

UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

Critical Considerations of Teacher Identity, Performativity and 'Perform-ability' and their Significance for Initial
Teacher Education

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Doctor of Education

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MPhil/PhD THESES



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Abstract:

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes have traditionally focussed more on knowledge, skills and competencies, than on areas such as identity formation. This thesis argues that developing teacher identity is integral for teacher agency and integrity and that ITE providers should ensure time is given to develop these areas with students. The prevalent neoliberal performative focus in education is argued to have a debilitating impact on teachers and teacher identity, impacting their wellbeing and ability to retain their integrity as professionals. This study suggests that critical engagement in ITE around political, neoliberal influences in education, in tandem with engagement with approaches to education, such as Critical Pedagogy and Philosophy for Children (P4C), might encourage a resilience and even resistance to current performative narratives. This thesis considers how the writings of Paulo Freire (1994, 1996, 1998) combined with Critical P4C (Funston, 2017), could provide a message of possibility and hope to counter the neoliberal agenda's normalising narrative of accountability and performability for schools, teachers and ITE. Participants were undergraduate Primary Education students in England who were in the final year of their programme. The research adopts a qualitative approach using Communities of Enquiry (CoE) and a Focus Group and explores the use of a CoE as an emerging area of study in the context of research methods. In addition, the study brings contributions to the exploration of teacher identity of ITE students in a performative culture, considering the impact that engaging in alternative pedagogies might bring to the retention and wellbeing of new teachers.

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No portion of the work referred to in the Thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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Two Kinds of Intelligence

There are two kinds of intelligence: one acquired,
as a child in school memorizes facts and concepts
from books and from what the teacher says,
collecting information from the traditional sciences
as well as from the new sciences.
With such intelligence you rise in the world.
You get ranked ahead or behind others
in regard to your competence in retaining
information. You stroll with this intelligence
in and out of fields of knowledge, getting always more
marks on your preserving tablets.
There is another kind of tablet, one
already completed and preserved inside you.
A spring overflowing its springbox. A freshness
in the center of the chest. This other intelligence
does not turn yellow or stagnate. It's fluid,
and it doesn't move from outside to inside
through conduits of plumbing-learning.
This second knowing is a fountainhead
from within you, moving out.

Rumi

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Key words: neoliberal, performative, teacher identity, Initial Teacher Education, Freire, Critical Pedagogy, Philosophy for Children, Community of Enquiry, ITE, ITT, P4C

List of Contents

Declaration.....	6
Copyright Statement.....	6
Acknowledgements.....	1
Abstract.....	2
Terminology	6
List of Tables	8
List of Figures	8
Chapter One: Introduction.....	9
Introduction	9
Research Context	9
Rationale for Study	10
Research Aims and Objectives	11
Research Questions	12
Thesis Structure	12
Thesis Significance	13
Chapter Two: Problems: Policies, Themes and Concepts.....	14
Introduction	14
Initial Teacher Education: A Brief History	14
Neoliberalism in education	17
Performativity in Education	19
The ‘Banking Model’ of Education.....	22
Impact on Teachers.....	24
Teacher Identity	30
Student Teacher Identity	34
Dissonance between ITE and School	36
Wellbeing	39
Chapter Summary	42
Chapter Three: Possible solutions: Theories and Pedagogies	44
Introduction	44
Freirean Critical Pedagogy as a theoretical lens	44
Oppression	45
Power structures in dialogue	46
Politics and Critical Pedagogy	49
Social Transformation	52
Love, Hope & Neoliberalism	54

Problem Posing Education in Praxis.....	55
Philosophy for Children (P4C)	58
Wellbeing and P4C	62
P4C and ITE	63
Critical P4C: A way forward?.....	65
Chapter Summary	68
Chapter Four: Methodology, Methods & Data Analysis: Developing an Ethical Critical Research approach	69
Introduction	69
Research Aims.....	70
Research Questions	70
My stance as a Critical Researcher	70
Critical Research.....	71
Participatory Research	73
Positionality and Reflexivity.....	73
The Ethical Critical Researcher.....	74
Sample.....	79
Methods.....	82
The Community of Enquiry as a research method	83
Focus Groups.....	85
Focus Groups and Communities of Enquiry: Similarities and Differences.....	88
Data Collection.....	89
Data Analysis: An Iterative Process/Journey	96
Presenting the Findings.....	101
Analysing data from groups	102
Presenting group data.....	104
Chapter Summary	104
Chapter Five: Findings, Analysis and Discussion	107
Introduction	107
Teachers as Oppressed Beings.....	108
Teachers as Agentic and Political Beings	120
Teachers as Agentic Beings	120
Teachers as Political Beings	127
Teachers as Relational and Hope-full Beings	135
Teachers as Relational Beings	135
Teachers as Hope-full Beings	141

