as being out of character for him:

> *And Eddie was interesting, although he's kind of a free spirit, and he's kind of rebellious, he was kind of, I felt like he was really looking for the right answer. And he was so focused on the pictures and what the pictures were telling him. I thought that was really interesting. He was almost limiting himself by only looking at the illustrations.*

Faye also described her surprise around the students' engagement with the stories, especially after she began encouraging them to call out instead of raising their hands. She identified Elliot as especially engaged in the discussions and commented on the thoughtfulness of his contributions.

In Setting B, both Andrea and Ellie identified Fern as coming on 'leaps and bounds', explaining that they felt she had gained confidence in her speech through the project:

> *She has just clicked. Her letters and sounds. It's a confidence thing. And she is going to be heard.*

In general, they also said they observed more varied emotion words, more initiated thinking about the causes of others' behaviours and many more speculative words and phrases like 'maybe' and 'I wonder', especially with Oliver.

In Setting C, Phoebe said there was an unexpected level of engagement from both Raymond and Wade, while speculating about the importance of giving the children enough time to express themselves:

> *Raymond in our group who started out as a bit of an observer, but I think became more confident with time. Today I went out on a walk with him and his mom, and he just wanted to talk all the time, so I think it's that as well, giving the children time to express their ideas and thoughts.*

Phoebe went on to describe the importance of children relating the stories back to their own experiences, and described how Wade was able to do this:

> *This thing of the importance of relating back to their own experience and that they want to talk about that and that actually if they if they do, that helps them to think about the experiences of others [...] some of them did it, like Wade came out.*

Erin then agreed, adding that Lori was able to make these connections as well. She also made it a point to describe how she felt the format of the discussions enabled Ryan to demonstrate his enjoyment and engagement with the stories, which he hadn't done in other settings:

> *Well, just through discussions, I didn't realise how much Ryan enjoyed stories. And he's not the sort of child that would bring a book up to you and would want you to read, and because he was always doing other stuff like play, and I didn't know that, I would never have thought. And he was one of the children that joined the discussion time and time again.*

The teachers also described their observations of the students learning to express themselves more and to disagree with other students. In setting A, Andrea and Ellie both agreed that they felt the project empowered the students to speak up more often:

I think it's empowered them to know that their voice makes a difference. And their disagreements... like the other day, they were playing, and Ingrid said, "I don't think that. It's okay for me to not think that."

In Setting C, Erin reflected on the way in which the smaller group format enabled the children to listen to each other's ideas which helped the conversation to flow:

I like the idea of a smaller group because they sort of feed off of each other's ideas, one comes up with something and somebody else would chip in and that gets the conversation flowing.

Phoebe agreed, adding that the children were more likely to agree and disagree with each other or the course of the project:

I think that's a really good point because that was something in one of your feedbacks where you were talking about, you had a name for it, where they listen to what the other has said and then they respond either to agree or disagree, and then as the weeks have gone on, they were more likely to do that.

7.2.2 Difficulties with group engagement

The teachers also referred to the challenges with maintaining students' engagement, especially over an extended period of time of questioning and probing, referring to the common problem of one student dominating the conversation and losing the rest of the group.

In setting A, Ellie described the constant challenge of some students being more engaged than others, especially when she and Andrea emphasised children's diverging viewpoints:

I think it will be something that's always there, is the fact that some children are just far more engaged and interested in it than others. So obviously emphasising other children's ideas especially if they bring up an alternative explanation, you want to do

that. But on the other hand, I'm very conscious that we lose some of the group, I found that the whole way through, that was a key thing that I was very aware of.

Ellie elaborated on the reasons for this disengagement, acknowledging their efforts to animate the stories but explaining that some children will be more engaged with certain stories than others:

Whether that just be that the children are at different levels, whether it be that they're just not interested in that, you know what it's like even from the start, we look at the front cover and what's it about, if someone's really interested in animals, like Mr Tiger Goes Wild, if they don't have much interest in that, I find that it can be that simple to whether they engage with it straight away. Yeah, obviously how we do the voices and get them engaged helps, but you either like things or you don't.

Andrea and Ellie brainstormed ways to increase student engagement, introducing an idea of a story sack with props to help them act the stories out:

Andrea: *I think if I did it next time, I would get more props from the stories, so actually have like a broken bird.*

Ellie: *Like a story sack.*

Andrea: *Yeah, and have actually the characters from the story so you could physically act it out. And I think that would hold more attention and I don't know almost role play emotions more, like these guys are making fun, and do a visual as well.*

Ellie: *And even with the SEN training, that is a given. With children that are varying levels and different needs, if you're trying to engage them in a group activity like a story, quite often they will have a physical thing to hold.*

In Setting B, Faye described how Hal tended to dominate the conversation and caused other students to repeat his ideas. This was an ongoing struggle over the course of the project:

> *Hal says things just to sound smart, and it becomes difficult because all of the other children just agree with him, they aren't really thinking for themselves.*

Patricia said she was afraid to question their thinking too much as she felt it might put them off from saying what they really think, however she generally expressed how pleasantly surprised she was with the overall level of students' engagement and excitement around the stories. She also reflected on what she might do differently in the future to increase students' engagement, including introducing stories two weeks in a row while refraining from asking questions in the first reading to save time:

> *I mean, it's the whole 'time' thing. Because I found, we only had about 20-minute slots, but at the same time I don't think you can keep their attention for longer than 20 minutes. So maybe if I was going to do it again it'd almost be worth reading the book one week and then use the second week to ask the… think about the questions. So you know to read the book took less than 20 minutes so then say let's see what happened beginning to end and then delve into it more deeply the second week.*

In Setting C, Erin talked about the importance of warming up to the group, which took time for some of the students. She described how some of the students might cope better with one-on-one or groups of two children in a more informal setting. She reflected on her impression that Fannie is more likely to verbalise her thoughts in an intimate setting, however she still felt she engaged by listening to the discussions:

> *With Fannie, I mean she absolutely loves stories, I felt she didn't cope as well in that group, then she would sit on the sofa with me and one other child, and I would get quite a lot from that. So just, she listened.*

It seemed that there were a few students in each setting who sustained high engagement in the small-group reading context, even to an extent which teachers were surprised by, and then there were others who engaged less than teachers would have expected. However, many of the teachers actively reflected on how they would improve engagement in the future, presenting a few different specific actions that they would take based on their learning from the project.

7.3 Theme: Evolving priorities and conceptions of promoting dialogue around stories

The teachers discussed the ways in which their views about how to best facilitate dialogue around storytelling changed over the course of the project, and two interesting sub-themes emerged. Some teachers, namely Andrea and Ellie from Setting A, talked about how the project helped them to stop overthinking the ways in which they approach storytelling by going 'back to basics'. Alternatively, other teachers talked about how much effort they realised is required for asking good questions which facilitate children's thinking, and they emphasised the value of reflection and feedback in supporting this process.

7.3.1 The value of going 'back to basics'

In Setting A, Andrea and Ellie both reflected that there had been a 'weight lifted' for them as they began to see the value in just getting the children to talk. Ellie described her sense of moving away from trying to get to an objective answer or outcome while instead focusing on just promoting dialogue and sustained-shared thinking from the group as a whole:

> *It kind of goes back to sustained shared thinking. That kind of concept. It's based on that kind of getting the group rather than just an answer [...] as a teacher, you just go straight back to basics, instead of reaching or trying to get to an objective outcome, but actually for us to just take a step back, and say, of course, this is where it all began this is where it all started.*

Andrea described her increasing reliance on a couple of key question prompts about the characters' thoughts and feelings and her declining emphasis on the stories:

It's okay to actually sit, and not even read a story, not finish a story, not complete the whole story, just sit and look at a page. What are they thinking, what are they feeling? I think sometimes we overcomplicate things.

Both Andrea and Ellie felt that their classroom was undergoing a stressful time just before the project started, which they described was related to behavioural issues with many of the children and some key structural transitions within the setting. They seemed to think the project helped them to refocus on what was important to them as teachers.

7.3.2   The challenge of taking the children's thinking further

In Setting C, Erin and Phoebe acknowledged the multiple layers of dialogue that these discussions afforded, including the ability to 'strip it right back' by focusing on the main content of the stories while also emphasising the value and challenge in taking the children's thinking further, referencing the importance of reflection and feedback. Erin described the value of this flexibility as being able to adapt to the differing abilities of the children:

It depends on what you want from it, you can strip it right back and just talk about friendships and wanting to play together, or you can take it that little bit further depending on the children, depending on their understanding of the story.

Phoebe extended Erin's explanation, emphasising the importance of the quality of their questioning (including the importance of phrasing) and the value of reflection in developing their abilities to ask good questions:

And the other thing I was thinking, is how the sort of questioning that we use as an adult, I think I got better at it, but this thing about what particular questions are helpful in terms of getting them to think about. And the way you ask it is really important. The words you use. I'm sure the more you do it, the better you get. It's important to have that reflection and discussion time where you're thinking about how you do this. [...] So the feedback that we got, I always used to think it's interesting that you've noticed

that, and then you give a suggestion for how we could have extended it because you know that's the sort of attention to detail that helps actually develop practice and we don't get the time to do that.

Erin also added that she thought it would be a good idea to take the reflection component forward to continue to develop their practice around asking good questions and scaffolding the children's learning:

And how we as an adult can take it further for that child. So if that child is at a point where they're not too sure, we can follow up with suggestions, but obviously following the child and what they're wanting to do, and how we can help them...

In Setting C, Patricia had a couple of additional roles in the school (i.e. in senior administration and PSHE coordination) and often seemed pressed for time, and this was reflected in her desire for more direction from me. She expressed that she found a lot of value in the weekly feedback and reflection but that she didn't always get a chance to read my feedback all the way though; in general, she emphasised that having a list of suggested questions for each story helped her to think in the moment about other questions she wanted to ask. She also said she found value in watching me lead the group at the end of the project, and that she found herself taking notes. Similarly, Faye said she appreciated receiving some suggested questions from me before she read the book, however she emphasised the value of in-vivo feedback:

I liked how you were able to provide tips during the discussions, especially when the children were talking amongst themselves. That really helped me to ask better questions.

At an early point in the project, Faye and I brainstormed ways to get more engagement from the children, and she suggested having the students deliberate amongst each other so she could have a quick moment with me to deliberate and troubleshoot. She reflected that while the weekly feedback was helpful, this particular 'live' feedback enabled the ability to reflect and try out new ideas in real time.

7.4 Theme: Benefits from the project extending to other aspects of classroom life

Teachers reflected on how the project had benefits that extended to other aspects in two domains: firstly, involving skills that they felt students gained specifically around communication and literacy and secondly, the ways in which learning from the project affected their general teaching.

7.4.1 Improvements in social-communication and dialogue between students

Primarily, teachers described observing children's communication improve over the course of the project. In Setting A, Ellie observed more dialogue between the students, and Andrea added that she thought the students were sorting issues out more for themselves in daily classroom life, however this was observed in more than just the children involved in the project. Ellie speculated about the possible reasons for these changes, suggesting that something just 'clicked' for the children, while also acknowledging that they as teachers might just notice specific interactions between students more often because of their participation in the project. She also speculated that the logistical aspects of the project may have helped in some way:

> *I would say in general, it may be that something's just clicked. It may be that we are more aware because of this study, it may be that while we were doing this, the other group that needed a bit of down time or smaller group time and has had that.*

In Setting B, Patricia cited that the project helped with other literacy targets:

> *One of the literacy targets about re-telling or summarising stories, talking about characters, and because they were so invested and interested in the story, it was interesting that they could really respond.*

Faye talked about how letting them call out (instead of raising their hands) and allowing them to say whatever was on their minds has been really positive for students' confidence and

initiative in speaking up, although she also reflected on how it might be difficult for the students to transition back to raising their hands in other larger group activities.

In Setting C, Phoebe reflected on the transfer of skills from the discussions to their talking and communication outside of the discussions:

> *Giving the children time to express their ideas and thoughts, transfers to other things. Other talking. So you know that the story in itself is not just important for what we're trying to think about with the books but in terms of their communication.*

In general, there was an acknowledgement among the teachers that a large part of the project's benefits came from just spending more time with children and giving them more opportunities to express their ideas in a safe space.

7.4.2   Changes in thinking about general teaching approaches

In Setting A, Ellie further reflected on the benefits that came from thinking about logistics and management of their space of time, and how this would feed into their future work around sharing learning from the project with other staff. Specifically, she talked about the importance of embedding the strategies into daily classroom activities and free play, and making sure that teachers are manning areas of the room and engaging with students during these times:

> *Personally, I would probably do a staff meeting and staff training and I would pretty much share what you've got here in terms of some of the examples, and I suppose it would be a toolbox of strategies. [...] Basically, what can I ask, buzz words, what am I looking for? And then I'd probably put a project in place for staff, I would probably assign 3 books for each room. [...] Yes, we've always got a million things to laminate and cut out and write up, but actually sticking to sort of 'Can you go in the corner there and can you be stationed there?'*

In Setting B, Faye expressed that she doesn't like having to be so strict with the whole class but that it is often necessary to manage such a big group, whereas she liked being able to have more informal interactions with a smaller group of students and was thinking about how she could find time for more small-group activities. She also reflected on how the project helped her thinking about continuous provision planning, in terms of thinking about how to thread certain themes that come up in stories into various activities throughout the school day. Patricia also expressed that she would love to use the texts with the wider class to encourage more students to talk in in a more open way about the characters.

In Setting C, Phoebe reflected on how the project highlighted the value in finding time for discussions around stories, especially with bigger groups:

I think sometimes when you're reading to a bigger group, but you don't actually have that reflection afterwards, and that conversation with the children, and some of the children do like to talk about the stories afterwards, and that's valuable time because that's when they start bringing in their own ideas and you could talk about a bit more in depth about the story and about what they think and how their ideas and so I think that time, not for all of them but some of them do like that time. But it's finding the time to do that.

Every teacher mentioned time as a constraint for being able to engage in extended discussions with students on a more regular basis, however they expressed the desire to be creative in order to find more time where they can.

7.5 Theme: Specific topics in which teachers took a personal interest

Some of the teachers reflected on one specific topic that emerged from the discussions that they found they had a particular interest in. They expressed wanting to continue to explore ways to embed these particular topics into future planning, either through story discussions or in other ways. In each of these cases, the topics that teachers found to be particularly important seemed to connect in one way or another to ongoing issues or themes within the setting.

7.5.1 The topics of labelling, noticing differences, and social responsibility

In Setting B, Faye reflected on the discussion about feeling two things at once and about how people can change. She described how she found it interesting when the students reflected on how one of the characters might have never been happy before in her life but that having a friend made her happy. She liked that they were able to explore the idea that certain dispositions are not 'ingrained' in us but are intertwined with our environments and what we do. She felt that the children were beginning to acknowledge this idea, which was apparent when they began to say that a character could have been feeling two things at once. She even described these discussions to parents during our parent workshop, explaining how interesting it was to see the students coming up with these ideas on their own.

Patricia found that a couple of the conversational topics stood out to her. She first pointed out that she found the students to be "quite punitive" especially in the discussions around Broken Bird, and reflected that these ideas may have come from parents:

> *Quite punitive. In a way that we're not, we're not punitive. So yeah it's interesting. But yeah, I think I might have said that some parents said the children go home and they label the children in the class. So you know they say Sean's very naughty. He's actually not that naughty.*

She also discussed her surprise that the students hadn't made the connection between one of the books and a specific boy in their school who is different because he has Noonan syndrome, but ultimately said she felt like it was nice they hadn't singled him out:

> *I thought what was really interesting was that you know in Marla's class we've got a little boy with Noonan syndrome [...] and I kept asking the question if there was somebody who was very different, you know, how would you react? And have you ever seen anyone in our school who looks different, and it just didn't register. And It was so interesting, I was sure that it would come up, but it's nice that it didn't in a way. I don't*

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know, it was really interesting, I can't remember what book it was. But I was trying to give them all these opportunities to say, but no they just never mentioned it. But they play with him all the time.

Ultimately, Patricia said that what really stood out to her was the idea of social responsibility and the importance of not being a bystander. She described wanting to give children the self-awareness to stand away from the group, especially when witnessing any kind of bullying on the playground, and explained that the stories helped to develop a 'shared vocabulary' in the classroom:

And I thought that's why doing this work on values is so important. Because it gives us a shared vocabulary. So in those interactions, you can say, oh are you being respectful right now? Or you know, all of that stuff. you can choose to be that type of person [...] You know, that's a self-directed behaviour. No one's going to tell you to do it. And no one can choose but you, and surely we should all be choosing to be like that.

Notably, in Setting C, Andrea and Ellie didn't express a specific interest in any particular topic that came up in the discussions. They had focused earlier on in the project on the issue surrounding children's labelling of characters (and other children) as nasty and naughty when they read the story Something Else, and they reflected on why they felt students might have latched onto the concept of punishment:

It's something we say all through the day, how would you feel if I did that to you or if someone took that from you? So maybe that's them going well, how would you feel? Not seeing it as punishment but rather just trying to think it through...

It seemed that while Ellie and Andrea were initially concerned by the children's ideas about punishment, especially around the story *Something Else*, they had more of an understanding toward the end of the project of how it might be stemming from children's desires to enact the 'golden rule'(i.e. 'treat others how you'd like to be treated) which they often talked about in the classroom.

7.5.2 The topics of Friendship and Exclusion and links to classroom behaviour policies

In Setting C, Phoebe described friendship and exclusion as topics she wanted to think further about addressing more thoughtfully in the setting:

> *One other thing is the friendship, we had a discussion, I think that would be good to talk about as a team, is thinking about exclusion and inclusion and being a friend and not being a friend. Being a friend is a very complex thing, so what is it that we're actually trying to encourage the children to do socially?*

Erin agreed, describing some of the related issues in the setting:

> *You do get that a lot with children, that you're not my best friend. You can't be her friend because I'm her best friend and not getting the thing, well actually we can all play, we don't have to have one best friend, and other children can play as well. They don't tend to understand that as much, I hear that a lot with some of the children.*

Phoebe further explained:

> *So it's like an ethos, isn't it? What is it we want for every child in how they relate to each other? And it's kind of like, we don't necessarily all want to be friends but we all want to be kind, and share the equipment, and listen and think and use our words, you know those sort of things, and help them eventually they will come to have a preference for people they like spending time with a lot.*

Eventually, Phoebe described how these questions and ideas might feed into their own behaviour and discipline policies. In doing so, she describes her goal of establishing a framework around a 'continuum of behaviour' involving a general aim of supporting children's broadened perspective taking abilities to help with negotiating classroom life:

If we're developing a continuum of behaviour, because if you say, they're really mean, well that's a characteristic, almost like it's a biological characteristic, and that's it. But we're trying to do is show them that the person might not be sharing in this situation for a particular reason, they really like it, they're really enjoying it, there's only one, they've only just got it, actually we're trying to get them to look at the broader thing because that will help them negotiate, so how to share it, and so, actually the perspective taking and the reading develops their bigger personal and social skills.

7.6   Theme: Reflections on chosen stories and future adaptations to classroom reading

Teachers reflected on the stories that we chose for the project, how they themselves engaged with the stories, and how they were thinking about choosing stories for discussion moving forward.

Andrea and Ellie admitted that the books we chose for this project were stories they would not have normally chosen and that they found a lot of value in trying out these new books. They both explained how they have 'safe books' that they use time and again. Andrea suggested trying out further books that they haven't heard of to 'see what comes out of that'. She also described her desire to try out more wordless picture books, or even put a page from a book on one of the walls to prompt children's informal discussions:

> *I'm almost interested to put a page from a book on the room with no words and just get how much language comes out. Like the window book. And actually that would get so much more language and thinking about how that person feels.*

Ellie agreed that it would be a good idea to try out books that might seem out of their comfort zones. She also described her preference for certain kinds of books. She explained that she really loved *Mr. Tiger Goes Wild*, especially the artwork. She also said she felt it was important to introduce students to 'traditional tales' such as *Goldilocks, Thumbelina*, and *Peter Rabbit* and some other Norwegian folk tales. Both Andrea and Ellie said that they actually didn't like

the story *Something Else* very much, and they described a general sense of wanting to stray away from only using trending books, such as this and *The Gruffalo*.

In Setting B, Patricia explained that the stories we chose for the project were books that she would definitely go back to in the future, however she reflected that *Something Else* is a book that lots of teachers like but she feels doesn't get that much engagement out of children. She referenced her role as PSHE coordinator and explained that she is always thinking about which books are good to support students' discussions of certain topics and issues. She told me about a book about exclusion that she had used previously, but she expressed the concern of not wanting to place certain ideas about ways to exclude or be mean to peers in children's heads. She elaborated:

> *I mean it's a risky one to read in a way because it's almost punting ideas. And sometimes I've read it and I thought, oh, I hope no one thinks that's a good idea.*

She also described the school's efforts to renew their values with input from the staff, and that one thing they are doing is looking for rich literature and story books to teach these values and prompt discussions. She then went on to describe how when she was leading an assembly on kindness during the previous week, she decided that she wanted to tell a story about something that had happened to her to demonstrate the value of random acts of kindness. She even acted it out with props and explained that sharing this story seemed to really engage students in thinking about the issue in a more personal way. She said liked the idea of sharing personal narratives as well as more formal story books with children.

Faye expressed that she really enjoyed the book *The Cloud* and that she ended up reading the book to the class and planning a whole-class art activity linked to the story in which students painted on a big sheet of paper together. She felt the students really enjoyed this, and she reflected on how this sparked her excitement about coming up with other activities that could support children to interact with stories creatively. Faye also expressed that she liked the story *The Koala Who Could*, again referencing her desire to find further books that show how happiness is linked closely with the environment. In the final week of the project, Faye decided

she wanted to read a different story than originally planned and brought in the book *The Little Hummingbird,* which she explained comes from her home country (Canada) and has beautiful traditional artwork. She reflected on how she enjoyed being able to share something that had a personal meaning to her with her students.

In Setting C, Erin and Phoebe explained that they felt the books we chose were really useful for supporting children's deeper engagement with the topics, and Phoebe suggested that they put these books in the classroom for other teachers to read with students during free-play, as an extension of their 'core books'. Phoebe reflected on the 'challenging' nature of the stories we chose, expressing a concern that some of the stories might be too advanced for some of the children but resolved that they would give some students who are 'emergent' readers an opportunity to work through the stories with input and support from adults:

> *These stories are quite challenging, but I like them. And so, I've shown Courtney our PSE stories, and maybe we could fit them in, and actually say to people that we want them to use these stories. Because some of the children are emergent or have delay in their language, so I think we'd have to do it as appropriate. So it's almost like an extension activity, for those who have got the vocabulary and are starting to think, you know the cognitive development, in a way that's a good thing, because those children actually don't get one-to-one or small group adult input in that way.*

Erin and Phoebe generally emphasised how they felt reading could build children's larger personal and social skills and how the project has supported them to be bolder in introducing some more complex books with cross-cutting themes to the classroom's set of core books.

Teachers' feelings about the stories they used seemed to be an especially important point of reflection: on one hand, teachers acknowledged that some stories are generally good because they are challenging and provide opportunities to extend children's thinking; on the other hand, it seemed that whether they personally liked or connected with the stories impacted on how excited and personally engaged they were in within the discussions.

7.7   Conclusion

Each of the teachers involved in the project had a lot to say in these final meetings, and there was an overall sentiment that the project had added value to their students' learning and to their own teaching and professional development. For many of the teachers, it seemed that one primary source of value came from the ability to take the time with a small group of students and to be able to engage in reflective practice around these activities with tailored guidance and feedback from me.

In reflecting on students' engagement, they described the benefits and drawbacks of the small-group format and how some students seemed to find their voice while others had a more difficult time engaging and contributing. The teachers referred to the difficulties involved with managing the whole group's engagement. Even so, there was frequent reference to students increasing their confidence in speaking and their ability to disagree and work through issues with others. Teachers also brainstormed ways to engage students in story discussions in the future, referring to the use of more physical props and the possibility of being more flexible with the format of discussions.

In reflecting on their own evolving conceptions of story reading, some teachers talked about how the project helped them to remember what's important in telling stories, referring specifically to the importance of just getting children to talk, and this seemed to relieve teachers' feelings of pressure to perform. Alternatively, other teachers emphasised their feelings about how difficult it is to ask good questions which really support and extend children's thinking, and they focused on the value of reflection and tailored feedback in supporting this process. Some teachers talked about how they might incorporate more regular teacher-to-teacher reflection practices into the setting.

All of the teachers described ways in which the project's benefits extended to other aspects of classroom life, however there was a generally consistent tendency for teachers to reflect on multiple possible causes for these changes, including tangential changes and other factors outside the project. Still, there was a sentiment that the need to plan around the project forced

teachers to be more careful about planning their time and arranging alternative activities for other students which had overarching benefits for the classroom as a whole.

Many of the teachers took a special interest in particular topics which emerged from one or more of the discussions around the stories and seemed to spark a sense of personal meaning in the project. Many of the teachers described how they wanted to continue to incorporate thinking about these issues into other activities and even into their behaviour management policies and PSHE curriculum planning.

Teachers discussed the positives and negatives of including stories that they might usually shy away from for various reasons, while acknowledging the importance of choosing stories that they personally liked and wanted to read with the children. Some of the teachers acknowledged the benefit of choosing 'challenging' texts, even for more 'emergent' readers. There was a general consensus of personally not liking one or more of the stories while having a particular affection for one specific story, while admitting that this didn't always coincide with students' preferences for and engagement with specific books. In general, there was an acknowledgment among the teachers of the importance of thoughtfully choosing texts that extend beyond the usual stories found in early years and primary classrooms.

7.8   Building on the Literature

Teachers found value in getting to take time and space to engage with small groups of students, and they described their involvement in the project as a unique opportunity to intuitively listen and respond to individual students' ideas. This finding brings to mind the principles and ideas presented in the area of care ethics, described within the literature review, which highlight the importance of teachers' emotional engagement with students as a key component in students' learning about morality and caring.

Researchers in the field of care ethics describe how children learn to care based on their capacity for emotional engagement and on feelings of connection to others (Slote, 2007). The small group format within this project provided opportunities for teachers to concentrate on

this aspect of care; that is, they cultivated abundant and supportive interactions which appeared to lead to meaningful discussions which supported shifts in children's thinking. Further, the close attention that the teachers were able to provide to each student in the groups enabled some of the quieter students to gain confidence in speaking up and sharing their ideas. This created a sense that every student's ideas were valued, which appeared to promote balanced engagement and authentic dialogue across the groups, especially around moral topics surrounding themes of exclusion and loneliness. While there were instances in which the students' personal connections to the stories appeared to inhibit flexible, relational reasoning about the characters (as discussed in both chapter4 and 5, Case Studies 1 and 2), these personal connections were nonetheless important in making the conversations relevant and meaningful in the context of their own developing moral understanding.

Further, the discussions seemed to spark a sense of personal meaning among the teachers in the project, and many described continuing to think about these topics outside of the immediate discussions. This personal investment from teachers seemed to establish a robust foundation for the discussions which prompted authentic interest and engagement from students. However, some teachers found it difficult to know how to capitalize on students' engagement and to ask the right questions to broaden children's thinking. Teachers especially emphasised the value of tailored reflection and feedback from myself and their partner teachers. As discussed in the previous chapter about teachers' dialogic moves, many of the related training studies around promoting children's social reasoning through discussions around stories (e.g. Bianco & Lecce, 2016; Bianco et al., 2016; Lecce et al., 2014) have focused on giving teachers specific guidance about how to ask questions and prompt discussion from students. In these studies, teachers received a series of training sessions before the start of the programme which were meant to equip them with strategies for guiding the discussions, however they did not receive any ongoing training or feedback, likely because there was an emphasis on delivering the interventions with a certain level of fidelity and reliability across settings.

It may be important to think about how to incorporate regular feedback and possible teacher-to-teacher reflective practices into any future story-based conversational interventions, such as

those based on the programme developed by Bianco and Lecce (2016), while still maintaining a level of control in how the training programme is actually delivered. Further, there may be value in enabling teachers to choose their own stories to use in the interventions based on their own preferences and the topics that they think are relevant for their individual classrooms in order to promote their own personal engagement within the dialogue around the texts. However, it is important to consider that teachers might shy away from using certain texts because they seem too ambiguous or too challenging; this can be addressed by a researcher or consultant who might present specific texts as suggestions and who can work closely with the teachers to choose a variety of texts that suit both the teachers' preferences and the overarching project goals.

In general, while these adaptations may be difficult to incorporate into a randomized intervention study, it is worth considering how certain aspects of a programme can be flexible so that teachers can play a more active role and leverage their own professional wisdom and expertise, as well as their personal relationships with and knowledge of the students. Of course, as discussed in the literature review, there is a risk associated with overemphasising, or idealising teachers' craft knowledge as the most important part of effective teaching practices (Black-Hawkins & Florian, 2012). In order to find a balance between teachers' expertise and best-practice guidelines, intervention studies should be implemented in ways that identify the specific pedagogic principles and techniques that should ideally be followed prudently while specifying where in the programme there is room for interpretation and creativity from the teachers. Further, there should be procedures in place to monitor the delivery of the programme in an ongoing and collaborative way with teachers while accommodating the flexibility that enables alignment with the values and goals of specific educational contexts.

Chapter 8
Discussion

8.1 Introduction

While I have adopted a primarily sociocultural perspective of learning, with a focus on the social construction of meaning within dialogue, I have also drawn on the theories and relevant literature of cognitive developmental psychology and sociolinguistics, both in conceptualising and designing this project and in my data analysis and interpretation.

Within this discussion, I initially draw on the field of developmental psychology to help contextualise and explain findings in terms of what we know about age-related stages and variations in children's social reasoning and information processing. I then elaborate on these interpretations by drawing on sociocultural literature, especially from research in the field of classroom dialogue, to better understand the processes of meaning-making and conceptual change that took place on a collective level in the dialogue over the course of the weekly discussions. I also draw on literature within sociolinguistics toward my aim of investigating how, through linguistic and paralinguistic means, children created and negotiated relationships and positions in their classroom interactions, including how these processes appeared to impact meaning-making over time.

I then discuss the design principles and draw on related research about the utility of certain kinds of pedagogic questioning in order to elucidate the potential mechanisms of these principles. I also discuss the role of teachers in moderating students' engagement in the discussions, and I consider their reflections on the project in the context of the literature around teacher professional development. In doing so, I aim to gain a better understanding how their impressions and engagement in their own reflective professional development may have influenced processes of children's meaning-making and shifts in thinking over time. I conclude with an overarching discussion of how I understand all of these ideas to fit together, especially

within the broader literature around children's relational reasoning, categorisation, and social attributional thinking.

8.2 Normative frames: Entity-based conceptualisation of categories, emotions and traits as evident in early stages of group talk

Normative frames emerged within the first few story discussions within all five of the settings. These included expectations about how people tend to behave in specific circumstances, in addition to ideas about what kind of behaviour is socially valued and expected. Children described these expectations in the context of discussions about emotions (especially happiness), traits (especially friendliness and meanness) and other concepts such as kindness, weirdness/normality, and belonging. Within each of these normative frames, children conveyed entity-based concepts of animals and social groups, in addition to categorisation of specific emotions and traits. That is, children described specific animal categories and social groups as being defined primarily by specific physical features or commonalities, and they demonstrated a conceptualisation of specific emotions and traits as concrete categories which could be identified based on a few primary overt expressions or specific behaviours.

Specifically, the frame of emotions (which emerged in setting A) conveyed expectations about how certain physical displays (e.g. facial expressions or body postures) indicate specific categories of emotions (e.g. happiness or sadness). There was also an associated frame around specific negative traits, involving the expectation that people should share and be friendly (e.g. they need to smile), otherwise they are 'mean' or 'nasty' and should be punished. This frame also involved behavioural criteria for identifying specific trait categories; for example, the children explained that the presence of smiling indicated a friendly disposition while 'not sharing' would indicate a mean disposition.

The frame involving a social script for kindness and making friends (which emerged in setting B, teacher 1) implicated a concrete set of criteria for what constitutes kind behaviour and a need for reinforcement based on these criteria. The frame of weirdness/normality (which emerged in setting B, teacher 2) conveyed normative expectations for how a member of a

category is meant to look or behave based on certain physical features and behaviours. Further, the descriptors 'weird' and 'strange' referred to members who did not conform to these expectations. This same group also introduced a normative frame of bravery (which emerged after the third story discussion, and thus was not depicted in the initial summary of normative frames) in which characters were expected to try new things. A conceptual link emerged between these two frames of weirdness and bravery when the children said a character was 'weird' for not wanting to try new things.

The frame of belonging (setting C, teacher 1) conveyed an entity-based conceptualisation about social/familial categories, in which members are expected to display certain shared physical features and behaviours (e.g. colour, height, or preference for certain activities) which determines whether they truly belong to that group. Finally, the frame describing the meaning of mean behaviour (which emerged in setting C, teacher 2) involved a concrete set of criteria for identifying mean behaviour and a requirement for an individual who acted in this way to say sorry based on these criteria.

Although some groups focused more closely on the topic of normality, there was an overarching discourse among all of the groups around the value of conforming to these normative frames and in some cases an underlying social expectation about the need to reinforce these norms, either through adult intervention, retaliation, or punishment. Further, the students fixated on identifying the existence of perceptual similarities or certain overt behaviours to classify or categorise characters, with minimal attention paid to the relational structure or function on which a category might be based. These category expectations sometimes led the children to make unsubstantiated assumptions in identifying the important features of a category. For example, students claimed that a family unit is determined by physical similarities, without consideration of the role of relational ties. Further, students claimed that an emotion is primarily related to a person's facial expression without consideration for their underlying thoughts or perceptions of a particular situation.

These findings can be connected to cognitive developmental research about children's early category concepts, which has shown that young children, especially 3-4 year olds, appear to

privilege perceptual similarities in determining category membership and prefer entity-based causal schemas (i.e. that the existence of a primary feature causes someone or something to be categorised in one way) over relational conceptualisations of categories (e.g. Gentner, 2005; Gelman & Davidson, 2013; Keil & Batterman, 1984; Piaget, 1972). For example, a four-year-old child might describe a brother as a male of a certain age or they might refer to a taxi as a yellow car, and only later come to acknowledge the true meanings of these categories in terms of their relational functions (e.g. that a brother must be a sibling to someone else or that a taxi is a car that people hire to take them places). In these examples, both categories are primarily constituted by relational properties, however it is important to acknowledge that some categories are in fact entity-based categories (i.e. whose membership is determined primarily by common intrinsic properties), so children's attention to perceptual features likely serves them in some contexts, which I will explore further in the following section.

8.2.1 The adaptive role of entity-based conceptions of categories

Children often first encounter the notion of 'scientific' knowledge in school. In this specific context, it is sometimes adaptive for children to utilise perceptually-based category concepts (e.g. in order to classify organisms or plants). Even so, there are many concepts in science which require relational and abstract reasoning and which necessitate that children overcome an 'entity-based view' in order to effectively process relational mechanisms (Christie & Gentner, 2007; Christie & Gentner, 2010; Gentner, 1988; Gentner & Rattermann, 1991; Hall & Waxman, 1993).

There is also a related area of developmental research which describes young children's entity-based conceptualisations of emotions and traits as being primarily adaptive, but not necessarily useful in all situations. For example, younger children (compared to older children) have been found to rely on emotional cues from facial expressions to identify emotions, even when multiple sources of information are available (Gross & Ballif, 1991). This developmental phenomenon has been termed the 'face superiority effect', which has been found in numerous experimental studies, and which is hypothesised to be a way in which children first begin to understand and respond to emotions (Russell & Widen, 2002; Widen & Russell, 2002; Widen

& Russell, 2010; Wiggers & van Lieshout, 1985). These researchers have proposed that children's earliest emotional categories slowly become differentiated based on children's increasingly varied involvement in experiencing and observing specific emotional states.

Researchers have argued that early attention to facial cues supports children's rapid identification of certain basic emotion categories which is important for early social processing; however, this reliance on perceptual signals can limit children's emotion identification, especially in ambiguous cases which require attention to contextual cues (Russell & Widen, 2002). It is important to note that all of the research around young children's entity-based categorisation cited above comes from Europe and North America, however, there have been some additional studies comparing children's categorisation (especially related to plants and animals) across geographic locations, which sheds light on how components of children's early categorisation may be influenced by their sociocultural environments, described further below.

8.2.2 Cross-cultural variations in categorisation

Children within the United Kingdom (Braund, 1991, 1998; Kattmann, 2001; Allen, 2014), the Indian subcontinent (Ramadas, 1996), and Taiwan (Yen, Yao, & Mintzes, 2007) tend to use obvious external features as visual cues for animal classification, even through middle-childhood. On the other hand, pupils from Botswana tend to use alternative criteria (e.g. eating behaviour) which seems to enable them to sort nonarchetypal cases of animals to their appropriate categories (Tema, 1989). While there seems to be a lack of research around children's conceptual learning in science in the preschool years, some of these authors have argued that the narrow ways in which animal categories are introduced in formal schooling (i.e. as restricted, everyday ideas of barnyard or zoo animals) might contribute to children's early misconceptions (e.g. Allen, 2015; Yen et al., 2007). Recently, there have been efforts to modify science curriculum to incorporate a 'learning progression' approach, in which teachers introduce concepts as open-ended definitions and help children to incorporate more sophisticated variants of these definitions over time in order to reduce children's overemphasis on entity-based categorisation (Allen & Danos, 2015).

These authors also argue that entity-based category expectations are not necessarily cognitive 'mistakes' as such but are likely tied to the ways in which a given culture construes specific categories, especially biological categories such as animals and socially salient categories such as families. For example, it is common across different cultural contexts for families to talk about how babies look like their parents (Daly & Wilson, 1982). Further, many teachers begin to teach emotions by first identifying their associated facial expressions (Hyson, 2004) and teachers often discuss moral concepts of good behaviour as being tied to certain classroom behaviours, such as sharing or cooperating (DeVries & Zan, 1994; Al-Hooli & Al-Shammari, 2009).

In my research fieldnotes, I commented on my impressions of how, to varying extents, teachers in each setting within this project used particular language and phrasing around emotions and also around concepts of 'good' or 'nice' behaviour. In these observations, I noted how teachers often helped children to identify emotions in illustrations based on facial expressions, and teachers also helped children to explain story characters' behaviours and negotiate conflict on the playground by labelling certain actions as 'not nice'. These subtle messages likely played some role in indexing children's concepts (e.g. signposting certain concepts to specific properties; Budwig, 2003) in ways that contributed to children's general emphasis on entity-based categories.

8.2.3 Diving deeper into exploring the sociocultural influences on children's tendencies to describe entity-based categories

8.2.3.1 Frames as being influenced by children's perceived expectations within the activities

In addition to considering how various concepts are introduced to children early on in schooling, it is also important to consider how the goals and expectations of certain activities might inadvertently lead children toward entity-based thinking and away from abstract reasoning about social categories and concepts. Within the first few classroom discussions in each setting, there appeared to be a drive among the students to give clear, concise answers to teachers' questions or to make predictions. Children were initially prone to speak over each

other and often offered brief, simplified observations or comments about what they thought the stories might be about. Teachers sometimes appeared to seek out singular, one-word responses from students, which potentially indicated that there was a singular 'best' answer, which may have led students to provide oversimplified, concrete explanations of categories or concepts.

Schools, especially early years classrooms, have generally become increasingly focused on enacting 'child-centred' pedagogy in which knowledge is seen as being constructed by the learner (Edwards & Mercer, 1989). However, even though many schools may aim to prioritise joint activity and shared knowledge creation through dialogic teaching practices, there are often still remnants of the traditional teaching patterns in which teachers initiate instruction and ask students questions, and students are expected to reply with 'correct' answers. In this way, pupils become familiarised with specific conventions and established expectations about how to interact with and respond to teachers, which can inhibit the quality and openness of classroom dialogue (Thompson, 2008). In general, children's normative frames must be viewed as intimately linked to the nature of the dialogue in question, including their perceived goals of the dialogue and how students might be motivated to respond in certain, socially desirable ways. Further, as the students engaged in this shared process of negotiating the meaning of these frames, they simultaneously engaged in a process of thinking about each other's perspectives in order to build and maintain shared understanding. In this way, normative frames and perspective taking are not so much separate concepts that interact but should instead be viewed as inextricably connected and intertwined.