Golden Threads.....	148
Chapter Summary	151
Chapter Six: Conclusion: Dreaming of Utopia.....	152
Introduction	152
Conclusions from research.....	152
Contribution to Knowledge and Recommendations for Practice	156
Limitations of study	161
Implications for future research	162
Chapter Summary	163
Postscript	164
References	167
Appendices.....	181
Appendix 1 Ethics form with Participant Information and Consent Form	181
Appendix 2 Stimuli posters	193
Appendix 3 Transcripts	193
Appendix 4 NVivo.....	227
Appendix 5 Detailed Data Analysis Process	228
Appendix 6 Phase 1 data familiarisation.....	237
Appendix 7 Phase 1 Field Notes.....	238
Appendix 8 Phase 1 Emerging codes	238
Appendix 9 Phase 2 Final Codes	240
Appendix 10 Word Clouds and Word Frequencies.....	241

Terminology

In considering the terminology used in this thesis, choices were balanced between popular usage or common practice, as well as the potential underlying message that the terms carried. Clarification of key terms or acronyms that are used throughout this thesis is provided here.

Initial Teacher Education and Student Teachers

A variety of terms are used to signify the stage of education that results in qualification as a primary or secondary teacher. In England, Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) dominate. Government/DFE publications typically use ITT (e.g. DFE, 2019). My positioning supports the use of ITE, with its implied discourse around education rather than training, and will be the term used in this thesis to cover all pre-service education.

Similarly, prospective teachers in the UK are identified as teacher trainees or student teachers I will be using the latter as that is the designation used at my institution. At times I discuss concerns that are pertinent to both student teachers as well as recently qualified teachers – for sake of brevity, I will use *beginning teachers* where both of these categories are encompassed.

Philosophy for Children

The pedagogical approach of Philosophy for Children is practised worldwide and is subsequently known under different titles – primarily three predominate: Philosophy *for* Children (P4C), Philosophy *with* Children (PwC) and Philosophy *for/with* Children (P4C/wC). P4C is the designation most widely applied in the UK and therefore will be the term used in this thesis to cover all aspects of philosophy for/with children (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Scholl *et al.*, 2009; Haynes, 2014; 2018). Likewise, P4C's particular conceptualisation of the Community of Enquiry is known under different titles – i.e. Community of Enquiry (Haynes, 2008); Community of Inquiry (Burgh & Yorshansky, 2011); Community of Philosophical Inquiry (Kizel, 2016). I have chosen to use the term Community of Enquiry, as the term normally utilised in the UK, although it is possible that Community of Inquiry may be more apposite for what takes place in P4C (Baumfield, 2020).

Perform-ability

My vision for the 'perform-able' teacher, is one who is able to thrive despite the performative education culture. A development of my conceptualisation of the Teacher-Agent (discussed below), my vision for this teacher is that they will be able to challenge and resist reductionist narratives allowing them to thrive as teachers without compromising their values. The idea of 'perform-ability' presented in this thesis conceptualises a teacher who is able to meet the targets of the neoliberal narrative, whilst still nurturing the whole child, enabling their pupils to make affective as well as cognitive gains.

Teacher-Agent

The concept of the Teacher-Agent was first introduced in a paper at the International Council of Philosophy Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) conference (Love, 2019). This Teacher-Agent would be aware of the performative neoliberal educational culture, and actively resist it, in favour of a more holistic view of education.