8.2.3.2 Frames as fragmentary and subject to negotiation within dialogue

Within the field of sociolinguistics, frames are not thought to represent enduring internal representations, but are instead seen as situationally-bound and temporarily-bound positions. For example, Davies and Harré argue that individual ideas (and the sense of self that comes from positioning oneself in relation to these ideas) emerge through processes of social interactions and are constantly reconstituted through various discursive practices (Davies & Harré, 1990).

Accordingly, children's normative frames might be best conceptualised not as coherent or unitary beliefs but as fragmented narratives that unfolded within the group and which drew on shared resources (e.g. common experiences and knowledge) as well as private experiences, personal storylines and individual interpretations of these shared resources. In general, there has been an ongoing debate in other fields, including cognitive and developmental psychology, about the stability of learners' ideas. For example, Piaget pointed out that learners' elicited ideas could be greatly influenced by investigator's questions (1973). An elicited idea could reflect underlying beliefs about the world or merely provide evidence of a more fluid working hypotheses.

In this project, children's normative frames seemed to be fragmentary and inconsistent, and as soon as teachers began to change their orientation to the dialogue (e.g. by emphasising that there were no 'right' answers) and challenged children's category expectations (e.g. by asking whether all members of a category do in fact share a specific trait), children appeared to demonstrate some fluctuation in their reliance on perceptual features. That is, with a little bit of prompting, they were able to acknowledge at least some aspects of the functional and relational nature of specific categories. Children's openness to engaging in more relational thinking about the meaning of categories is perhaps stimulated within contexts that encourage children to work through ideas together without becoming aligned with any one idea or explanation before considering multiple possible explanations.

8.3 The influence of classroom values and positioning around normative frames on children's perspective-taking

Even though teachers in this project did in fact start to question children's entity-based ideas about certain categories early on in the story discussions, children quickly began to take up socially-desired positions within the group, which may have restricted their willingness to consider certain information or the perspectives of certain characters. While children brought their own prior knowledge and beliefs to the discussion, this was situated within a shared history of interactions and shared cultural and classroom narratives. Specifically, categories (including animal and social categories and emotions and traits) were situated within normative

frames which evoked different social values. Many of these social values seemed to be communicated, whether subtly or overtly (e.g. via posters on the walls), as parts of the school ethos or philosophy. Within the discussions, there were clear acts of positioning from students to establish themselves as affirming, or in some cases disaffirming, these social values.

Over the course of the discussions, as one or more normative frames emerged in the children's talk, the students appeared to firmly take up specific moral positions about what the characters should do, both based on these values and on their conceptualisations of category norms. In taking up these moral positions, children sometimes made judgments about one or more characters' dispositions, which was often accompanied by vocal disapproval. Further, children seemed less likely to put effort into thinking about the motivations behind characters' behaviours once they made these evaluations and judgments. As the overarching normative frames became more clearly articulated and as certain classroom values became more salient (especially when the teachers explicitly prompted students to explain a particular value), the students seemed to be even more likely to try to position themselves on the *right* side of an argument.

In the field of moral education, and especially research which takes place in the context of classroom dialogue, researchers have shown how children position themselves in ways that align with or create distance from certain dominant cultural narratives (e.g. Haste & Abrahams, 2008; Tappan, 2016). This research posits that classrooms are microcosms of society at large, and morals and values are embedded within classroom settings, whether this is made explicit or not. Further, research within developmental psychology shows that young children (4-6 years old) tend to disapprove of nonconformity, drawing on norm-based explanations when justifying their disapproval, which is evident in children in both the U.S. and China (e.g. Roberts, Guo, Ho, & Gelman, 2017). Findings from these two areas of work, taken together, seem to suggest young children have a propensity to position themselves in terms of affirming (rather than distancing themselves from) the group's values, especially when these values are perceived as being straightforward or uncomplicated.

While I observed that children within this project tended to position themselves as aligning with certain ideas about values or norms, especially within the earlier discussions, this began to change as soon as one or more children presented an alternate way to interpret or think about a value. It seemed that as more children began to weigh in, there appeared to be a process of alignment and negotiation, which perhaps made the *right* side of the argument less obvious. Researchers who have emphasised a sociocultural lens of understanding social and moral development have argued that moral reasoning necessarily consists of balancing multiple voices and multiple forms of reasoning, both within an individual and across peer groups and communities (e.g. Day & Tappan, 1996; Tappan 2006). Within this research, there is a focus on Vygotsky's notion of internalisation, considering how children construct an internal 'moral audience' by first engaging in dialogue about specific topics with moral implications and internalising these perspectives (Buzzelli, 1996; Tappan, 1991, 1998). As young children start to become conscious of how their social community (in the case of this project, their classroom peer group) places moral value on certain types of behaviour, the process of internalisation might be largely monologic or one-sided in that it only involves one dominant narrative or discourse, without taking into account opposing perspectives. This might lead to rigid conceptions of morality which are not adapted to the complexities of everyday life.

Some might argue that teachers need to be straightforward with verbalising values to communicate social expectations of right and wrong and to support children to adhere to clearly defined norms, as mentioned earlier in the literature review in the context of children's social imitation and cultural learning (e.g. Chudek & Henrich, 2011). However, morals are not transmitted in such a direct fashion. Instead, moral reasoning is socially and culturally mediated: it is the day-to-day dialogues—with parents, teachers, and peers—that scaffold children's cultural stories and help them construct notions of what is right and wrong across a wide variety of circumstances and situations. Thus, the most impactful role that educators can have in influencing this process is to provide children with the tools to engage in these dialogues and to actively construct their own opinions, while maintaining a space for flexibility and openness to how others might differently interpret a moral value or particular situation.

The ways in which teachers might encourage this openness in the classroom will be explored further in the following section.

8.4 Conceptual shifts: Increased context-sensitive perspective taking through processes of integrative complexity

Much of the early dialogue in this project appeared to dichotomise 'right and wrong' thinking which inhibited further exploration of other ways to think about and interpret the stories. There was, however, some emerging evidence of a proliferation of different perspectives within the second or third discussions of each setting. Further, it appeared that once there was a plurality of ideas and explanations, and especially when children began to question their initial conceptualisations about the important features of a category, children could position themselves in ways that diverged from the group without diverging from a dominant discourse. These instances of divergence were characterised by episodes of dialogue in which children began to explore multiple perspectives, including tensions between two or more seemingly conflicting ideas or values. Through this growing differentiation within the dialogue, there was a generally increasing sense of uncertainty and ambiguity.

However, mere exposure to disagreement was likely insufficient for children to engage in conceptual change. Researchers within the moral developmental literature have looked at the effect of interventions with involve 'dilemma discussions' (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Kohlberg, 1981) in which children are encouraged to test their perspectives and examine them against other viewpoints in relation to a specific moral topic. Relevant studies which have found positive effects of dilemma discussions on students' developing moral reasoning have found there to be a few key components of the intervention: use of hypothetical dilemmas, opportunities for student-student discussion, use of 'probe questions' by a teacher or facilitator which are tailored to the level of students' understanding, and multiple opportunities to think about the topic in a new way (such as watching videos and role-playing) (Lind, 2002). However, these studies have primarily focused on evaluating students' outcomes, which has limited the insights that can be gained from how conceptual change actually happens through these discussions (Killen & Smetana, 2013).

Interestingly, there is a small subfield of research specifically investigating classroom-based dialogic approaches to combatting violent extremism, in which researchers have implemented school-based interventions designed to promote critical thinking and plurality in moral reasoning. These studies use the psychological construct of 'integrative complexity' to describe a process that students engage in to move toward dialogical open-mindedness in face of difference or disagreement (Boyd-MacMillan, Fearon, Ptolomey, & Mathieson, 2016; Boyd-MacMillan, Campbell, Furey, 2016; Doney & Wegerif, 2017).

 The term 'integrative complexity' has traditionally referred to an individual's thinking style and has focused on measuring individual differences in how people demonstrate this characteristic across groups, however within the studies mentioned above (e.g. Doney & Wegerif, 2017, it has been reconceptualised as a skill that can be learned. Moving towards greater integrative complexity involves 1) differentiation (e.g. tolerating ambiguity, recognising change over time or incomplete knowledge, seeing different dimensions or viewpoints as legitimate) and 2) integration (e.g. identifying links among different viewpoints and constructing an overarching abstract theory or belief which accommodates or responds to these multiple perspectives).

This process-oriented construct has been useful in helping to make sense of what I saw happening in children's talk within this particular project. While children started out with an apparent confidence in their understanding of specific categories and made dispositional judgments toward characters based on these expectations, they began to move toward differentiation in their interpretation of constructs within the overarching normative frames, in which some students more readily began to share and consider alternative perspectives. This period of differentiation also involved shifts in positioning from students who claimed to know the 'right' answer. That is, they began to present further alternate possibilities and acknowledged incomplete information and ambiguity within their developing explanations. In the following sections, I will discuss in greater detail how the two primary components of integrative complexity (differentiation and integration) were demonstrated by students within the discussions.

8.4.1 Differentiation

8.4.1.1   Plurality and divergence of ideas

In the initial discussions within this project, there was a focus on agreement and alignment, with reference to shared experiences and social values. However, when the teachers highlighted subjectivity and divergence in perspectives among the group, there was an emerging exploratory nature to the dialogue, including consideration of what these experiences and values actually meant in the context of the particularities of the stories. Further, acknowledging that other children in the group had differing perspectives about how they perceived information to be important within the story scenes appeared to support children to think about the characters' perspectives in similarly varied ways. Specifically, there was a growing propensity for children to demonstrate openness to presenting or considering different perspectives about how to understand and explain the characters' behaviours. They also began to predict what they thought *would* happen more often than what they thought *should* happen. However, the emergence of divergent perspectives also prompted some students to argue their initial points and position themselves even more firmly in a particular stance.

Wegerif (2007) describes the 'dialogic space' as involving the gaps or tensions between two or more perspectives from which meaning emerges. However, Maine argues that does not necessarily have to entail opposition but can involve building and extending of ideas (2015). Additional researchers within the field of classroom dialogue have argued that productive dialogue, including this building and extending of ideas, requires participants to have a respect for and an open orientation toward difference (e.g. Hennessy et al., 2016). That is, speakers open themselves up to what the others have to say, honestly considering what the other person means and intends, while allowing themselves to be changed by these other ideas.

It may be that some of the children in this project began to adopt this orientation toward difference early on whereas other had not. In some cases, teachers explicitly emphasised the fact that it was good to disagree, whereas in other settings this message was more subtle or perhaps confounded by other messaging about searching for a specific answer or solution to a

problem. This points to the importance of the teachers' role in supporting all students to adopt values of respect for difference from the start of any dialogic activities in order to encourage students not just to tolerate different ideas but to invite and sincerely listen and respond to them.

8.4.1.2 Conceptual blending

In some of the cases in which children presented alternative perspectives on the topics of discussion, the group's initial conceptual understanding of a frame was linked in a novel way with a new frame, and this catalysed children to conceptualise their initial frame differently. In these particular cases, there was a clear process of linking two relatively distinct frames (e.g. normality and bravery) and a complementariness in which the broadening of children's thinking about one frame supported children's broadening of their thinking about the other. This phenomenon can be represented by a concept in cognitive linguistics (a field which parallels social linguistics) which looks at 'blended spaces', conceptualised as sites for 'central cognitive work', such as reasoning and drawing new inferences (Fauconnier & Turner, 1996).

Blended spaces are seen as contexts to explore and question meaning; when two frames become conceptually linked in discourse, there is an opportunity for teachers to help students extend their reasoning about both frames (Hart, 2007). In cognitive blending theory, mental spaces are 'small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action' and are structured by our frames and cognitive models (Fauconnier & Turner, 1996, p. 113). In a blended space, elements belonging to two different frames or mental packets are connected in new ways within dialogue, which can lead to periods of exploration and consideration of new perspectives. Importantly, this theory states that a conceptual blend involves cross-space mappings between the two mental spaces. During this mapping, structure and elements may arise that don't exist in either of the mental spaces, resulting in an emergent structure of understanding (Sweetser, 1999).

Accordingly, in this project, it appeared that when two frames were explicitly considered together, there was an ensuing period of uncertainty and exploration. Within these periods,

children began to refer less to their expectations embedded within these individual frames to explain behaviour and instead paid closer attention to the contextual information within the stories, and they demonstrated that they were reasoning about this information in more inductive and less top-down ways. Finally, in making explicit connections between elements of two frames, they came up with new, often imaginative explanations for how these ideas might fit together.

8.4.2 Integration of multiple ideas

These changes did not take place in one instance but appeared to build across the weekly story discussions; however, there were a few key moments in which children clearly acknowledged and/or responded to what other students had said previously and presented new explanations to accommodate more than one perspective. This process resembled the final stage of integrative complexity (integration) in that they identified links among different viewpoints and came to new explanations of the story characters which accommodated or responded to at least some of the differing perspectives within the group. Changes in children's orientation to the dialogue within this project, especially their growing openness to diverging ideas, not only led to shifts in thinking but generally led to apparent changes in how they encountered new information. It appeared that children became more focused on responding to each other's ideas and building collective knowledge rather than defending their own views.

Research within the classroom dialogue literature has shown that one key mediating mechanism of long-term conceptual change involves changes in metacognition (e.g. increased awareness and regulation of one's own thoughts and beliefs) which supports children to consider new information or hypothetical scenarios. Specifically, children's engagement in group shared thinking processes supports metacognitive awareness (i.e. through the need to monitor the group's thinking process) which has been proposed to enable their future engagement in related discussions and helps children to integrate multiple perspectives and aspects of an argument into a coherent thread over an extended period of time (Howe, 2013).

It may be that children's engagement in the discussions within this project, in which the teachers increasingly encouraged sharing of opinions and responding to other points of view, may have supported students to develop their metacognitive awareness of the dialogue, which may have in turn supported children to gradually accommodate and integrate more perspectives and potential explanations into their thinking. Of course, this hypothesis is highly speculative as I did not consider metacognition specifically within this project. In general, it is important to recognise that there were likely intermediary mechanisms, whether that was the progression of children's metacognition or other auxiliary factors which supported change over time.

In the next section, I will continue to discuss teachers' roles in supporting children's shifts in thinking with a special focus on elaborating on and making sense of the design principles presented in chapter 6.

8.5 How teachers' dialogic moves seemed to support children's broadened thinking and context-sensitive perspective taking

Within the four design principles I identified which describe how specific patterns of teachers' dialogic moves appeared to propel children's thinking, I reference specific dialogic strategies and types of questions. I identified teachers' dialogic moves utilising a modified version of the Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (SEDA) coding framework (Hennessy et al., 2016). Utilising this scheme provided a structure for identifying specific strategies used by teachers and enabled me to characterise communicative acts in terms of their intentions and functions. Furthermore, this scheme helped to identify the presence of key words or phrases which indicated high-level reasoning within the groups. It offered identifiers and descriptors for certain kinds of prompts (e.g. open vs. closed questioning) and provided guidance for thinking about the different levels of dialogue. In the course of my analysis, this structured framework provided a tool for considering the specific conversational turns and events alongside my thinking about the overall current of shared meaning-making and frame negotiation. Many of these strategies and questions that I identified in this coding process of teachers' dialogic moves have been studied in the context of dialogic education (especially in research tangential to the development of the SEDA coding scheme) and my use of SEDA allowed me to directly relate

my findings to this larger body of literature (i.e. within this section and within the wider discussion.

Importantly, there is an area of research that complements the work done to create the SEDA coding scheme, which investigates teachers' discourse moves within Quality Talk (QT), a teacher-facilitated, small-group discussion model designed to enhance students' high-level reasoning. Wilkinson et al. (2010) developed the initial QT discussion model by combining the best features of approaches found in a meta-analytic investigation of 42 empirical studies examining the effects of specific discussion approaches on both teacher and student talk as well as students' outcomes. QT consists of four interrelated components: the instructional frame, discourse elements, teacher discourse moves, and pedagogical principles. Since the introduction of the initial QT model, researchers have begun to revise and expand on this model with a specific focus on how teachers can release control of the discussions over time and how students' critical-analytic thinking progresses over time within small-group dialogue (Li et al., 2016; Reninger & Wilkinson, 2010; Wilkinson et al., 2010). In order to situate myself within the broader field of educational dialogue, I will refer to this body of work around Quality Talk, other research around systematic analysis of classroom dialogue, as well as research within the area of cognitive developmental psychology, in discussing the findings related to teachers' dialogic moves.

The design principles that emerged in this project around teachers' discourse moves specifically identified overarching patterns, including the ways in which teachers *combined* these strategies and questions. Because these strategies have yet to be examined in the specific ways that I identified, I have outlined how different areas of research individually relate to these four design principles in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Connections between the design principles and relevant research

Design principle	Discussion of related research
Design principle 1: Inviting possibility thinking by guiding students through their own logic through both open-ended and closed questioning to challenge dispositional judgments	5.1 Teachers' use of different types of questions (including 5.1.1-5.1.3) 5.2 Supporting students to make reasoning explicit and coordinating multiple ideas

Design principle 2: Supporting students to make personal connections and connecting these experiences back to the story to encourage perspective taking	5.3 The role of teachers' grammatical constructions, positioning, and personalised feedback
Design principle 3: Making use of illustrations as a springboard for imagining the characters' perspectives rather than as a tool for comprehension	5.4 The role of illustrations in supporting imagination
Design principle 4: Using sentential complements and open-ended, hypothetical positioning to support context-sensitive perspective taking	5.1.3 Prompting possibility thinking through hypothetical questioning 5.3 The role of teachers' grammatical constructions, positioning and personalised feedback

8.5.1 Teachers' use of different types of questions

Teachers asked open-ended questions (e.g. 'why', 'how', 'what else' and 'what if' questions) to prompt children's explanations. Specifically, 'how' and 'why' questions appeared to motivate children to look beyond surface-level aspects of the stories and to begin to pay attention to more subtle aspects of the situations, including relations between characters. However, in some cases, especially early on in the discussions and with a couple of specific students in each group, prompting for explanation caused children to reaffirm their earlier entity-based ideas, and it wasn't until teachers led children through their own logic and began to provide feedback about specific components of their explanations, that the students began to pay closer attention to relational features of the story and to modify their entity-based category concepts and dispositional judgments of characters.

8.5.1.1 Open-ended and closed questioning

Research within the cognitive development literature has identified that open-ended questioning, specifically that which prompts for explanation, multiple explanation, and counterfactual questioning, supports children to ignore salient features of concepts and to instead pay attention to more subtle relational or functional features of category concepts (Nyhout, Iannuzziello, Walker, & Ganea, 2019). Researchers have further explored the varying

mechanisms by which each of these types of questions likely supports children's relational inferences (Walker & Nyhout, 2020).

Firstly, explanation questions of the form "Why/how did X happen?" have been extensively studied in the developmental literature to date, demonstrating their effect on children's abstract and relational reasoning. Explaining is a goal-directed and constructive process, in which the learner is asked to go beyond the information that is explicitly provided and to account for causal mechanisms behind the story events (which are often hidden). This process of explaining the causes for events helps learners to identify gaps or inconsistencies in their understanding (Chi, 2009; Walker et al., 2016)

Additionally, a study by Walker and Lombrozo (2017) found that prompting 5- and 6-year-olds to explain during a storybook reading bolstered their ability to identify and extend abstract moral themes from fictional stories. That is, prompting children to explain led them to understate superficial details in the story, instead paying closer attention to the underlying meaning. However, this also led students to make explanatory generalisations about overarching concepts. For example, they said that social exclusion is generally caused by being different, without considering the specific reasons for social exclusion in the story. Especially in the context of this last finding, it is important to acknowledge that while explanation appears to prompt relational and abstract reasoning, it also prompts children to overgeneralise at times, by leading them to identify broad patterns and prefer parsimonious causal explanations, while ignoring exceptions, anomalies, or counterexamples that may be present in the stories (Walker & Gopnik, 2017). Thus, while explanation prompts can be useful for supporting children to privilege relational information over salient perceptual features in their reasoning, this type of questioning may be insufficient for supporting children to steer away from broad generalisations and to engage in context-sensitive perspective taking.