List of Tables

	Page Number
Table 1 Phases of thematic analysis	100
Table 2 Occurrence of data against each theme	110
Table 3 Coding spread across Teachers as Oppressed Beings	111
Table 4 Coding spread across Teachers as Agentic Beings	122
Table 5 Coding spread across Teachers as Political Beings	130
Table 6 Coding spread across Teachers as Relational Beings	137
Table 7 Coding spread across Teachers as Hope-full Beings	143

List of Figures

	Page Number
Figure 1 Primary developmental tasks for student teachers	40
Figure 2 Excerpt from ITT Core Content Framework	44
Figure 3 The 10-step model of enquiry	62
Figure 4 Breakdown of potential purposive sample	81
Figure 5 Breakdown of final purposive sample cohort and participant numbers	82
Figure 6 Extract from Conditions for good dialogue handout	86
Figure 7 Example of Little Miss characters	93
Figure 8 Stimulus provided (left), as annotated for CoE1 (right)	94
Figure 9 Example of stimulus annotated for CoE1 (left) and amended for CoE2 (right)	96
Figure 10 Focus Group Prompt sheet	97
Figure 11 Phase 5 Thematic Map	103
Figure 12 Influences on my positionality as a researcher	107
Figure 13 Linked Themes for Findings	109
Figure 14 Questions created for CoE1	112
Figure 15 Questions created for CoE2	116

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

This chapter introduces the study's research context and rationale. The study's aims, objectives and questions are introduced with reference to the author's professional experience as well as the relevant research and policy literature. Finally, the thesis structure is outlined.

Research Context

The prevailing focus on achievement in education has become a driver for an ethos and curriculum that prioritises speedy results, often at the expense of the more holistic elements; which are considered paramount in the development of the child (Adams, 2013; Clarke *et al.*, 2014). The emphasis on national testing can engender a climate of stress, impacting on self-esteem and leaving children feeling unable to cope (Adams, 2013; Yandell, 2014).

I have personal experience of the impact of the performative culture. Before making the move to Higher Education, my last school had such a strong performative focus that I considered leaving the profession. It was at this critical point that I was introduced to Philosophy for Children (P4C), and this was, for me, a revelation and resonated with why I had gone into education in the first place. It felt like an antidote to the focus of my school and transformed my practice and my identity as a teacher.

The impact that P4C has had on my teaching career, and on the children I taught, was unparalleled, particularly regarding the more affective or non-cognitive attributes or benefits of P4C. Traditionally P4C research was limited to considerations of attainment, possibly due to the neoliberal focus on performance, which rates academic gains above more philosophically informed outcomes such as self-esteem, empathy, equality and inclusion (Haynes & Murris, Murris, 2008; 2011b). The area of Critical Thinking, or P4C as a Thinking Skills programme has been extensively researched (Trickey & Topping, 2004; Topping & Trickey, 2007). Similarly much research has been undertaken to examine the positive effects of P4C's dialogic approach to teaching and learning (Fisher, 2007; Jenkins & Lyle, 2010; Splitter, 2014), however interest in potential non-cognitive impacts from P4C is an area of recent and growing research (Gorard *et al.*, 2015; Siddiqui *et al.*, 2017b; Love, 2018b; Siddiqui *et al.*, 2019).

Research shows that Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes have traditionally focussed more on knowledge, skills and competencies, than on areas such as teacher identity formation (Furlong, 2013; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a). However, as this thesis sets out to explore, if developing teacher identity is important, then it could be argued that ITE providers might need to re-evaluate the importance placed on this on their programmes and ensure that time and space is given to interrogate this concept with students (Kagan, 1992; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012).

This re-evaluation might necessitate an alternative view of ITE; one that evaluates and engages with the dominant discourse by openly encouraging and critically examining, with student teachers, possible alternative views of education. This could include explicit critical engagement with neoliberal influences on education and the potential impact on schools, teachers and pupils; mindful of the fact that the current generation of student teachers have themselves experienced their whole education thus far under this performative focus (Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017). Additionally, it could promote deliberate engagement with more creative areas of the curriculum – such as promoting foundation subjects, rather than the prevalent dominant focus on core subjects (Pollard & Triggs, 2001; Filer *et al.*, 2002) as well as encouraging emotional wellbeing (Adams, 2013; Adams *et al.*, 2015).

For me, all of these areas resonate with the philosophy of critical pedagogy (see Chapter Three). Critical pedagogy encourages teachers and students to critically examine and evaluate the power structures of society, education and authority, with the aim of challenging inequality and promoting social transformation, and ultimately leading to the development critical consciousness or *conscientização* (Freire, 1996). It is this *Conscientização* that I seek to develop throughout this thesis.

It is to this context that my thesis is set, and provides the background for my research aims, objectives and questions.