It is important to note that the use of closed questioning has been studied in classroom dialogue research; in general, these types of questions have been found to discourage children from thinking for themselves and to inhibit children from providing a range of responses; instead,

these types of questions seem to prompt brief responses and encourage passivity (e.g. Hardman, 2008). However, teachers' usage of closed questioning has primarily been examined as an overarching style of talk, often associated with the initiation-response-feedback (IRF) exchange, but not as an individual strategy which can be part of a larger repertoire of dialogic strategies. Researchers in the field of dialogic education, such as Rojas-Drummond (2000), Mercer (1995), Alexander (2001), and Gibbons (2001) have argued that it is important to evaluate teachers' dialogic strategies based on the broader function in the dialogue. That is, there may be some unexpected utility in the use of the IRF sequence or certain kinds of closed questioning, in conjunction with other types of more open-ended questions. For example, using a metaphor of dialogue as a building or construction site, closed-questions may act as building blocks by supporting children to make their reasoning explicit, or they may act as cement by joining individual ideas and exchanges together. This linking of ideas can provide increased opportunities for students to make longer contributions in which they express their current state of understanding or consider gaps in the group's reasoning (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003).

Nystrand has argued that even open-ended questions can lead to closed responses and that instead of focusing on individual aspects of teachers' questioning, researchers should focus on whether questions are authentic (i.e. whether they allow for a range of responses) and whether they signal to the students that teachers are sincerely interested in what they think (Nystrand et al., 2003). Within this line of reasoning, it is the intention of the questioning which is important, and this intention must be evaluated in the context of the teacher's role within the discussion as a whole.

8.5.1.2 Asking 'what else': Prompting multiple explanations and consideration of alternative perspectives

Teachers also asked questions that prompted children to build on their ideas and consider additional possible explanations for the events in the stories (i.e. 'what else' questions). These questions seemed to support a proliferation of different ideas among students. As discussed previously, this differentiation appeared to be a crucial component in children's ability to move

past an initial hypothesis or judgment about the characters and to consider previously overlooked information or different interpretations of characters' perspectives.

Educational dialogue researchers have looked at the specific components of classroom dialogue that predict positive outcomes (e.g. in mathematics, reading, and reasoning) and identified the importance of teachers promoting elaboration and querying together with high student participation (Howe, Hennessy, Mercer, Vrikki, & Wheatley, 2019). In this research, dialogue that supported students to express their ideas openly at length and engage with previous ideas (e.g. by challenging, elaborating, or referring back to previous contributions), enabled students to consider plausible alternative perspectives on the topic under discussion. These researchers further found that juxtaposition (i.e. comparisons between differing ideas) in dialogue engendered a metacognitive perspective on personal thought processes and beliefs, pointing the role of the teacher in prompting students to elaborate on and connect their ideas together.

Several studies within developmental psychology indicate that when children have a strong belief in a hypothesis, they tend to engage in biased hypothesis-testing, seeking to confirm, rather than disconfirm their initial hypothesis (Kuhn & Phelps, 1982; Penner & Klahr, 1996; Zimmerman & Glaser, 2001). More recent research within this area has found that children are better able to conduct a controlled test of a hypothesis after they hear contrasting hypotheses about which variables might matter (Cook & Schulz, 2009). However, in these experiments, children were not asked to come up with multiple explanations themselves (i.e. they were presented with alternative explanations from the experimenter); researchers are now looking at whether prompts for children themselves to generate multiple explanations support hypothesis-testing and broadened reasoning (e.g. decreasing fixation on an initial explanation) in the context of both laboratory settings and classroom settings (Nyhout & Walker, 2020). It is probable that engaging in argumentation through dialogue or group reasoning not only enabled the children in this specific project to be exposed to multiple viewpoints but allowed for personal engagement in this process of presenting alternative explanations, which may have

encouraged children to understand that their own claims are subject to scrutiny and require evaluation of alternatives.

8.5.1.3 Asking 'what if': Prompting possibility thinking through hypothetical questioning

Teachers asked hypothetical questions, which prompted the students to consider how the story would change with manipulation of one or more variables and supported consideration of the causal mechanisms of both situational constraints and internal thought processes on characters' behaviours. This hypothetical questioning also encouraged the students to see the characters' perspectives through a relational lens in which they considered characters' relationships with other characters as influencing their perspectives.

A complementary proposal within the cognitive development literature is that hypothetical questions have an effect on causal reasoning because they prompt learners to conduct thought experiments or imagined interventions on a causal system (Walker & Gopnik, 2013; Buchsbaum et al., 2012; Woodward, 2007). When children are asked counterfactual questions (e.g. "What if…" questions), patterns of 'causal contingency' (i.e. how one event might lead to another) become more explicit in children's thinking. Hypothetical questions also draw children's attention to anomalies in their reasoning (Chinn & Brewer, 1998), supporting them to acknowledge that if their previous hypothesis was true, the observed evidence would not have occurred.

The students in this project clearly engaged in increased imaginative speculation about the story characters in direct response to teachers' hypothetical questions. Further, some students even began to spontaneously present their own hypothetical scenarios and came up with inventive explanations for the characters' motivations, indicating that in addition to the benefits to 'what if' questions described above, there may have been shifts in children's general orientations to the dialogue. That is, it is possible that they became more open to considering alternative possibilities generally, referred to as a mindset of 'possibility thinking' (Craft,

2015), which supported students to thinking more imaginatively about the characters' perspectives.

Within the SEDA coding scheme, the code 'possibility thinking' draws on Craft's definition, involving a mindset of imaginative speculation (Craft, 2015) and emphasises the role of teachers in allowing students to 'not know' the right answer (Hennessy et al., 2016). Importantly, when teachers in this project asked hypothetical questions, they not only allowed students to 'not know', but they often stressed that the students were merely guessing based on the available information. Teachers also encouraged students to address each other's responses, supporting them to build on the hypothetical scenarios presented, rather than just pooling ideas together or finding consensus. This indicated the presence of 'mutual addressivity' (i.e. sincere engagement with each other's ideas), an idea which builds on Bakhtin's notion of polyphony (i.e. multiple voices within dialogue) (Sidorkin, 1999). These ideas of speculation, mutual addressivity, and polyphony are central in the definition of the code 'possibility thinking' in the SEDA scheme and helped me to identify the moments in which teachers supported students to build and explore hypothetical scenarios across the group. Further, through close examination of these episodes, I noticed how students continually considered and compared differing perspectives about how one event might lead to another, and this led to increased open-ended creative thinking about the drivers and motivations of the characters in the stories.

8.5.2 Supporting students to make reasoning explicit and coordinating multiple ideas

Within this project, teachers followed 'why/how', 'what else', and 'what if', and other types of questions with efforts to guide students through their own logic, helping them to synthesise divergent ideas and draw conclusions from their thought experiments. When children struggled to consolidate ideas, to understand the implications of new information or ideas, or to remember the overarching claim or argument in question, these follow-up prompts supported students to reorient to a focal line of inquiry, to help connect together different ideas and arguments into a coherent chain of logic, draw reasonable conclusions and perhaps make

modifications to an original idea or claim. While the open-ended and hypothetical questions supported the initial broadening of children's normative frames which appeared to promote increased context-sensitive perspective taking, teachers' follow-up questions and personalised feedback seemed to be a crucial component in actually helping children to coordinate and integrate divergent ideas. Ultimately, this consistent coordination seemed to support children to gradually shift their explanations to more relational conceptualisations of categories and behaviour.

Research around classroom dialogue, both in naturalistic and experimental contexts, has found that effective teachers often aim to get pupils to reason and reflect about what they are doing (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003). This encouragement for students to make their reasoning explicit in turn enables other students to more easily access and productively respond to other ideas. Further, according to the QT model, effective dialogic pedagogy involves using discourse tools to not only invite a range of evidence-based responses, but also to help students make connections (e.g. between each other's ideas, shared knowledge, or to another text). Within this model, the teacher is meant to gradually release control of the discussion so that students begin to make connections on their own, which has been associated with relational reasoning in STEM at secondary level/high school (Murphy, Firetto, & Greene, 2017). However, students often still need support in making these connections, especially in the earlier years when children struggle to manage tasks meta-cognitively (Rojas-Drummond, 2000; Rojas-Drummond, Mercer, & Dabrowski, 2001; Wegerif, Rojas-Drummond, & Mercer, 1999).

The importance of this component of teachers' dialogic moves became especially apparent in my reflection on Setting C (teacher 2) in which the teacher did not appear to coordinate ideas or guide their thinking as much as the other teachers in the project. In this case, while she used many of the types of questioning described here, the children seemed to have a difficult time sticking to one strand of thinking, which appeared to inhibit their capacity to extend and build on each other's ideas in a productive way.

8.5.3 The role of teachers' grammatical constructions, positioning, and personalised feedback

Teachers' phrasing of questions and feedback within sentential complements also supported children's relational reasoning within their perspective taking. Verbs within sentential complement constructions can either be a verb of communication (e.g. a character *said* that…) or of a mental state (e.g. a character *thought* that), creating an emphasis on subjectivity, which likely enables children to consider contradictions between mental states and reality. In this study, this language appeared to support children to identify when one character had a thought or belief about another character, which helped them to consider the characters' relationships as key factors in thinking about their perspectives. Further, teachers' use of first- and second-person sentential complement phrasing (i.e. *I* think, *you* think) appeared to prompt students to make their own subjective positioning explicit in the process of taking the characters' perspectives, as demonstrated by their repetition and spontaneous use of this phrasing in their own responses, in addition to the growing speculative nature of their ideas, indicated by other phrases like 'maybe' and "I wonder'.

As previously discussed in the context of possibility thinking, teachers in this project often stressed that the students were guessing based on the information they had available, and they modelled this hypothetical positioning by using sentential complement phrasing themselves. Further, teachers helped students to make connections between the stories and their own personal experiences, all the while maintaining this hypothetical stance. Importantly, in order to help children apply insights from these personal connections to their perspective taking, teachers also supported students to map insights from these personal connections onto the particular story context.

There is a growing body of research around the role of perspective taking interventions in promoting children's understanding of how people's mental states are contextualised within social situations (Astington & Jenkins, 1995; Bianco et al., 2016; Farrant et al., 2012; Bianco et al., 2004). These studies have examined both young children (e.g. preschool, 3-6 years) and older children (e.g. middle childhood, primary school years), and have found that conversation

about mental states (beliefs, desires, perceptions) can increase reasoning about others' perspectives, especially when conversational partners use specific phrasing (e.g. sentential complement structures), feedback, and explanations.

Perspective taking necessarily involves some form of thinking about one's own experiences in relation to another person's perspective. In fact, some researchers argue that this is the only way that we can have any point of reference for how someone might be thinking or feeling in a specific situation (Chambers & Davis, 2012). However, other people's experiences will always be different than one's own experience. Thus, the explicit acknowledgement that we can only estimate what someone else is thinking or feeling might motivate a more thorough effort to engage with the specific details of that person's (or story character's) world (Sassenrath, Hodges, & Pfattheicher, 2016).

8.5.4 The role of illustrations in supporting perspective taking of story characters

Within many of the reading groups in this project, children relied on the illustrations in responding to teachers' prompts to make inferences about the characters' perspectives. While children sometimes appeared to use illustrations to help them remember key information, they also referred to salient details in the illustrations as evidence for specific claims (i.e. as straightforward answers to the teachers' questions), while overlooking certain information from the text (i.e. information that might suggest a different interpretation of events). For example, some of the children referred to the facial expressions of characters to argue that they were experiencing one particular emotion, even when the story text suggested that they might have felt differently than this facial expression portrayed.

In the context of reading comprehension, it has been posited that illustrations can serve to lighten the demands on children's working memory when processing text, which might in turn enable young readers to keep track of the most important information and to make important connections (Gyselinck & Tardieu, 1999). However, illustrations can support or ambiguate the text depending on the type of information depicted. For example, the text on a single page in a

story might present multiple pieces of information, including change over time. Therefore, an illustration might represent only one element or moment in time of the evolving storyline, which can create discontinuity between the text and image. One study found that when children (7-11 years old) were asked to make an inference about a text, the story illustration acted as a distraction when it presented information that was inconsistent with or irrelevant to the current state of affairs (Pike, Barnes, & Barron, 2010). However, in general, younger readers tend to be more dependent on illustrative support to make inferences about a story than older readers (Ackerman, 1988); therefore, they might be more susceptible to being consumed by salient details in an illustration, especially when the text presents a more ambiguous or complex portrayal of events.

On the other hand, researchers in the fields of dialogic education and children's literature have explored the ways in which illustrations in children's stories can expand the meaning of text, especially in the context of children engaging in a process of shared reflection about the meaning of the texts and images as a whole. For example, Maine argues that illustrations can prompt children to look for meaning beyond the literal; one reason for this is that images are non-linear and therefore 'the reader can choose how they navigate the space of the image', rather than following the 'temporal reading pathway' specified by the text, which requires children to bring their own experiences and interpretation to the interaction (Maine, 2015, pp. 23). Further, Arizpe and Styles (2004) argue: 'it is the difference between the words and pictures that make us interpret one in light of the other' (p. 24).

Patterns of children's engagement with the illustrations (presented in design principle 3) demonstrated how young children in particular may need support from adults to pay attention to the ways in which images and text might be fragmentary, ironic, or ambiguous. This can support children to think about illustrations not as 'evidence' for a particular explanation but as springboards for broadening children's thinking about the possible meanings of the text.

8.5.5 The role of value alignment with teachers and school-wide engagement

Within this project, there were subtle conflicts between the aims of the project and certain values or policies within the schools that I worked in. These conflicts were not overt from the beginning of my collaboration with teachers, but gradually emerged throughout the course of our work together.

It may have been useful to make more of a concerted effort from the beginning of the project to have more in-depth conversations about the school or centre's existing values, policies, or curriculum structures. For example, I could have engaged in more thorough conversations about the school and teacher's core values, with the aim of thinking about how certain values might emphasise specific personal characteristics (e.g. bravery, kindness), or behaviour management policies/PSHE curricula which outline specific types of acceptable behaviour. In this way, I could have used these conversations to explore how these factors might inadvertently reinforce categorisation of behaviour, which could have served to guide further thinking and discussions with the teachers.

Further, while small group activity has been found to be relatively frequent in England and the United States (Alexander, 2001), active participation and engagement in dialogue and oracy-related activities is relatively rare (Alexander 2008; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, Gamoran, & 2003; Nystrand et al., 2003; Rojas-Drummond, 2000; Smith, Hardman, Wall, & Mroz, 2004). Teachers who work within settings where recitation is the predominant discourse pattern may find it especially challenging to facilitate productive classroom discussions about text, especially about texts that deal with such complex and nuanced topics as categorisation and bias.

One successful solution to bridging the gap between school practices and values and those of a new programme or research project is to take a whole-school or whole-centre approach, much like the Comer School Development Program, which focused primarily on influencing the culture and climate of schools in order to promote children's capacity for social understanding

and empathic caring (Cohen, 2001). In this way, schools can be more intentional and explicit about their overall school climate, including how they structure the curriculum, how they communicate expectations about the ways in which students should engage with their teachers and peers (e.g. within text-based discussions), and how they frame social expectations and behaviour and whether their behaviour management, PSHE, and bullying policies are in alignment with the project or programme's broader aims. Other important considerations related to engaging with teachers and schools in participatory design work are explored in the following section.

8.6 Teachers' reflections of how the project influenced their professional development and children's learning

Teachers felt the project influenced their own teaching and professional learning in addition to their students' engagement and learning in varied ways. In terms of their own professional learning and teaching, they described evolving priorities and conceptions of promoting dialogue around stories, demonstrating how they took ownership of their own professional development within the project. They also took a particular interest in specific topics of discussion and made it a priority to focus on promoting children's thinking around these themes over others, based on ongoing reflection about their own priorities and values. In terms of student engagement and learning, they described pleasant surprises in individual students' engagement as well as unexpected challenges with others. They also described how they felt the benefits of the learning from the project extended to other skills and aspects of student life.

Reflective, inquiry-based practice and collaborative consultation have been heralded as tools for those who aim to support educators in developing their practice based on pre-identified, shared values and goals (Kyriakides & Creemers, 2015). Related research around teacher professional development stresses the importance of teachers taking a lead in their own learning and goal-setting with the support of feedback and reflective practice, cycles of reflection and action, and targeted feedback on how certain prompts and questions influence children's thinking.

In this study, I used the Educational Design Research (EDR) paradigm (Van den Akker et al., 2006), specifically adopting critical design ethnography (Barab et al., 2004), in order to position myself as a co-investigator with teachers. While I made an effort at the beginning of my collaboration with each teacher to clearly articulate our goals for the project, including where they converged and diverged, teachers' priorities appeared to shift over the course of the reading discussions.

In this project, I found that sometimes putting aside my broad agenda and prioritising the teachers' interests and concerns was necessary to build a collaborative agenda and to enable teachers to take the lead in the project. This tension remained throughout my work, with my interest sometimes being front and centre, at other times fading into the background. In describing the goals and challenges of EDR, especially in 'critical design ethnography', Barab and colleagues describe the challenges involved in the researcher's ever-shifting position as outside the context or organization (having 'peripheral membership' as advisor) and inside the organization (as collaborator/change agent). These researchers argue that this is not a contradiction but a tension that is inherent in the process of carrying out critical design ethnography (2004). In my reflections on this process, I came to realise that the most important part about managing this relationship was to make sure I let teachers take the lead in the project (e.g. in guiding the topics of our reflection meetings) when they articulated particular areas of concern or interest.

8.6.1 Specific reflections from teachers about engagement from particular students and specific topics of interest

Shortly after I started my work in each setting, teachers slowly began to articulate particular interests in specific topics of discussion and to describe their impressions of specific children's engagement and progress in the project, expressing their surprises or concerns about a few students in particular. In their reflections, it appeared that this ownership over the content and direction of the discussions, their authentic engagement in thinking through the emerging ideas, and their sense of individual student engagement was crucial to their continued excitement and motivation within the project.

Within the reflection discussions, the teachers went into great detail describing their impressions of individual students' progress and learning. They also described challenges around extending children's thinking, and in doing so, they referred to individual students' understanding of the stories and their responses to specific strategies. It appeared that this close attention to and knowledge of individual students' needs enabled them to build on their deep familiarity with each student and accordingly, to adjust their strategies in differentiated ways. In discussing how they felt the benefits extended from the project to other aspects of classroom life, teachers described their impressions of specific students' increased confidence and ability to speak up.

Research around teacher professional development and teacher effectiveness has highlighted how teachers' beliefs are related in a consistent way to their teaching practice. Specifically, teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching can be classified in two distinct dimensions: student-oriented (i.e. the extent to which teachers are oriented towards individual students learning outcomes) and subject matter-oriented (the extent to which teachers are focused on teaching specific content). Recent research has looked at the specific relationship between teachers' beliefs about students and their level of engagement in continuing professional development (CPD) activities and has found that teachers' orientation to students is the primary factor that supports teacher engagement in CPD (de Vries, van de Grift, & Jansen, 2014). Interestingly, while teachers who scored highly in both student and subject matter orientation were highly engaged in their professional development, student orientation seemed to be the most important factor in predicting teacher engagement (de Vries, van de Grift, and Jansen, 2013). However, the more a teacher's profile was both student-oriented and subject matter-oriented, the higher his or her participation in CPD.

Further, related research within the classroom dialogue literature has investigated teachers' use of scaffolding to extend students' ideas and move their thinking forward. Specifically, this work highlights the importance of teacher reflection upon individual students' responses to their questioning in helping them to build their ability to effectively scaffold children's learning within their own ability range (i.e. their 'zone of proximal development). For example, teachers

involved in a reflective professional development programme with cycles of action, feedback and reflection (similar to this project), were encouraged to focus on how they responded to individual students' comments, and this focus supported teachers' engagement in developing their dialogic practices. The researchers hypothesise that actively reflecting on follow-up responses required teachers to think of responses in-vivo rather than utilising predetermined open-ended questions (Pehmer, Groschner, & Seidel, 2015). In general, the demand for quick thinking and responding likely requires teachers to be actively tuned in to the students' engagement and thinking in order to provide the right kind of scaffolding. It also likely relies on teachers being authentically invested themselves in the topics of discussion and also being committed to the elaborate and often extended process of carefully thinking ideas through.

8.7 Revisiting and revising the conceptual framework

Early in this thesis, I presented a conceptual framework and theorised about the mechanisms by which children's normative frames and perspective taking might interact to promote or inhibit attributional bias in the context of classroom dialogue around stories. As I have reflected on the findings from this project, I have begun to reconceptualise this framework and update my hypothesis for how these concepts link together.

This project demonstrated how normative frames were intimately linked to the nature of the dialogue in question. Specifically, students appeared to respond to their teachers and peers in certain socially-desirable ways or in ways that they might have thought the teacher(s) expected them to respond. Further, they engaged in a process of building and maintaining a shared understanding around emergent concepts and normative frames within the dialogue, which involved a process of thinking about other perspectives, not just of the characters in the stories but of the other participants in the group. In light of these findings, I have begun to see normative frames and perspective taking not as separate concepts that influence one another but as inextricably linked, making up a central pillar of shared social reasoning.

In this updated framework, I have represented relational reasoning and attributionally-biased reasoning as both being supported by this central pillar. Further, I have begun to

reconceptualise relational reasoning as itself a biased kind of reasoning and as a counterweight to rather than an absence of attributional bias. I see guided dialogue around stories as a pivotal tool by which teachers can help children question and broaden their normative frames and increase context-sensitive perspective taking. In this way, teachers can help` tip the scale so that relational thinking overpowers attributional bias in children's shared social reasoning. In particular, when teachers help children explicitly focus on the subjectivity of their normative frames (i.e. that other people can have different perspectives) within dialogue around stories, children are more likely to engage in relational reasoning about others' behaviours. As children construct normative frames which privilege contextual and relational information (over dispositional information) in taking other perspectives, they are more likely to engage in relational reasoning about others' behaviours. On the contrary, when children are not supported to explicitly focus on their own subjectivity, they are more likely to construct normative frames which inflexibly attribute certain intentions and/or social value to specific behaviours and to reason about others' behaviours in attributionally-biased ways. Please see figure 8.1 for the updated illustration of this conceptual framework. I will discuss the proposed mechanisms of this updated conceptual framework in further detail in the following sections.
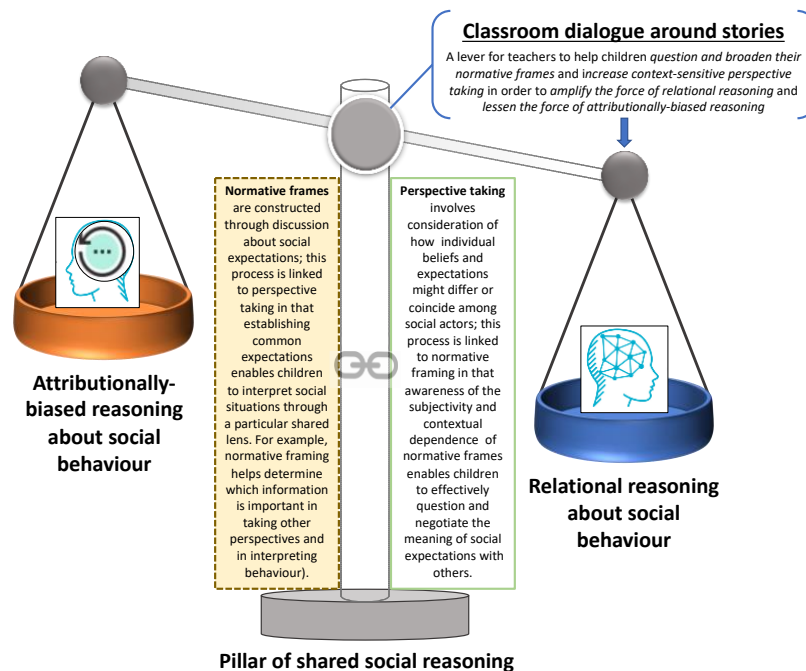

Classroom dialogue around stories
A lever for teachers to help children *question and broaden their normative frames* and increase *context-sensitive perspective taking* in order to *amplify the force of relational reasoning* and *lessen the force of attributionally-biased reasoning*

Normative frames are constructed through discussion about social expectations; this process is linked to perspective taking in that establishing common expectations enables children to interpret social situations through a particular shared lens. For example, normative framing helps determine which information is important in taking other perspectives and in interpreting behaviour).

Perspective taking involves consideration of how individual beliefs and expectations might differ or coincide among social actors; this process is linked to normative framing in that awareness of the subjectivity and contextual dependence of normative frames enables children to effectively question and negotiate the meaning of social expectations with others.

Attributionally-biased reasoning about social behaviour

Relational reasoning about social behaviour

Pillar of shared social reasoning

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Figure 8.1 Updated Conceptual Framework

8.7.1 A central pillar of social understanding involving the interconnected process of normative framing and perspective taking

In my initial presentation of this conceptual framework, I described the process of framing within the shared reading discussions as the construction and expansion of a shared mental context. I related this process to Vygotsky's concept of 'intermental thinking', in which children's individual social understanding is constructed within the shared processes of meaning making that take place in social interaction. However, within my initial conceptualisation, I did not explicitly recognise that as the students engage in this shared process of negotiating the meaning of normative frames, they must also engage in a process of thinking about each other's perspectives in order to build and maintain this shared understanding. I now acknowledge that collective framing (i.e. within dialogue) necessarily involves at least some consideration that other participants might bring different normative frames to the discussion and that, in general, there are multiple ways to frame something based on one's own personal experiences. However, the extent to which students explicitly focus on this subjectivity in framing is highly variable and influenced by teachers' prompting and questioning.

I believe it is misleading to represent perspective taking and normative frames as separate concepts that influence one another or to think of teachers as bringing perspective taking into students' normative frames. Instead, it seems more accurate to represent perspective taking and normative frames as two interlinked components that are both integral to the process of collective social reasoning. Further, I have reconceptualised the teachers' roles within this project as helping students to explicitly acknowledge this subjectivity and perspective taking as part of the framing process and to become aware of other perspectives that might be missing from their reasoning. As I have discussed in my description of Frame Analysis, both Goffman and Gordon's depictions of frames involve acknowledgment of the social positioning and relational responding that occur when two or more individuals come together to negotiate their understanding of the topic or concepts in question (Goffman, 1974; Gordon, 2008). While

Goffman and Gordon have not explicitly described social perspective taking as part of this process of frame negotiation, it has become clear after engagement in this type of analysis myself that consideration of the other interlocutors' perspectives is an integral part of the process of negotiating and constructing normative frames.

Further afield, there is a substantive body of work within the area of social psychology about the framing effect in biased reasoning, which refers to the phenomenon in which the same information can have a varying impact on someone's decision making depending on how this information is presented to them (Koehler & Harvey, 2008). The framing effect is distinct from the concept of normative frames that I have used in this study in that it primarily emphasises how information is passively presented to and received by individuals rather than how individuals actively construct frames within social interaction. It is not within the scope of this discussion to consider this body of literature in depth; however it is interesting to note some parallels.

Specifically, there is an extension of this body of research around the framing effect that is particularly relevant in that it acknowledges how individuals can effortfully influence how they interpret information by becoming aware of their biases and the heuristics that they are using in their reasoning. Many studies have employed 'perspective focus' intervention strategies in which the aim is to train individuals to adjust their self-centred perspective to consider the perspective of an outsider or other involved party (e.g. Aczel, Bago, Szollosi, Foldes, & Lukacs, 2015). These studies have some overlap with the intervention studies citied in the literature review which focused on supporting people to develop a more complete picture of others' influences and motivations (e.g. Gawronski, 2003; Hooper et al., 2014).

Importantly, some of the authors within these studies have incorporated a focus on relational frame theory (RFT), emphasising how the act of supporting people to put concepts into relations with one another (i.e. not based on their physical properties but based on relational cues) reduces biases in reasoning. Specifically, one intervention strategy that has been used within the context of story-based discussion programmes in schools has been referred to as

'multiple exemplar training' and involves supporting children to elicit deictic relations (i.e. verbally constructed statements relating "I" or "me" to "you" and the rest of the world) in thinking about the different concepts and ideas that emerge in talking about the stories (e.g. Davlin, Rehfeldt, & Lovett, 2011).

Although I did not utilise RFT in my thinking and planning within this project, the theory aligns with my evolving conceptualisation of normative frames and perspective taking as being intricately linked together. In thinking more closely about how RFT might align with my evolving thinking within this project, I decided to reflect on some of the other research I cited in the literature review, and my attention was drawn to Budwig's theory of 'indexicality' (2003) and Chen and French's contextual-developmental model (2008), which both conceptualise the processes of framing and perspective taking as bidirectional and transactional in nature. While I initially conceptualised frames as exerting a primarily top-down influence on children's perspective taking in the conceptual framework, my early acknowledgement of this literature and of literature that describes individual variation in social development within cultures indicates that I was also considering how this process might involve more complexity than this unidirectional relationship allows. I have now begun to more clearly align myself with contextual-developmental models (referenced in section 2.3.3) in which children are seen to actively construct and negotiate meaning within a given culture and to move away from cultural-normative models of social development (referenced in section 2.3.2), in which culture is seen to exert direct control over children's thinking and reasoning.

8.7.2 Relational reasoning as a counterbalance to attributional bias

As I have mentioned previously in this discussion, it is important to consider the context in which children's normative frames emerged. Within the reading activities, teachers structured children's participation within specific communities of practice, and there was always an underlying process of socialization in which the children were learning the habitual and routine practices of these communities. Further, the teachers were guiding the discussions and were thus engaging in verbal framing, regardless of whether they were conscious of this process or not. Specifically, the teachers described the events in the stories and asked questions in ways

that made certain information salient and steered the discussions in specific directions. They also sometimes made suggestions for how to explain the events in the stories or for how characters could or should respond.

The approach that I used to outline the initial normative frames and embedded frame elements was a research tool to monitor change over time, however it was necessarily a simplified rendering of a dynamic process of building concepts and ideas involving active negotiation and shifting of meaning from both the students and teachers. Through my analysis, I was able to examine teachers' verbal framing on a granular level which allowed me to 1) incorporate and consider their contributions to and influence on students reasoning and 2) support teachers to question and challenge both their own and students' underlying normative expectations. In general, the findings demonstrate how teachers' verbal framing played a role in students' early demonstrations of attribution bias.

However, reflecting upon this process of analysis has led me to think about the limitations of trying to distil concrete normative frames from dialogue. This has also led me to question whether it would be possible (or even desirable) to dismantle normative frames or to rid children of their attributional biases altogether. Instead, it might be better to think about this process in a more open-ended way, in which teachers can work towards supporting children to incorporate new elements and ways of connecting these elements together within their ever-shifting normative frames. In this way, teachers' reflective practice can enable students to question expectations and take into account a broader range of factors and considerations in their social reasoning.

I have also begun to wonder whether all frames are in fact normative and whether, to at least some extent, all frames bring about biased reasoning. In response to this emerging line of inquiry, I have begun to think of teachers' roles within this project as steering children's reasoning in one direction over another. Specifically, teachers were not ridding children of their biases but instead prompting a different kind of bias – one in which children became

predisposed to look for environmental/situational information over trait or dispositional information in their reasoning about other people's behaviour.

Consistent with the initial conceptual model I presented earlier in this thesis, it still seems reasonable to maintain my original hypothesis that perspective taking and normative frames which are context-sensitive lessen children's attributional bias whereas perspective taking that does not properly take context into account may increase attributional bias. However, the findings from this project show that children's attributionally-biased reasoning was persistent, even when children demonstrated shifts in their normative frames and engaged in increased relational reasoning about the story characters. Therefore, it may be more accurate to represent relational reasoning not as the absence of attributional bias but as a counterweight. Further, it seems useful to think of relational reasoning as another type of bias in social reasoning, one that involves a tendency to privilege contextual and relational information in thinking about other people's behaviour.

I have updated the conceptual framework to reflect both my reconceptualisation of frames and perspective taking as comprising an integrated pillar of shared social reasoning and my reassessment of attributional bias and relational reasoning as co-occurring modes of social reasoning. Importantly, I have represented these concepts in a model that resembles a weighing scale to represent the oppositional nature of attributionally-biased reasoning and relational reasoning and the way in which they both stem from the core column of shared social reasoning. As illustrated by the updated conceptual framework, the efforts made by teachers in this study to support students to place more emphasis on relational information in the stories helped to tip the scale toward increased relational reasoning over attributionally-biased reasoning.

It is important to note that because I have combined theoretical thinking and methodological approaches from a broad range of epistemologies, theoretical frameworks, parallel fields of study, I have not been able to reference all of these fields in great depth within this discussion. For example, while I have referenced research around the Quality Talk model (section 8.5),

there is a substantial amount of research within this area, especially around belief change in small group discourse, that I have not referred to in this thesis. Further, I have briefly addressed literature around debiasing, however I have focused primarily on the research around attributional bias and interventions that promote context-sensitive perspective taking. Within this thesis, one important contribution that I make to the field involves connecting disparate yet relevant areas to shed light on the complexities of how children collectively reason about social situations, however one drawback is that I cannot delve into each field in as much depth as I would if I were situated within one primary area of work.

8.8 Overarching discussion

In general, research within developmental psychology, especially within research around children's development of categorisation referred to earlier in this chapter, suggests that relational concepts are more difficult for young children than are object concepts. It is possible that children within the age range of the project (i.e. 4-6 years) were at the precipice of what researchers have traditionally termed a 'perceptual to relational shift', referring to a transition from reliance on objects to a gradual consideration of relations in categorisation (e.g. Gentner, 1983, 1988, 2005; Richland et al., 2006). This would suggest that the children in this project were just beginning to develop cognitive and language skills to engage in relational reasoning, but still tended to privilege perceptual similarities of concepts in their early conceptualisation of categories.

However, while some researchers have traditionally attributed children's early entity-based categorisation to a developmental lag in both inhibition (e.g. the ability to ignore perceptual distractions) and to a lack of relational knowledge, recent research within the cognitive developmental literature has suggested that relational reasoning highly depends on task framing. For example, Walker and Gopnik (2017) found that 3-year-olds can make abstract relational inferences when adults prompt children to explain the pattern of events, and that this ability declines between 3 and 6 years. This research indicates that the relational shift would be better characterised as "u-shaped curve," in which early reasoning abilities become overshadowed by children's development of conflicting hypotheses, often referred to cognitive

science as 'priors' (i.e. beliefs about the about the probability of an event) (e.g. Karmiloff-Smith & Inhelder, 1974). For example, young children may develop the hypothesis that categories are defined by obvious salient features or that individual object kinds are more likely to causally influence an outcome (e.g. a single object causes a machine to turn on or a single event causes someone to be sad).

This work about children's development of relational reasoning is situated within a recent trend in the field of cognitive psychology research to adapt probabilistic models (c.f. Bayesian models) of cognitive development, viewing learners as searching through a space of potential hypotheses and testing them against data (i.e. the information that they encounter in the world). While this work has a distinctly cognitive slant, there is increased explicit acknowledgement of the influence of the social context of learning and the ways in which language guides children's preferences for specific hypotheses or explanations of events. These researchers have theorised that entity-based hypotheses are likely to gain increasing evidence and become stronger 'priors' in children's minds based on the way in which events are framed and discussed within the norms and expectations of a given social context. Although I may be situated in a very different field from cognitive psychology (with a very different research paradigm and related terminology), I feel aligned with the thinking and explanations that these researchers have put forward about how children likely come to develop entity-based conceptions of categories.

In general, these Bayesian models of relational learning are supported by both cross-cultural research in relational reasoning development and by parallel research about children's development of structural thinking about categories. For example, Cartenson and Walker (2017) showed that languages which have a particular emphasis on verbs (e.g. Mandarin) over nouns (e.g. English) orient young learners to pay attention to relations and thus better enable children to understand categories in more relational, rather than entity-based terms. Further, Vasilyeva, Gopnik, and Lombrozo (2018) found that young children (i.e. 3-4 years old) can engage in structural thinking about categories when the task is narrated in a relational way (i.e. with an emphasis on a category's structural features) by the experimenter.

The period of 3-6 years seems to be a critical period in children's development of social attribution and categorisation, while at the same time it seems to be a time of decline in children's relational reasoning. As mentioned early on in this thesis (e.g. in the introduction and literature review, 4-6 years seems to be a period for children, especially in western cultures, in which children begin to make dispositional and attributional judgments about others based on very little or even contradictory evidence (Seiver et al., 2013). Based on the research just mentioned about children's development of relational reasoning, this period may start slightly earlier. That is, 3-year-old children demonstrate the ability to infer relational properties, whereas 3-4 year old children fail to draw this relational inference. These authors hypothesise that children (i.e. in western cultures) develop a learned bias to attend to individual social characteristics (i.e. dispositions and traits) and individual object properties and to ignore the abstract relations which might influence or wholly underlie these concepts.

In this study, teachers brought relational reasoning to the fore of the discussions by prompting children to overlook distracting salient perceptual properties and to instead pay closer attention to relational and structural features of the stories. Further, it seemed that a greater propensity for talk which openly explored meaning and built collective knowledge transpired over the course of the project, which created more of varied distribution of ideas, perspectives, and hypotheses among the group, and children generally appeared to become more comfortable with dissenting from the group's dominant perspective. This proliferation of ideas, along with teachers' encouragement and reinforcement of children's guessing and hypothesising, seemed to diminish children's emphasis on coming up with a 'correct' answer or defending a specific idea when the evidence suggested there might be a different explanation. With the support of teachers' efforts to clarify and link children's contributions together, children slowly began to build on their peers' previous ideas, which enabled children to account for more contextual information and to consider the interplay of multiple factors that might influence characters' perspectives, which lessened the focus on making dispositional judgments about the characters. Students also began to engage in processes of conceptual blending and integration of multiple ideas, creating what seemed to be working hypotheses, rather than matter-of-fact statements. These trends were ultimately associated with less of an emphasis on normative category rules

based on perceptual features (e.g. of animal/social categories, emotions, traits), more context-sensitive perspective taking, and fewer dispositional judgments over the course of the project.

Chapter 9
Conclusion

9.1 Overview of key findings

In this project, I investigated how teacher-led classroom dialogue around stories challenged children's normative frames of social understanding, promoted children's perspective taking and lessened their dispositional judgments. I also examined the process of collaborating with teachers in this investigation and outlined some design principles about promising dialogic sequences and instructional characteristics which can support future adaptations of this particular programme of inquiry.

My primary findings reveal how children's dispositional judgments can be causally linked to overarching normative frames of social understanding within the context of children's shared discussions around stories. I have also shown how it is possible to deconstruct the situated meaning of these normative frames by identifying the frame elements in which there is shared understanding and alignment, pinpointing instances in which there is contested meaning and new emergent understanding and locating nodes in the frames in which there were connections to other tangential frames.

Further, I demonstrated how normative frames might function to constrain children's perspective taking, while paying particular attention to the role of children's stance-taking, and more specifically, their willingness to take up new positions in relation to each other and the topics under discussion. Specifically, in four out of five of the groups, children slowly became more comfortable with diverging from the group consensus and they demonstrated less concern for coming up with a specific or correct answer. In parallel, as their thinking around their early normative frames shifted, they demonstrated an increased propensity for context-sensitive perspective taking, which coincided with reduced dispositional judgments.