Rationale for Study

In my position as a Senior Lecturer of Teacher Education in Higher Education, I am a Personal Development Tutor to finalist students. My interest in performativity resulted from conversations with tutees at the end of their primary education undergraduate degree. They were reflecting on the disparity they felt between what was being taught to them in the university and the reality that they had faced in their final school placements. One reflection that struck me was if we encouraged our students to embrace more anti-performative approaches to education (for example, encouraging democratic and collaborative practice, embracing the more creative and inclusive aspects of

education and learning) could we be argued to be setting them up for an identity crisis? It seemed to me that ITE programmes must *explicitly* teach them how to navigate and survive the ‘shifting landscapes’ (Clandinin *et al.*, 2009:142).

The rationale behind my research focus for the thesis can be summed up in three quotes from Freire one from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and one from *The Politics of Education*.

Firstly, ‘There's no such thing as neutral education. Education either functions as an instrument to bring about conformity or freedom’ (Freire, 1996:16). The contention regarding the impossibility of neutrality in education, made me reflect on how much or how little we engaged with contrasting and potentially conflicting political agendas in education. Freire’s (1996) suggestion was that neoliberal drivers in education lead to what he termed *Banking Education*, which promotes an acquiescence with the dominant performative narrative of education. Freire suggested that this results in a situation where: ‘As long as the oppressed remain unaware of the causes of their condition, they fatalistically "accept" their exploitation’ (Freire, 1996:38). This led me to consider the possibility that ITE had a duty to promote an ‘awareness’ or cognisance of potential causes of oppression that might be faced by beginning teachers. The more I read about Teacher Identity, the more I realised that it was a principal factor in enabling this cognisance: ‘Without a sense of identity, there can be no real struggle’ (Freire, 1985:186). Therefore, that became part of the rationale for the study, to explore how beginning teachers might effectively, fully cognisant and confidently, engage with questions of neoliberal performativity and how this might impact on their emerging teacher identity.

My stance as an ethical researcher led me to explore using a Community of Enquiry, as conceptualised in P4C, as my research method (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017). This research method aligned with my desire for an ethical and equitable research approach, enabling my participants and me to collectively and collaboratively generate data.

Research Aims and Objectives

Main Aim

To examine student teachers’ experiences of teacher identity, agency and education in a neoliberal climate.

Sub Aims

- Examine participant experience of neoliberal education agendas from within Initial Teacher Education and school placements

- Explore opportunities for participants to critically engage with neoliberal discourse
- Consider relationship between Performativity and Teacher Identity in Initial Teacher Education and practice and the emerging concept of 'Perform-ability'

Objectives

- To offer participants a voice to engage in discussions around performativity, 'perform-ability' and teacher identity
- To offer recommendations for how Initial Teacher Education might manage discourse around neoliberal education agenda in their taught programmes
- To offer a scholarly contribution to the literature on how pedagogies such as Philosophy for Children can be used as strategies to engage with neoliberal education agendas
- To offer a scholarly contribution to the literature on using Philosophy for Children's Community of Enquiry as a research method

Research Questions

An overarching purpose of educational research is that it should contribute to improving education, as well as be of beneficence to those participating in the research (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012; Tangen, 2014) and was a key consideration as I formulated my research questions.

- 1) What are the experiences, concerns and observations of the participants regarding the neoliberal education culture and how this might impact on their teacher identity?
- 2) What are the participants' reactions to the concept of 'perform-ability'?
- 3) What elements of Initial Teacher Education have shaped the participants' teacher identity?
- 4) What strategies are the participants developing to enable them to flourish despite the performative climate?

These questions will be addressed through the literature review, the data generated and associated analysis and discussions.

Thesis Structure

Chapter Two and Chapter Three contain reviews of the relevant literature and discourse related to the thesis. Chapter Two focuses primarily on setting the context for ITE but also exploring the literature that details the impact and challenge inherent in UK education as a result of the neoliberal focus. It also examines current literature on Teacher Identity. Chapter Three explores potential solutions or alternative visions for education, a re-imagining and reframing of the situation, with a positive focus, including insights from Critical Pedagogy and specifically Freire. In Chapter Four, the research methodology is introduced and justified, as well as consideration given to the ethical issues pertinent to this study. Additionally, the research method and the approach taken for data analysis

is explored. This is followed in Chapter Five with the associated findings, analysis and discussion before Chapter Six presents the conclusions of the study; the responses to the research questions as well as recommendations for ITE practice and considerations for future research. References and Appendices conclude the thesis.