I elaborated on the teachers' roles in supporting these shifts, describing how they questioned assumptions embedded within normative frames and continually oriented the children's

attention to the characters' perspectives in relation to the story context. Specifically, I highlighted the importance of teachers' guidance which helped students to support their claims with details from the story, to speculate, to disagree, and to engage in possibility thinking, underscoring patterns of dialogue in which students began to question and modify aspects of their normative frames and subsequently to broaden their understanding of conformity in general.

Finally, I analysed teachers' impressions of learning and engagement within the project, and I found that teachers' ownership over the content and direction of the discussions and their sense of individual student engagement were crucial to their continued motivation and leadership within the project. Overall, each teacher had a lot to say in our final meetings, and there was an overall sentiment that the project had a unique added value to their students' learning and to their own teaching and professional development. For many of the teachers, it seemed that one primary source of value came from the ability to take the time with a small group of students and to be able to engage in reflective practice around these activities with tailored guidance and feedback. Before considering how these findings have implications for future research and practice, I will first discuss what I perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the critical design ethnographic methodology and the general limitations of this project.

9.2 Critical reflections on my methodology

9.2.1 Examining variations across groups

One group of children (within Setting C) did not demonstrate any clear normative frames or prescriptive attitudes toward the character, either at the start or throughout the course of the project. During my observations of this group's reading discussions, I immediately noticed that while the children appeared to be engaged with the stories, they were much less responsive to the teacher and less vocal than the children in other groups. It was interesting to note that this particular group spent the majority of their days in a large classroom with other children and teachers, and importantly with the teacher and children from the other reading group in Setting C. Thus, the difference in the way these children engaged with the stories compared to the other

group could not be linked to differences in their everyday learning environments. I had the inclination to say that maybe this group was on average shyer than the other group, but then I realised that my judgment made me guilty of the same 'attributional bias' that I was seeking to challenge in this project. This made me think that it is also completely possible that my early impressions about this particular group and teacher may have influenced my openness to looking for substantive change in the children's thinking, however I do feel like I put multiple measures in place, as described in the methodology chapter, to ensure that this kind of confirmation bias was not likely.

It is instead more likely that this teacher was just less inclined to guide the children's thinking in what she perceived to be a directive way, as she explicitly mentioned in our reflection meetings (as described in Chapter 6). This made it so that she did not guide or coordinate children's ideas as persistently as other teachers in this project. Still, the teacher reflected that she found a lot of value in participating in the project and found that engaging in a small group format enabled her to see certain students as enjoying reading more than she initially expected.

This case highlights the importance of acknowledging that dialogic activities and reflective practices with teachers explored in this project were not a 'one-size-fits-all' and findings from this project may have very different applications for individual settings and even teachers and groups of students within one setting. Further, the overlapping (albeit still variable) findings across the other four groups demonstrate that there will be commonalities across settings that, if considered in a thoughtful and measured way, can be leveraged to establish future projects that build productively on this one and future communities of practice between schools and teachers.

9.2.2 Reflecting on changing goals over the course of the project

As mentioned in the discussion and previously in this conclusion, I had to sometimes put aside my own research agenda in order to prioritise the teachers' interests and concerns. This created fluctuation in the aim and focus of inquiry within each setting, which could be seen as a challenge to defining a clear trajectory of learning in an individual setting. Further, the

interpretation of the data was iterative and built up over time, which made it difficult to delineate a concise timeline of concrete steps within my process of analysis, although I attempted to engage in this process in as structured a way as possible. In general, in critical research, the goal is to engage in a constant questioning and construction of the primary aims and core concepts of the project (Smyth & Shacklock, 1998). Harvey describes the process as 'a constant shuttling backwards and forwards between abstract concept and concrete data, […] between current structures and historical development; between surface appearance and essence, between reflection and practice (Harvey, 1990, p. 29). Thus, my early focus on a few particular core concepts and the resulting fluctuation in the relevance and importance of these concepts can be seen not as a limitation but as a crucial part of the ongoing collaborative research agenda, which should be taken forward in any efforts to relate findings from this project to new settings.

9.2.3 Viewing my embeddedness within each setting as a strength and a challenge

An enduring challenge in research on learning is understanding human activity in context. Design-based research has allowed for processes of learning to be planned, documented, and refined as part of the dynamic contexts in which they unfold (Barab & Squire, 2004). However, the researcher's heavy involvement within the research context creates a need to reflexively address her own position in the research and the situated nature of the inquiry. This requires a thoughtful assessment of how the research is shaped by the researcher's own history and the way in which ethnographic data is "produced" and not "found" (Simon & Dippo, 1986, p. 200).

The goal of critical design ethnography is to create a design narrative, which is by nature a story constructed from the researcher's perspective. There will inevitably be elements of my analysis that are influenced and perhaps limited by my preconceived ideas about the project and my developing narrative, which can be viewed as both a limitation of the project, but also as a strength, at least when there are sufficient efforts to reflect on this subjectivity and the on the constructed nature of the data and analysis. I engaged in systematic efforts throughout the

research process to critically reflect on my own potential biases and normative ideas and the ways in which these biases may be influencing my interpretations of the data.

Embeddedness within the research setting is a strength and an essential part of educational ethnography, and it is important to acknowledge my goal was not to aim for objectivity, per se, but towards trustworthiness and authenticity by 'considering alternative interpretations of the data, and by following through with the implications of particular interpretations to see if these are confirmed' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 227). In this effort to consider alternative interpretations of the data, I kept a secondary reflective journal to reflect on my fieldnotes and I also decided to ask a colleague to be a sounding board in order to engage in further critical reflection throughout the process of analysis. This colleague had extensive experience in research around classroom dialogue but did not know anything about the teachers or the particular research settings in which I was working. Through multiple conversations over the course of the project, she was able to get a handle on the context and nature of the project while still being able to challenge my thinking from the perspective of an outsider. Through these conversations, she helped me to reflect on alternative possibilities of interpretation that I may not have otherwise considered.

9.3 Limitations of this research

This project required substantial time commitment and motivation from teachers. It also depended on the centres or schools having some curriculum flexibility and openness to being innovative within specific curriculum areas (e.g. reading, communication, and language). In the recruitment process, while I had multiple expressions of interest from schools and early years centres, many of these teachers ultimately decided that they did not feel they had enough time or flexibility to participate in the project. Therefore, instead of sampling from a larger pool of interested teachers, I ended up working with a convenience sample of teachers who were in a position to allocate time to this project and who were motivated to go above and beyond their normal responsibilities. In thinking about the applicability of insights from this project to other teachers and schools, it is important to consider these constraints. It is also important to ensure that any teachers who would like to adapt principles from the project

understand that they must engage in a similar process of planning and reflective practice over an extended period of time, preferably in collaboration with other teachers.

Further, there were challenges involved in engaging in qualitative research with very young children. In my efforts to enter into their worlds and understand their thinking processes, there was a continual risk of misinterpreting what they were thinking. Sometimes it seemed like what they were talking about was random or nonsensical, and I had to be very mindful to continually question whether there might be some connection to the story or to the discussion that I was not able to immediately glean. While I made efforts to get to know the children well over the course of my involvement in each setting, and I continually discussed my thinking with teachers to guide my interpretations of children's talk, it is still necessary to acknowledge the possibility that these interpretations may be sometimes misguided or incomplete.

Further, the final reading activities that I led with the children helped me to understand how their thinking extended beyond the initial discussions, however it may have also been useful to engage in these kinds of reflective activities with the children, perhaps in a more informal and personalised manner, throughout the course of the project. Further, in future efforts to analyse young children's talk in order to gauge their thinking and understanding, it may also be beneficial to engage with parents to support the process of interpretation.

It is also important to critically consider the nature of the claims that I have made in this project. Examining causal mechanisms within the theoretical framework of Critical Realism does not allow for researchers to make assertions about causality in the same way that randomised experiments allow for. Instead, the project constitutes the very beginning of a process of developing and refining theories about causal relationships between normative frames, children's dispositional judgments, perspective taking, and dialogue around stories, and it is crucial to emphasise that my findings are working hypotheses. I see value in trying to test some of these hypotheses in the future through more controlled designs, however I argue that this testing should always be done in the context of the setting in which the programme is meant to be implemented and in collaboration with teachers. Further, it is important to continually revisit

the field of implementation science to take into account whether individual settings have sufficient programme infrastructure (e.g. training, coaching, data systems) in place to support the sustained implementation of a specific programme or intervention, and that teachers gain a firm understanding of how the programme is proposed to 'work' so that they can adapt interventions in ways that fit the structure and resource constraints of their individual settings, while maintaining the core structure of these essential components.

9.4 Broad contributions to theory and practice

The findings from this project provide insight into how early educators can leverage dialogue within shared-reading activities, which are generally embedded in some form or another within early years curriculum, to challenge restrictive normative frames and to expand children's awareness about the factors that influence people's social behaviour.

This project provides a broad roadmap for how teachers can play a more active and reflective role in challenging children's emerging normative frames in order to promote greater context-sensitive perspective taking and lessen children's dispositional judgments. The findings also contribute to theory about how children's social-attributional thinking is linked to their overarching normative frames, and how dialogue with peers and teachers plays a role in propagating or challenging children's early attributional biases.

It is important to stress that any future efforts to share the design principles from this project with different settings should involve some component of action or design-based research in order for settings to sensitively adapt insights from this project to meet their own needs and constraints. Thus, an educational product might resemble a 'design manual' involving flexible guidelines about developing an individualised, systemic reflective-inquiry plan, incorporating reflective practice between teachers and possibly with external researchers or consultants.

In addressing concerns about the prescriptiveness and outcome-oriented nature of some related intervention studies, I have blended theoretical thinking and methodological approaches from traditionally separate but related epistemologies and theoretical frameworks (i.e. critical

realism, dialogism, ecological systems theory, sociolinguistics) and parallel fields of study (i.e. cognitive developmental psychology, educational dialogue, sociolinguistics, and implementation science). In doing so, I have outlined a novel approach to examining how to both understand and contribute to localised processes of change, while looking closely at both group and individual patterns of thinking, stance-taking, and meaning making. This project extends the generic model of EDR and critical-design ethnography, inviting increased possibilities for how these approaches can be used by researchers who find themselves in similar arenas, aiming to both examine and sway processes of change within complex, ecologically-oriented interventions and to produce an instructional design that can be adapted to multiple contexts. Thus, I see this project as expanding upon emerging notions of participatory design and evidence-informed practice within the educational sciences.

9.5 Future directions

I have argued that dispositional judgments are inextricably linked to children's broader normative frames about social behaviour, which can be connected to broader social discourses about the value of conformity. Further, I have shown how it is possible to map these connections within children's talk and consequently to find ways to challenge children's thinking around the meaning of these normative frames and the structure of categories and concepts embedded within these frames, in order to support broadened perspective taking and reduced dispositional judgments. Finally, the findings bring together relational reasoning and possibility thinking as key components of both challenging children's normative frames, promoting context-sensitive perspective taking, and reducing dispositional judgments. To my knowledge, this project constitutes the first effort to link these concepts in an integrated way. Future research could look longitudinally at how any early changes in children's normative frames, perspective taking, and dispositional thinking extend past a specific research period by conducting longitudinal data collection which follows children over time and across various educational contexts. Further, future research might seek to test this instructional design in a more rigorous way, possibly through formative and summative assessments.

Finally, in addition to classroom-specific applications, findings from this project can also tentatively contribute to knowledge about the ways in which parents can think more carefully about the language and dialogic strategies that they use to model and guide reasoning about others' social behaviour. Future research in this area could look further into the role of both parents and children's positioning and stance-taking in the construction of normative frames over extended periods of time, especially when children are just starting to engage more actively in dialogue with parents and siblings (e.g. around 2 years of age) but before children begin to attend formal schooling.

In general, each of these potential areas of future work implies the challenging task of asking parents, teachers, and researchers to reflect on their own potential biases in order to prevent children from developing similar social biases. It raises the question of whether it is reasonable to expect anyone to be able to identify and reflect on one's own implicit biases. However, by utilising the notion of 'normative frames' as key indicators of potential underlying biases, we can pay more direct attention to the subtle messages communicated to children about what is and is not normal and to the ways in which children interpret these messages. This understanding is a preliminary, but very important step in being able to support children to adapt more flexible, open-minded, and perhaps more empathetic attitudes towards others, especially with those whom they might initially consider to be different, strange, or bad.

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Appendix A: Semi-structured interview schedule for reflection meetings with teachers

1. How did you feel about the project in general?

2. Did you feel like you could see any progress or any change in the children's thinking?

3. Are there any discussions or topics that were especially memorable?

4. Were there any challenges that stuck out to you that you felt like you struggled the most with?

5. Was there anything that comes to mind now that you would have liked to have done differently?

6. How do you think you'll carry this work forward beyond this project?

7. How did you feel about the books we chose?
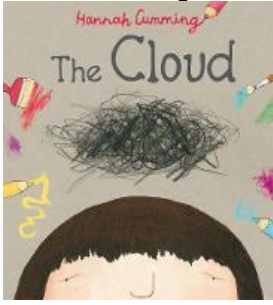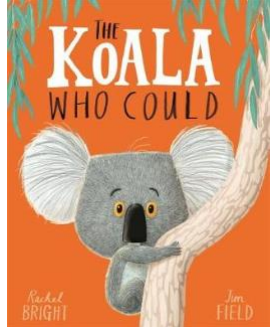
Appendix B: Research Timetable

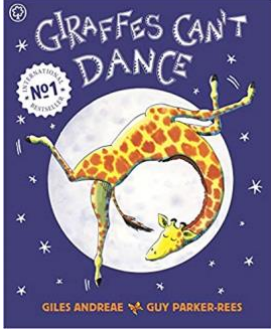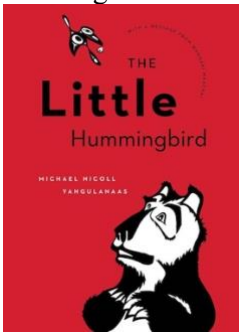| Research Activities	Setting	Oct-Dec 2017	15-29 Jan 2018	29 Jan - 9th Feb	12-23 Feb (Half term 19-23 Feb)	26 Feb-2 Mar	5-16 Mar	19-30 Mar	2-13 Apr	16-27 Apr	30 Apr-11 May	14-25 May	28 May-8 Jun	11-25 Jun
Planning and Baseline Observations	Setting A	Initial meeting with teacher 1: 10/10/17; meeting with teacher 2: 03/22/17 meeting with both teachers 11/12/17	Initial Observations on 17/01/18 and 23/01/18											
	Setting B	Initial meeting with Teacher 1: 14/11/17; meeting with both teachers 18/01/18												
	Setting B, Teacher 1		Classroom observations: 15/01/18; 29/01/18											
	Setting B, Teacher 2		Classroom observations: 23/01/18; 26/01/18											
	Setting C				First meeting with both teachers 22/02/18					2nd planning meeting: 24/04/18	Observations on 30/04/18, 8/05/18 and 14/05/18			
First week discussion, reflection meeting, and 1 hour observation	Setting A, teacher 1			01/02/18: The Bear and the Piano										
	Setting B, Teacher 1			29/01/18: We're All Wonders										
	Setting B, Teacher 2			02/02/18: Broken Bird										
	Setting C, Teacher 1										30/04/18: Broken Bird			
	Setting C, Teacher 2											14/05/18: Broken Bird		
Second week story discussion, reflection meeting and 1 hour observation	Setting A, Teacher 2			01/02/18: Broken Bird										
	Setting B, Teacher 1			5/02/18: The Cloud										
	Setting B, Teacher 2			09/02/18: Something Else										
	Setting C, Teacher 1											14/05/18: The Cloud		
	Setting C, Teacher 2											21/05/18: The Cloud		
Third week story discussion, reflection meeting and 1 hour observation	Setting A, Teacher 1				15/02/18: Something Else									
	Setting B, Teacher 1				12/02/18: Broken bird									
	Setting B, Teacher 2					02/03/18: The Cloud								
	Setting C, Teacher 1											21/05/18: Something Else		
	Setting C, Teacher 2												04/06/18: The Koala Who Could	

Research Activities	Setting	Oct-Dec 2017	15-29 Jan 2018	29 Jan - 9th Feb	12-23 Feb (Half term 19-23 Feb)	26 Feb-2 Mar	5-16 Mar	19-30 Mar	2-13 Apr	16-27 Apr	30 Apr- 11 May	14-25 May	28 May-8 Jun	11-25 Jun
Fourth week story discussion, reflection meeting and 1 hour observation	Setting A, Teacher 2				22/02/18 Something Else									
	Setting B, Teacher 1					26/02/2018: Broken Bird								
	Setting B, Teacher 2						16/03/18: Invisible Boy							
	Setting C, Teacher 1												04/06/18: The Koala Who Could	
	Setting C, Teacher 2													11/06/18: Giraffes Can't Dance
Fifth week story discussion, reflecton meeting and 1 hour observation	Setting A, Teacher 1					01/03/18: The Cloud								
	Setting B, Teacher 1						05/03/18: Something Else							
	Setting B, Teacher 2											16/05/18: The Koala Who Could		
	Setting C, Teacher 1													11/06/18: Giraffes Can't Dance
	Setting C, Teacher 2													08/06/18: Something Else
Sixth week story discussion, reflection meeting and 1 hour observation	Setting A, Teacher 2						08/03/18: Mr Tiger Goes Wild							
	Setting B, Teacher 1						12/03/18: Invisible Boy							
	Setting B, Teacher 2											23/05/18: The Little Hummingbird		
	Setting C, Teacher 1													18/06/18: Perfectly Norman
	Setting C, Teacher 2													Teacher was sick, did not reschedule
Reflection discussion with children	Setting A						15/03/18							
	Setting B, Teacher 1						16/03/18							
	Setting B, Teacher 2													13/06/18
	Setting C, Teacher 1													25/06/18
	Setting C, Teacher 2													25/06/18
Interview with teachers	Setting A							21/03/18						
	Setting B, Teacher 1						19/03/18							
	Setting B, Teacher 2													14/06/18
	Setting C (both teachers)													26/6/18

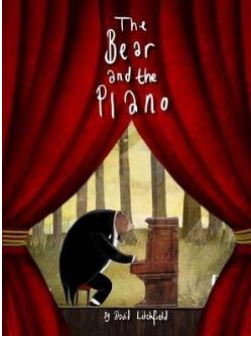| Colour Key			
Setting A, Teacher 1	Setting A, (activities with both teachers 1 and 2)	Setting B, Teacher 2	
Setting A, Teacher 2		Setting C, Teacher 1	Setting C (activities with both teachers 1 and 2)
Setting B, Teacher 1	Setting B (activities with both teachers 1 and 2)	Setting C, Teacher 2	

Appendix C: Summary of Books

Story/Author	Summary	Affordances for promoting social understanding
Broken Bird by Michael Broad	Broken Bird is born with only one wing but he refuses to believe he will never fly. His brothers tease him but he puts his best foot forward and sets off to explore the world from the ground. In the city he meets a soul mate - Scary Bird - and together they find more happiness than they could ever have imagined.	This story involves a complicated relationship between the main character and his two brothers, who are unkind to him. This creates opportunities for readers to try to understand both how Broken Bird feels and the possible reasons for the brothers' mean behaviour. Further, Broken Bird goes out on a journey to find a place where he belongs and ultimately finds love, which changes his perspective over the course of the story and creates an opportunity for readers to reflect on how Broken Bird's situation and experience of the world has changed.
Something Else, written by Kathryn Cave	Something Else (the name of the protagonist) is excluded from everything because he looks different. He does not play the same games, eat the same food or draw the same pictures. Then, one day Something turns up and wants to be friends. However, Something Else does not want to be friends with this creature as he believes that they are *not* the same and he refuses to eat sandwiches with 'Urgy stuff' in them. He sends Something away and then suddenly realizes that he acts like all the other people who always sent him away. Eventually Something Else and Something become best friends.	The main character, Something Else, wants to be included in the group and tries very hard to fit in, however the animals continue to dismiss him. This provides an opportunity for readers to think about why the animals exclude him and how it all makes Something Else feel. When Something shows up at Something Else's door, there is an opportunity for the readers to think about how Something Else is acting in a similar way to the animals at the beginning of the story. Readers can also speculate about Something's perspective, and how it might compare to Something Else's experience at the beginning of the story. Finally, readers can reflect on why Something Else ultimately changes his mind and decides to invite Something into his out in addition to how both characters feel at the end of the story.