Thesis Significance

This study aims to make contributions to knowledge under several areas. Limited literature exists using a Community of Enquiry (CoE) as a research method (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017). This research will promote a CoE as an emerging area of study in the context of qualitative research methods.

In addition, this thesis seeks to add to the literature exploring teacher identity of ITE students. In particular it will have a focus of the impact on teacher identity in a neoliberal performative culture, alongside the tension faced by beginning teachers of contrasting priorities from ITE and schools.

This thesis seeks to explore how Critical Pedagogy and in particular the writings of Freire (1994; 2006; 2007) might offer possibilities for inclusion in ITE programmes.

Finally, the conceptualisation of 'Perform-ability' encompasses the ability for teachers to not only survive, but flourish, despite this performative climate, and could, I suggest offer an important contribution to considerations of retention and wellbeing of beginning teachers.

Chapter Two: Problems: Policies, Themes and Concepts

Introduction

This chapter explores three key themes that are central to this thesis: ITE, performativity and teacher identity. Firstly, changes in education policy and practice in the United Kingdom (UK) over the last 40 years will be considered and the impact they have had on the culture and praxis of schools and teacher education. In particular, the chapter will reflect on the perpetuation of a neoliberal discourse influencing education, that is often coupled with a performative emphasis (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Cobb & Couch, 2018; Raymond, 2018). Although Critical Pedagogy and the work of Paulo Freire is introduced and interrogated for connections within the thesis in Chapter Three, the inclusion of Freire's (1996) description of the 'banking concept' in education is explored in this chapter due to its relevance and resonance with the discussions around neoliberalism and performativity. It is argued that the neoliberal discourse can have a detrimental impact on teacher identity (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Raymond, 2018) therefore literature on the topic of teacher identity will be explored to see how this adds to the considerations of this thesis. Finally, this chapter will explore the consideration that issues of wellbeing have been neglected and side-lined by the neoliberal performative agenda (Hill, 2007).

While there is extensive literature engaging with neoliberalism and its impact on education, the narrative is often negative or even nihilistic (see Ball, 2003 and Raymond, 2018). There is little engagement with possible solutions of the neoliberal debate, particularly with regard to the impact it has on schools and teachers (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Therefore, while this chapter explores current writing on the problems posed by literature on these topics, Chapter Three will suggest potential solutions to these issues.

Initial Teacher Education: A Brief History

When considering this brief history of teacher education, reflections on its purpose are fundamental. It can be argued that the purpose of teacher education has developed and changed alongside education policy changes over the last forty years (Hill, 2007; Apple, 2017). Apple (2017) suggests that a changing discourse regarding the purpose of education is to be expected under a neoliberal ideology, as controlling education enables the state to manage the way people think about 'society and its institutions' (p148).

Over the past 40 years, studies show an increasing correlation between the world of politics and ITE, both in the UK and world-wide (Bailey & Robson, 2002; Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This relationship, and the contemporaneous significant political changes, can also be connected with changes in ITE policies (Bailey & Robson, 2002; Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017), as well as impacting on teachers' 'political, cultural and professional lives' (Passy, 2013:1061).

Prior to 1970 there was considerable professional autonomy for teacher educators, schools and teachers with regard to curriculum and pedagogy (Hill, 2007), this however changed with both the ensuing Conservative and (New) Labour governments who sought to conform and reform education.

Teacher education in the UK can be considered in three distinct phases since the mid-1970s (Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). Initially these developments affected Wales and Northern Ireland as well as England, however from 2000 onwards, teacher education policy changes made in London affected only England (Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017).

The first of these phases ran from the 1970s to 1984, under the Conservative Government, with a focus on 'professionalisation' (Menter *et al.*, 2017:622), which called for teaching to become an all graduate profession, emphasising the importance of continuing learning for teachers. A significant factor in this phase was the closing of many smaller education colleges in favour of enlargement of university and polytechnic provision and the associated confirmation of teaching as worthy of an honours degree. It is at this time that concerns over the quality of educational provision emerged and instigated the then Prime Minister James Callaghan's 'Ruskin Speech.' The 1976 speech at Ruskin College in Oxford, inspired a new debate around education, ushering in an era of accountability and a restructuring of the governance of education (Ranson, 2003; Menter *et al.*, 2017). The speech called for an end to the autonomous professional education community, in lieu of a publicly accountable public service (Ranson, 2003). Specifically, this speech highlighted a view that the progressive culture of the 1960s and 1970s had gone too far, and standards were slipping. Public trust for professionals had been replaced by a mood of distrust, with professionals held to account, to ensure compliance of practice (Ranson, 2003; Hill, 2007; Lloyd & Davis, 2018).