The Cloud by Hannah Cummings	A little girl in art class is always by herself and never draws a picture. She also has a black cloud of scribbles over her head. Another child tries to make friends, but the little girl doesn't respond. The second child comes up with the solution that they should draw a picture together, which they do, although the first little girl can draw nothing but black scribbles just like her black cloud. When the rest of the class becomes involved, they all draw a giant picture together, and the little girl's black cloud finally disappears.	In this story, the main character comes to art class in a very gloomy mood, as depicted by the dark cloud above her head, which allows readers to speculate about why she might be in such a gloomy mood. One girl in the art class attempts to make the main character feel better but is initially unsuccessful, providing an opportunity for readers to speculate about why the main character doesn't respond positively to the girl and how both characters might be feeling about the situation. Finally, the main character feels better after she draws the cloud and the rest of the class joins in drawing together. This final part of the story provides a chance for readers to think about why the main character changes her mood and how the other students in the class are feeling about painting together with the girl.
The Koala Who Could, written by Rachel Bright, illustrated by Jim Field	Sometimes change comes along whether we like it or not ... but if you let it, change can be the making of you. Kevin isn't sure he likes change though, he prefers things the way they've always been, up there in his tree with his leaves where everything moves slowly. But perhaps Kevin needs to take a chance, otherwise he might miss out on all the fun.	The koala does not want to come down from the tree, even though his friends encourage and nag him. Readers can speculate about why the koala might not want to come down from the tree and how he feels about spending all of his time in the same place. They can also think about what the characters are thinking and feeling when the koala stubbornly stays in the tree. When the koala ultimately is forced to to come down from the tree, the story describes him as feeling young, happy and free. Readers can think about why he changed his mind and how he and his friends feel once he joins in their fun and games.
Giraffes Can't Dance Written by Giles Andreae, illustrated by Guy Parker-Rees	Gerald the giraffe wants nothing more than to dance. With crooked knees and thin legs, it's harder for a giraffe	When the animals laugh at Gerald's dancing, readers can hypothesise about how Gerald feels and why the characters are

GIRAFFES CAN'T DANCE №1 GILES ANDREAE GUY PARKER-REES	than you would think, and the animals in the jungle all make fun of Gerald when he tries. Gerald is finally able to dance to his own tune when he gets some encouraging words from an unlikely friend.	being so unfriendly. When Gerald leaves the dance party and meets the grasshopper, there is an opportunity for readers to think about what the grasshopper is thinking about Gerald. Finally, readers can speculate about Gerald gains confidence in his dancing at the end of the story and why the other animals change their attitude toward Gerald.
Perfectly Norman by Tom Percival PERFECTLY NORMAN TOM PERCIVAL BLOOMSBURY	Norman is very surprised to have wings suddenly - and he has the most fun *ever* trying them out high in the sky. But then he has to go in for dinner. What will his parents think? What will everyone else think? Norman feels the safest plan is to cover his wings with a big coat. But hiding the thing that makes you different proves tricky and upsetting. Can Norman ever truly be himself?	Norman has a lot of thoughts and feelings that are bottled up inside him. Readers can think about why Norman might want to hide his wings (and his feelings about them) from his parents and from the outside world. Further, readers can speculate about what Norman's parents are thinking and feeling when Norman appears to be sad but they don't know why. Finally, at the end of the story, readers can consider the possible reasons why Norman decides to let his wings show and how he feels when he decides to try flying and realises other children have wings and can fly just like him.
The Little Hummingbird By Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas THE Little Hummingbird MICHAEL NICOLL YAHGULANAAS	The book opens to a terrible fire burning in a forest. The largest and fiercest animals run away, with even Wolf howling that he is "so small" compared to the ravaging disaster. The animals gather at the edge of the fiery forest and watch the only animal brave enough to try and extinguish the fire: Little Hummingbird. Little Hummingbird may have been one of the smallest animals in the forest, but she was the	The hummingbird does not conform to the group, and instead makes a decision to be courageous and try to put out the forest fire. Readers can think about why the hummingbird decides to try to put out the fire when the other animals do nothing. They can also contemplate what the hummingbird is thinking and feeling about the other animals. Readers can also discuss the meaning of bravery, how it might feel to be brave, and whether the

	only one brave enough to help her friends in a seemingly helpless situation.	hummingbird feels brave. Finally, readers can discuss why the animals feel helpless and they can think about whether they think the hummingbird has a similar or different perspective of the situation.
Mr Tiger Goes Wild by Peter Brown	Mr. Tiger's bored with being proper. He's unhappy in his neat suit and top hat, exchanging banalities with his primly dressed friends. One day, he gets a wild idea: He drops to all fours, happily oblivious to the neighbours' stares. He grows increasingly wild, leaping and roaring about, and finally sheds his clothes altogether. Mr. Tiger is gloriously happy, but his friends sternly advise him to take his wildness to a more appropriate setting: the wilderness. Mr. Tiger happily obliges...but after some time he grows lonely. He ventures back to the city and happily discovers things have changed for the better in his absence. Finally, Mr. Tiger feels free to be himself.	Mr. Tiger is very grumpy at the start of the story. He doesn't like dressing up and is bored with having to act in a proper manner. Readers can discuss why Mr. Tiger feels unhappy and bored at the beginning of the story. When he decides to 'go wild', there is an opportunity for readers to think about how he feels and how the other characters feel about his behaviour. When the animals are rude to him, readers can speculate about he reasons for this rudeness and whether there might be any underlying or non-obvious causes of their behaviour. When the other animals in the city decide to follow him by also taking off their fancy clothes and letting loose, readers can discuss what might have changed the animals' minds and how the characters' feelings about the tiger might have changed over the course of the story.
The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig and illusgtrated by Patrice Barton	Brian is the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him in their group, game, or birthday party... until, that is, a new kid comes to class.

When Justin, the new boy, arrives, Brian is the first to make him feel welcome. And when Brian and Justin team up to work on a class project together, Brian finds a way to shine. | Readers can consider the reasons why Brian feels invisible, and they can discuss what feeling invisible means. When the new student shows up, readers can speculate about what Brian thinks of the new student and what the new student thinks about Brian. Brian is hopeful about becoming close friends with Justin, however he is disappointed when he finds out another student claims Justin as his partner for a school project. In this scene, readers can speculate about what both Justin and Brian are thinking, and why the other student is acting in an unfriendly way. Finally, at the end |

		of the story, readers can think about how all of the students feel when they decide to work together, and especially about how Brian's feelings may have changed since the beginning of the story.
The Bear and the Piano by David Litchfield	One day, a young bear stumbles upon something he has never seen before in the forest. As time passes, he teaches himself how to play the strange instrument, and eventually the beautiful sounds are heard by a father and son who are picnicking in the woods. The bear goes with them on an incredible journey to New York, where his piano playing makes him a huge star. He has fame, fortune and all the music in the world, but he misses the friends and family he has left behind.	At the start of the story, readers can explore the bear's experience of discovering the piano, including his understanding of the instrument and how he feels about learning how to play. Readers can also discussion his perception of the humans who he meets who hear him play and how he feels about going with them to the city to play for big crowds. When the bear is in the city, there is an opportunity for readers to explore his desires, including his conflicting desires to play beautiful music for large audiences and to be home with his family in the woods. Readers can also think about possible solutions to the bear's predicament. In the final scene, readers can think about how he feels to be home and how his family feels to hear him play again. They can explore whether he is completely happy to be home, or whether there might still be some lingering desire to be in the city.

Appendix D: Sample of early fieldnotes (taken in Setting C)

30 April 2018

<u>In-vivo field notes:</u>

In the reading corner, there is a shelf full of books and a comfy couch. A group of children were gathered, sitting on the couch or kneeling next to the shelf looking for books. There were two books with one book spread across both of their laps and they are pointing at the pictures and talking about the book together. There were two other boys hanging out in the corner but they more energetic and less interested in the books. They were wrestling with each other. One child seemed very happy to sit on his own and read.

The children were generally free to roam around and do as they please, and the adults participated with groups in what they are doing but it seems spontaneous and child-led. As I wandered around the setting, I noted that everyone seemed to be busy, and that teachers seem to walk a line between participating in the activities that children are engaged in while also keeping an eye over a larger group.

There were two rooms and a large outdoor area, lots of pretend play stations, a kitchen a bedroom, a hair salon. There are actually multiple cosy reading areas, one in each room, and a 'reading cave' outside. There seem to be clear groups that play together and then some lone rangers/wanderers. It didn't appear like there was any one student who spent

Two boys are playing in the kitchen, copying each other, playing with toy alligators, saying repeatedly, "Naughty, naughty, Crocodile!" Copying each other, then using the crodolise as pretend musical instruments. They kept repeating this phrase in a sing-song fashion, pointing at the crocodile, and looking at each other and laughing. The children told me that crocodile had bitten their fingers which is why it was naughty.

Outside the children are scattered around the yard, playing on tricycles and in the sand boxes, or sliding down the slide. One teacher smiled at me and we talk briefly about how cold it is. She told me that one of the children is having a hard time following the rules (i.e. staying within the 'play area' boundaries). She explains that this child is new, so she doesn't really know the rules yet. She said that other children are not new so they should know the rules. It's a very large yard and there aren't that many teachers outside with the children at any given time (no more than 3 teachers).

I observed this teacher and one other teacher on the playground providing quite a few ultimatums in their dealings with children (e.g. saying, 'if you keep doing that, then...'). Two children got pulled aside sternly for 'crawling and making noise, pretending to be cats'. The teacher explained earlier that they weren't supposed to crawl on the floor like that, and they should know better.

In general, I notice a lot of children fighting over toys, and the children consistently look up to the adults to help them. Some of the children looked to me in the same way a few times throughout my visit, even though they didn't really know me yet, presumably it is because I'm an adult. There is a lot of positive reinforcement, but the teachers also reprimand students, saying: "No thank you" when children are not following the rules or do something inappropriate.

At one point, it looked like two girls were going to get in a physical fight on the playground, and a teacher ran over to pull them apart. This teacher reflected to me that there are quite a few students in the centre with behavioural difficulties and problems with aggression, which made it especially hard when there was a staff shortage, like today.

Right before lunchtime, a group of about 15 children played an activity in which there were various objects placed in cups and they took turns shaking the cups to listen to the sounds that the different materials make. This activity was led by a new teacher. She was introduced to the children in this lesson by another teacher who was also facilitating the lesson. Within this circle, she told children to 'wiggle their thumb' in order to indicate that they wanted to speak. The teachers only chose students to speak who wiggled their thumbs quietly.

It felt like the students were really enjoying the activity, and it also seemed to be enjoyable for the teachers. For me it felt like a nice reprieve from the noisiness and chaos of the other activities.

In the staff room, I sat and ate lunch with some of the teachers. We are sitting along the walls in a big room that is also a kitchen. There was a feeling of comradery and the teachers seem to really know each other well. They were very comfortable in chatting and talking about things outside of school. They seemed to know what's going on in each other's lives. For example, one student was talking about how her daughter was preparing for A levels and that she was stressed for her.

Phoebe joined in. She was out during the morning picketing, trying to gain support for the save nurseries campaign. There are posters on the walls talking about the ongoing strikes and the fight to preserve the Cambridge nurseries, there are news articles about these strikes and about the teacher's union in general. Phoebe expressed how worried she was about the nursery having to close in about a years' time if their funding gets cut.

She said they stopped in the McDonalds, and she spoke about how futuristic and new age it is, and how it was quite the shock for her. She explained how there is no human-human interaction, and how a restaurant that was traditionally build for family dinners is now a place where you order from a screen and children sit on their iPads while they eat.

Reflections after the visit:

There was sometimes a feeling that things were a bit manic/hectic which perhaps made the staff a little bit sterner at times. I felt a bit of frustration in the air, either with the children, or lack of staff, or obstacles. However, during this visit, I generally felt a welcoming and positive vibe. It seems like the teachers are passionate about their jobs and there is a real sense of comradery among the staff.

I was really interested to see how many cosy reading areas there were and how much the children seemed to take advantage of them. It seems like stories are a big part of the setting, however I didn't observe any coordinated 'story time' activities within the classroom. This might be because the teachers have designated time with their 'key children' and carry out more directed activities during this time.

Towards the end of this visit, I started to see how difficulties with staff shortages and looming funding cuts may be on teachers' minds, even more than they let on. While I felt like this might have influenced how they engaged with children throughout the school day, the teachers did not seem distracted or disengaged.

I also noticed that the teachers all adhered to a similar behaviour management style of intervening whenever there was a conflict between students. It seemed that bevaviour management might be a heightened issue at this centre, based on my conversations with one of the teachers. It seemed like the two boys saying 'naughty naughty crocodile' were mimicking the tone of voice of some of the teachers when they reprimand children, however this is pure speculation, and I also know that the teachers don't tend to use that kind of language to label children. I have the sense that I do not yet know enough about the behaviour management policies or school ethos is like yet, and it makes me think I need to be careful in overinterpreting these observations or making connections that aren't valid.

Appendix E: Sample of ongoing fieldnotes (taken in Setting B with Teacher 2, Faye)

9 Feb 2018

<u>In-vivo fieldnotes:</u>

I walked in as the children were sitting on the carpet on their numbers and Faye was reviewing the plans for the day and the classroom housekeeping.

She stopped in the middle of a sentence to tell children to 'sit on their bottoms'. They seem restless. She asks a lot of questions that have a clear answer, beginning to sound out the word to give the children a hint at the answer. For example, they are making honey sandwiches today and she asks, "What is the first thing we need for our honey sandwiches? B-b-b- …" and all of the children answer in a disjointed chorus, "Bread!" and she responses, "Yes, that's right!". The children appear to be accustomed to this format of question, answer, feedback and they seem to expect it. I wonder if it's a group management technique to keep the children's attention.

The two designated helpers for the day were 'the twins' as Faye refers to them. She explains that it's their last day and that they have been kind enough to buy every child in the class a new book. She shows the class the bag of books and asks, what do we say to the twins today? And everyone looks over and calls out 'Thank you", again in a chorus-style response.

During 'busy learning', there was a group of boys playing in the corner with safari animals. When I walked over, Darrin was explaining to the group that there were two teams, the good vs. the evil. When Hal gets 'assigned' to the evil team, he says, "No, I don't want to be evil!". Darrin response by saying that they're not in the same family but they are neighbours, and Hal acquiesces.`

One boy walks up to me from the other side of the room and complains that Estelle K is 'not being kind' in their group. I walked over to the 'sunflower station', in which there was a pile cut-up construction paper and glue to make paper sunflowers. All of the students tried to tell me all at once what was happening. I got the impression that they were starting to see me as an authority figure. I asked them to speak one at a time, and one child explained Estelle swore and yelled at them and took more of the pedals than the rest of them. She sat there listening and then yelled, "Just make more!" She started ripping up the paper sloppily, saying "see!" but the pedals were not as nice as the ones that Faye had previously cut up for the activity

Faye rang a bell, which indicated that it was time to clean up and sit down at the carpet. In a way, I felt like this was a classic case of being 'saved by the bell' as I did not feel like I knew how to best respond to the situation with Estelle. Once they were all sitting at the carpet, Faye moved to the front of the classroom and said she had a slip from recess. A child had hit his

friend in the face and there was a class discussion about why he did that and the punishment was being alone in another classroom for 10 minutes. After this, there was a class-wide meditation, which happens most days, in which the students sat cross-legged on the carpet with their eyes closed listening to calming music. It is also a competition to see who can sit most quietly. The person that Faye chooses gets to tell a story about their meditation.

Then Faye starts to describe the plan for the afternoon, explaining that there will be different groups of activities. She first calls out the children that will be in the reading group for my project, and a few of them say "Yay!". It seems to be an exciting thing to be a part of this group, like the children proud of it.

Reflections with teacher

We chat about how difficult it is to remember to ask questions while managing the group. She says she wonders if having the children call out is the best thing, because Hal dominates the conversation. I say that I think it's a good idea to try out different strategies to see how they go with the group. I also add that I think that while Hal tends to dominate the conversation, he also gets the children thinking about something they might not have otherwise considered. Faye agreed but pointed out that the children tend to agree/repeat back with whatever Hal says.

She said that she thinks Hal says things just to sound smart, and it becomes difficult because all of the other children just agree with him, and she thinks they aren't really thinking for themselves. I said this was a challenge that we should continue to brainstorm or think about. How does the teacher get the children to speak up, say what's on their mind instead of just agreeing? Maybe make more of a culture that encourages respectful disagreeing? Where it's valued to have your own idea.

We talked about some of my observations in the classroom from earlier that day. She reflected that she often finds the children playing games which incorporate concepts of good vs. evil. She said that it was something that concerned here, especially the violent nature of this play, and that some of the parents had brought up a concern about this in passing.

Reflections after the visit:

Faye asks a lot of 'what do you think' questions, which doesn't prompt a lot of ideas or suggestions from students. I wonder if this question is not specific enough.

I wonder if asking questions around what changed in the story (e.g. 'Why do you think he changed his mind?') could have prompted more thinking about the characters thoughts/beliefs and what factors might have changed their perspectives.

At the end of the story, Faye asked, 'Can we be friends with everyone?' and everyone but Darrin said 'yes'. Darrin said he would not be friends with something else. Faye kept trying to explore this further, asking the other children what they thought of that, but no one picked up the lead. She was concerned about this.

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I felt like there may have been an opportunity for discussion about how we might not have to be friends with everyone but that we can be kind to everyone. On the other hand, I find these discussions about concepts such as kindness or friendship to be limited. Some of the children seem to tout the idea that they should be friends with everyone, but in practice it's much more complicated than that. Patricia also emphasises this topic of kindness in a similar way. I wonder if it has something to do with the school culture. It seems the daily assemblies are a tradition that comes from its history of being a parish school. There is a lot of emphasis on exploring values like perseverance, assertiveness, kindness in a very generic sense.

There is also an emphasis on 'telling the teacher' (e.g. that there is a person who maintains the classroom order). I've noticed with how they ask me, teachers or aids to intervene when there is a conflict. I found it quite difficult today when the students came up to me to tell me about how Estelle was acting. My instinct was to tell Estelle that she needed to share with everyone, but I also strongly felt like they needed to work through the situation themselves. I can't imagine how difficult it is to manage a class where these kinds of situations probably come up multiple times in a day. I think these kinds of experiences are important for me to get a sense of how tricky it is to support children to manage their relationships with peers on their own while also wanting to reinforce certain appropriate ways of behaving so that activities run smoothly.

In general, I find it so interesting how many times I've observed children engaging in play around concepts of good and evil, not just in this setting but in the others as well. It makes me wonder whether there is some necessary psychological utility for this type of play, and whether it can be found across different cultures. My overarching feeling at the moment is children pick up on these concepts from movies and tv shows, and that there is an overarching tendency, at least in Western culture, to dichotomise behaviour in this way. I think I should look more into the research around the cross-cultural variation in children's concepts of good and evil.

Appendix F: Example of initial codes and annotations from stages 1-3 of Thematic Analysis

(completed for Setting A)

State 1: Example of initial annotations of dialogue

Transcripts		Annotations
Teacher	Should we talk about our bear? How do you think our bear is feeling to be back home playing his piano?	It's interesting how the children answer in a chorus-like fashion when the teacher asks questions about how the character is feeling. Happiness seems to be an emotion the children talk about a lot. They've mentioned previously that happiness can be identified based on a smile, and it's interesting that the teacher also seems to reinforce this notion here.
Ingrid	Happy	
Scarlett	Happy	
Oliver	Happy	
Andrea	I think he is so happy to be back home. Look at his huge smile on his face.	
Alfred	He put some, I can see some lights.	
Andrea	Lights. So they made a famous place for their bear in the forest. Look. There you go, and they're walking off together hand in hand in the forest.	
Ingrid	I think that's his dad. I think that's his baby now.	The children demonstrate an expectation that moms are shorter than dads. At an earlier part of this discussion, they said that all daddies have beards. It seems these comments indicate that there are ideas about gender roles, specifically related to the gender roles of parents. It is especially interesting that one of children does in fact seem to have parents that don't fit these expectations (i.e. that a mom is always shorter than a dad) but this doesn't seem to change their minds.
Andrea	What makes you think that Ingrid?	
Ingrid	Because he's already big.	
Andrea	Because he's so big, that makes him a daddy, now?	
Alfred	That's the dad and that's the mom.	
Andrea	Do we think this is our bear?	
Ingrid	The daddy and the mommy.	
Scarlett	This is the son and this is the dad.	
Andrea	So is the bear that plays the piano?	
Allison	No.	
Andrea	No this is two different bears?	
Allison	That's the daddy and that's the mommy.	
Andrea	Is that because she's smaller??	
Allison	She's a bit smaller, this one's big.	
Andrea	So do mummies have to be smaller than daddies?	
Scarlett	Yes	
Andrea	So you can't have a really tall mummy and a short little daddy?	
Scarlett	No	

Stage 2: Creating annotations about the emerging structure of the codes and my ongoing thinking around overarching themes

Emerging codes	Annotations about codes
1 Expressing emotions	I'm not sure this is the right title of the theme, as it is also about how children have shared experiences related to certain emotions, maybe it needs to include this somehow.
2 Facial expressions are linked to emotions	Teachers encourage the students to guess the final word to describe how the characters are feeling, and they often answer 'happy' in unison. They explain that smiling or laughing is a way to make yourself feel happy if you're feeling sad. There are many other references to how emotions are physically displayed by someone's facial or bodily expressions. They also say that you can tell someone is feeling happy by whether or not they're smiling, although this become a topic of debate in the third story discussion. There is a general sense that being unhappy is not desirable and that someone should do things to make themselves feel better.
2 Happiness	
3 Laughing makes you happy	
3 Smiling makes you happy	
3 Not wanting to stay unhappy	
3 Beauty: 'Only beautiful people smile'	Scarlett says that only beautiful people smile (third discussion). This idea of 'beauty' comes up in relation to being happy in the first discussion as well when Allison talks about how making beautiful music makes someone happy. I'm not sure if 'beauty' is the same in both of these cases, but in general it seems like the children think 'beautiful' has a happy connotation.
2 Scary things	The children talk briefly about dangerous things like twisters, ghosts, monsters in the first discussion. They kind of insinuate the fear associated with this, but they don't explicitly describe being afraid.
1 The necessity of kindness: You have to be kind	This code might not only be primarily about kindness, as the children seem to emphasis the trait labels over their explanations of why the characters should be considered bad. I'll need to think about whether the overarching theme should be about kindness or about traits.
2 Bad People	
3 Bad people should be punished	This comes up again and again. The idea of going to prison is really strong. There is an emphasis on being 'sent' to prison but no elaboration on why or who might do the sending.
3 Nastiness, naughtiness, baddies	They also use the word 'burglars' insinuating the idea of being a criminal
3 Nasty people don't smile	This is reconsidered by Scarlett at the end of third story discussion
3 Only beautiful people smile	Reference to beauty again, as in theme around emotions
1 Gender Roles	Mummies are smaller than daddies, dads are big and wear beards
2 Dads and mommies can be identified based on specific features	

Stage 3: Final editing/restructuring and choosing 1-2 normative frames to include in Discourse Analysis

Emerging codes	Annotations about codes
1 Expressing emotions	The topic of 'shyness' needs to be included as a subcode somewhere but not sure if this was considered a trait (to be placed in a high-level code about traits more generally) or an emotion by the children. It reminded me of the discussion with Scarlett when Andrea reminded her that she felt nervous about what to draw during art time. This makes me think 'shy' is similar to 'nervous' and indicates a temporary state. This also makes me think that topics of emotions and traits are not so clearly distinct and that they should both be included in the subsequent analysis.
2 Facial expressions are linked to emotions	
2 Happiness	
3 Laughing makes you happy	
3 Smiling makes you happy	
3 Not wanting to stay unhappy	
3 Beauty: 'Only beautiful people smile'	
2 Scary things	
1 The necessity of kindness: You have to be kind	'Kindness' doesn't really fit this theme, as the children did not really get into what it means to be kind to someone else. Instead, they described what it meant to be 'not nice' or 'rude' and to exclude others, and they emphasised labelling the characters as such. The students did not tend to point out when someone was being kind in the story, and they felt they were often brought this into the discussion. The only time 'kindness' really came up was when Ingrid said she decided to be nice to a friend who wasn't playing with her. I think the theme should reflect more closely what the children actually say (instead of extrapolating or rephrasing the topic in a broad way). It should be something around 'negative traits'.
2 Bad People	
3 Bad people should be punished	
3 Nastiness, naughtiness, baddies	
3 Nasty people don't smile	
3 Only beautiful people smile	
1 Gender Roles	While this topic of gender roles could be coded as a normative frame, I don't think it comes up at any point in the rest of the discussions. Also, the children don't really make any dispositional judgments based on these ideas.
2 Dads and mommies can be identified based on specific features	

Appendix G: Example of retroductive and abductive reflections
(taken from Setting C, Teacher 1, Phoebe)

Emerging themes:

Level	Theme	Examples/annotations
1	Belonging	
2	Being all on your own	
3	Loneliness	Not having any friends, not being liked, e.g. 'Loneliness means nobody likes you.'
3	Sadness	It's sad to not have any friends, to not belong, to be different
2	Family	Looking the same, physical similarities Protects you from being 'all alone'
3	Fear of losing family	The children predict that the parents in the story might 'pass away'

Example of retroductive/abductive reflections about emerging themes:

My conversation with Phoebe (14 May 2018) about the personal, social, and emotional (PSE) curriculum seems particularly relevant to the emerging themes, especially around the topic of 'being all on your own'. She explained to me that many of them have to work two jobs and leave their children at the centre for 10 hours a day. She said that even though many of the children were away from their parents for so much of the day, they still seemed to have secure relationships with their parents, even though they might not spend a lot of time with them, especially throughout the week. The children expressed joy in being with and getting cuddles with their parents, which seems to be something they highly value and look forward to.

We also reflected how the children appeared to be initiating discussions about death, especially about family members. Phoebe explained that one child had an aunt that passed away recently, and he had been bringing up the topic of death in conversations at school. The topic of death was likely related to this one child's experience and so I think the code 'fear of losing family' should be subsumed under a different code.

In the story discussions, the children explained that parents have to hug you before saying goodbye at school 'so that they know you're there' and later expressed the belief that your parents help you to make friends. These ideas seemed confusing to me at first, but after reflecting on this discussion with Phoebe, I started to think about the notion of 'secure attachment' and how the children seemed to be describing the importance of having parents that are looking out for you and that having this secure base can make you feel happy and secure at school to then be sociable and make friends. While the children appeared to express sadness around having to say goodbye when their parents drop them off at school, they didn't seem to show any sense of anxiety or fear that they wouldn't come back. Perhaps the code of 'fear of losing family' would be better represented as 'family as being a secure base'.

I decided to conduct a brief search of literature around children's early emotional attachment

and fear of losing parents. I already had a sense of some of the literature and theories around the importance of parent emotion socialization in supporting children's emotion regulation. That is, I knew about some of the work around early attachment and that parents' supportive responses to children's emotional displays (e.g.by validating, providing comfort, or helping children work through the emotional difficulty) is important for children's emotion regulation. I read a meta-analysis (Cooke et al., 2016) about secure attachment which found a 'robust' relationship between early security of attachment and emotion understanding. While It seemed like while some of these children have to be away from their parents for long periods of time, they are confident that their parents love them and are thinking about them. Some of these same children demonstrate an acute sensitivity toward the characters' experiences of being 'all alone' and how sometimes someone just needs 'a cuddle and a kiss' which to me demonstrates an impressive level of emotion understanding. While I can't say anything about the causal relationship between their home environments and their emotion understanding, I can at least speculate that there is potentially some correlation. Talking about these topics of loneliness and death in the context of a story which presents relatable characters as having relevant experiences might also support them to be feel more comfortable to discuss these emotions by talking them through the lens of the characters.

Appendix H: Sample of early stage of Sociocultural Discourse Analysis (SDA)

Building a commentary and identifying headings

Excerpt 3: Why isn't he happy in his own home?

1	Teacher	So do we think our piano playing bear is happy at the moment in the city?
2	Scarlett	But why isn't he happy to be in his own home?
3	Teacher	Hm, why do you think it is that he's not happy in his own home? What did
4		he wanted to do?
5	Allison	To do music.
6	Teacher	He wanted to do music.
7	Teacher	But did he do music in his own home?
8	Allison	(Shakes head *no*) Uh uh.
9	Scarlett	(Shakes head *yes*) Uh huh.
10	Teacher	You think he did, and you don't? Allison, why do you not think that he was
11		making music in his own home?
12	Allison	He was making a bit of music.

Commentary:

Andrea uses the pronoun 'we' which reinforces a sense of collectivity, while also indicating that she herself group's investigation. Scarlett's question, seems to demonstrate an expectation that happiness would be linked to certain settings (e.g. home). This reminds me of the theme on 'community' which was introduced during my first observation (17/01/19), in which they all brought in pictures of their homes and community landmarks and they put put the pictures up on the wall next to children's portraits in an artistic display. They created a pretend play 'fort' in the corner modelled after a kitchen and living room of a home. Emma described the unit as helping the children to 'locate their place in the world'. There seems to be strong links between the home and centre, as observed when I went to their summer family day. These observations reinforce the idea that 'home' is likely something they agree is associated with happiness, and so it is foreign to them to think of someone who wants to leave home. Scarlett's comment also acknowledges that the bear's emotions might not be as straightforward to explain as searching the illustration for a clue, as they had done previously. In this way, she positions herself as questioning the previously held assumptions about happiness being an emotion that is easy to link to specific experiences that they agree elicit happiness, which leads the other students to clarify the bear's motivation for the leaving home. This indicates a moment in which there is a breakdown in meaning (i.e. their assumptions are being brought into the light) and a need for the group to repair this breakdown in order to move forward by considering the 'nuance' of how someone might experience something differently than they might experience it. This idea of 'exploring nuance' (i.e. of emotional experiences) might be somehow incorporated into a heading to describe this initial change in the frame.

Appendix I: Example of ratings and decisions about choosing to include/exclude specific excerpts of dialogue in SDA

In this case, both of these excerpts related to the frame of weirdness, however I chose to include the first excerpt in the discourse analysis as opposed to the second episode based on the relevance to the frame (criteria 1) and the level of interaction between students (criteria 2).

Frame: Weirdness

1	Teacher	'On a windy hill alone with nothing to be friends with lived something else.'
2	Nadia	(Snickering)
3	Allen	His name is something else?
4	Teacher	Something else?
5	Hugo	Something Else?
	Teacher	Something Else
6	Nadia	That is really weird.
7	Teacher	Why is that a weird name?
8	Nadia	Something else isn't a name
9	Teacher	It isn't a name.
10	Allen	His name is Something Else so nobody plays with him.

Relevance to initial frame: 5 (direct reference to the term 'weird')
Level of interaction between students: 4 (*Nadia, Hugo, and Allen building on each other's ideas*)
Stance taking: 4 (*Nadia and Hugo align with each other's evaluation of the animal as weird or an outside*`)
Overall rating: 4.33

Darrin	And also, look, the bird's the same as him.
Teacher	The bird's the same as him? What do you think Aria? Is the bird the same as him?
Darrin	It's the same colour.
Teacher	Oh. You think the bird is the same color as him? What do you think, Nadia? Is the bird the same as him?
Nadia	Yes, it's the same color.
Teacher	Oh it's the same colour. what do you think, you two, Elliot and Darrin, is the bird the same as Something Else?
Nadia	Yeah.
Hugo	It's the same colour.
Allen	It's the same colour
Teacher	But are they the same animal?
Allen	No. He's a monkey
Teacher	He's a monkey, is he?
Allen	He might be a monkey or a…
Teacher	Let's keep going. 'Something Else did his best to be like the others…. As for his packed lunches…'
Allen	That's disgusting.

Relevance to initial frame: 4 (They talk about looking the same which is relevant to the frame of weirdness but does not mention the term and seems tangential (being the 'same' indicates a norm but

does not specify how weirdness relates to normality. That's disgusting appears to be more directly relevant to the frame of weirdness

Level of interaction between students: 3 (many students contributing and repeating each other, however there is little building on each other's ideas)

Stance taking: 4 (The children are positioning themselves in alignment around the way in which the character looks similar to the other animals, Allen takes a clear stance about the animal being 'disgusting')

<mark>Overall rating:</mark> 3.66

Appendix J: Example of 'dialogic moves' codes assigned to an excerpt with annotations

					Annotations
Coding Density	PT	CH	CA		

Teacher:
Do you just think these are not the right sort of people to be friends with for him?

IB — Closed question, asking the students to build on the previously mentioned by Allison that the animals are bad

Ingrid:
No.

Teacher:
Why not?

IRE — Open-ended question which prompts the student to reason further about a previous idea (e.g. that the characters are 'bad', that they aren't the right sort of people

Ingrid:
You need more people than that

Teacher:
You need more people in the group?

Alfred:
Maybe he needs to have, maybe he said you're too high maybe he said you're too tall, and you have to just shoot even more and you have to grow big like us and play.

Teacher:
Hmm, Scarlett what do you think, you had your hand up, what do you think?

Asking 'what do you think' - should this be coded as IRE? It is general, does not refer to any one idea (i.e. to extend reasoning). I think IRE is the most relevant code

Scarlett:
Maybe the other friends didn't know that.

Teacher:
Maybe, that's a very good point, maybe they aren't looking at how small he is. Do you think that's what's happened?

R — She first presents her own reasoning, but the whole thing is part of a move which invitesScarlett to build in a particular way on her idea that the animals were unaware of the character's situation. The closed question makes it IB (not IRE)

Scarlett:
[Nods head yes]

Francis:
Yeah

Teacher:
Yeah? Hmm, so we think he's made his new friends and are they all the same height Alfred?

She first presents her own reasoning, but she turns it into a question to invite Alfred to build on his earlier idea about the characters being different heights - asks a yes/no question so it's IB (not IRE)

Scarlett:
Um, no.

Teacher:
No, they're not.

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Appendix K Example of two stages of thematic analysis of the teachers' reflections on the project

(in addition to retroductive reflection annotations)

Stage 1: Initial reflections

The first thing that pops out to me as I read through the transcripts is that all of the teachers talked about how they had difficulty managing the group. They expressed that there are students who are really engaged and students that are not. They also expressed that there are varying expressive language abilities which means that some students end up talking and dominating the conversation, which makes it hard for teachers to balance the participation. The teachers mentioned individual students that surprised them with their engagement and ideas. There was a sense that giving the students the space to talk in a smaller group might have been extra beneficial for some students who have a harder time in larger groups.

Some of the teachers expressed a sense of frustration around how difficult it can be to help the children extend and build their ideas, especially when they are so focused on managing the group. However, other teachers seemed more focused on how the project enabled them to just sit with the children, and that they felt they were reminded of how important this simple act of tuning in with the children is. This makes me think that maybe the focus of the project evolved differently for different teachers, and that by the end there was a feeling that each teacher or pair of teachers had a key take-away. It may have been that the teachers' impressions were influenced by their most recent discussions. For example, there seemed to be a really important shift in the children's thinking in the last two story discussions, which Faye and I had reflected on in quite a lot of detail in our reflection meetings. On the other hand, Ellie and Andrea felt like the children were demonstrating more cooperation and were managing their emotions better outside of the classroom, which seemed to be more of a salient change for them.

I find it really interesting that they all seemed to focus in on specific topics that came up in the discussions, and that these topics had some overlaps but also differences. Some of the teachers emphasised that they liked being able to explore topics such as difference and labelling, and that they were surprised at how quick the children were to label the characters or other students. Other teachers homed in on the topic of friendship and exclusion, describing how they felt these were really relevant topics in the classroom that students seemed to be struggling with. In general, it seems like the relevance of certain topics to daily classroom life seems to be the key factor in how teachers prioritized certain topics.

It seems like the teachers had positive experiences in the project, and that they found meaning in the activities, but in different ways. They all mentioned how they felt the stories really contributed to the project's success, and that they learned about what stories they did and did not like. Andrea and Ellie were especially eager to tell me about some of the observations they had made in the last weeks about the children dealing with conflict in more communicative ways. It was interesting that they acknowledged that there were many different components to the project, one of which was that it forced a change in structure of the day and it enabled them

to spend more time talking and listening with students. They also said they found it valuable to have me watching their teaching and providing feedback, and that they don't often get the experience to engage in this kind of reflective feedback. My impression is that having that extra little bit of support and of getting to take the time to really sit and reflect on their practice may have been the most valuable par for teachers.

<u>Stage 2</u>

I coded all relevant extracts into categories and sub-categories, iteratively refining codes when new data suggested a different meaning or overarching topic, while creating annotations about the emerging structure of the codes and my ongoing thinking around overarching themes (referred to as stage 2).

Initial codes	Annotations
1 Student engagement	
Giving students space to talk in small groups	The teachers talked about how some students began talking and contributing more to the story discussions in the last few weeks, speculating that these children became more familiar and comfortable with the activity context. Being 'pleasantly surprised' seems to capture the essence of what teachers were saying, so I think this theme needs to incorporate this sentiment more explicitly. Also, the term 'behaviour management' doesn't come up in each interview. Instead, the teachers talk about more general difficulties related to student engagement in the material.
Balancing participation is difficult	
Behaviour management becomes the priority	
Children generalising learning gains to other settings	I'm not sure if this is so much about children's 'learning gains' as it is about ways in which the project supported a more dialogic orientation, both among students and teachers. Maybe there should be two subcodes here, one about the children being better able to communicate with one another outside of the discussions, and one about teachers adopting new ways of teaching (e.g.more dialogic ways of teaching)
Priorities based on daily classroom difficulties	The teachers picked specific topics that they said they were most interested in pursuing further. While these seemed to be based on classroom difficulties, this wasn't the case across the board. Maybe this code needs to capture the element of how teachers aligned with specific topics.
Story choice is key	The teachers reflected on story selection, but they also talked about what they would like to

	do in the future (e.g. what books they would like to introduce and how they would like to bring in more children, etc.). This theme should reflect teachers ideas about future adaptations.
Having time for reflection and feedback could be beneficial for multiple areas of the curriculum	This code seems to relate to teachers' professional development, in terms of how benefits from the project seemed to extend to other areas.

Example of retroductive/abductive reflections about emerging codes:

Teachers frequently reflected on specific students' engagement throughout the whole project. They seemed to take an interest in some students who were not as engaged in the discussions as they wanted them to be. For example, Phoebe reflected previously about how Ray seemed to be listening and engaged but that he often contributed in ways that seemed off-topic. She said he seemed to be 'processing' what the other children were saying but that it sometimes took longer for him to find the right words to express himself. Erin said she had expected Janine to say more, as she really loves stories and reading in general, but that she may need more 1-1 attention to feel comfortable sharing her ideas. Further, Patricia talked about how she felt like Hal was really insightful and said a lot in the discussions, and that she even told his parents how clever she thinks he is. Overall, I had the sense that the teachers really knew the children, they knew their parents and their histories, and they were personally invested in supporting these students. In seeing this topic come up again in the interviews, it feels like it should come to the fore of one of the themes. Maybe it should be presented somewhere under 'student engagement' and should include some reference to teachers' reflections on specific students.

I found an area of research that has looked at the specific relationship between teachers' beliefs about students and their level of engagement in continuing professional development (CPD) activities, and has found that teachers' orientation to students is the primary factor that supports teacher engagement in CPD (de Vries, van de Grift, and Jansen, 2014). Student orientation seems to be the most important factor in predicting teacher engagement (de Vries, van de Grift, and Jansen, 2013). However, the more a teacher is both student-oriented and subject matter-oriented, the higher his or her participation in CPD.