The following Conservative government (1979 - 1996) increased intervention in teacher education. Specifically in 1984, the first government circular on Initial Teacher Training (DES, 1984) was published, which amplified the influence of government and instigated the second of the three phases of teacher education (Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This period of teacher education is typified as a phase of 'standardisation and diversification' (Menter *et al.*, 2017:623) which continued until 2010. Standardisation signified tighter control and the establishment of particular skills and standards against which beginning teachers were to be judged; diversification

related to the new philosophy regarding teacher training, which encouraged new school-led routes into teaching, often involving minimal or no input from higher education institutions (Childs & Mender, 2013; Baumfield, 2016b; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This move was influenced by the governmental view that educational research, theory and university influences were suspect, prone to bias and indoctrination and ideologically left-wing (Hill, 2007; Menter *et al.*, 2017). While the research could be argued to be ideologically left-wing, it was not necessarily biased or prone to indoctrination. Significantly, government agendas conflated their dislike or distrust for certain ideological positions with a criticism of the quality and integrity of the research intention (Hill, 2007; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This misrepresentation not only undermined public support for the teaching profession, but also led the way for the campaign of attacks on ITE led by Gove (DfE, 2010) as discussed below.

Not only were new routes into teaching established under the Conservatives, but also a strictly controlled National Curriculum for ITE via the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) Circulars 9/92 and 14/93 (DfE, 1992, 1993). This repurposed *teacher training*, as it was referred to by Conservative and New Labour parties, sought to eliminate or reduce the potentially critical aspects of education, in favour of an emphasis on school-based practical skills (Hill, 2007; Alexander & Armstrong, 2010; Passy, 2013). Hill (2007) discusses how the rebranding from teacher education to teacher training was a symbolic depiction of the ‘new, ‘safe’, sanitised and detheorised education and training of new teachers’ (p213). Freire (2007) criticised the nomenclature *training* in association with education, stating: ‘Neoliberal doctrine seeks to limit education to technological practice. Currently, education is no longer understood as formative, but simply as training’ (p3).

This direction was continued under the auspices of the Coalition Government in 2010. Michael Gove, the then Secretary of State for Education, continued to take radical action against teacher education. His White Paper *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010), proclaimed teaching to be a technical craft rather than a profession, ideally learnt in a school setting (Bailey & Robson, 2002; Baumfield, 2016b). Introducing *School Direct* as a new approach to teaching, this initiative saw universities sidelined in favour of school-led training and recruitment (Menter *et al.*, 2017; Strom & Martin, 2017). This move was followed by verbal attacks by Gove on university education departments, blaming them for undermining education, as part of his war on experts (Mance, 2016; Menter *et al.*, 2017). ITE was deemed to be ‘too important to be left in the hands of academics and teacher educators’ (Mor, 2018:11). This then heralded the final of the three phases of teacher education, that of ‘marketisation’ (Menter *et al.*, 2017:624), which is characterised by the view held by the Coalition

and subsequent Conservative government that opening up education to market-style competition, would improve the quality of provision of teacher education (Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This standpoint was linked to a new conceptualisation of the purpose of education in terms of its potential for encouraging technological and economic gain, which directly impacted on ITE as the provider, or producer, of the market force (Hill, 2007; Cobb & Couch, 2018; Mor, 2018).

Although Menter *et al.* (2017) acknowledge that these three phases might be over-simplistic, their suggestion is that they provide a strong starting point for considering how teacher education has been influenced, changed and defined over the past forty years. Specifically, they underline as most significant the changing priorities for professional knowledge, from educational theories in phase 1, to teaching standards in phase 2. Menter *et al.* (2017) propose that this is not merely a marginalisation of educational theory and research, but an attempt to brand it 'irrelevant (at best) or subversive (at worst)' (p624), perpetuating an ideological challenge to the more traditional university-based teacher education programmes.

In summary, the effects of the last forty years of political movement in England has been an inexorable move towards a standards-based approach and marketized system of teacher education, consistent across the different political governments (Childs & Mender, 2013; Passy, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This is coupled with a dismantling of traditional higher educational teacher education routes, in favour of an increasing proliferation of 'schools reproducing teachers 'in their own image'' (Menter *et al.*, 2017:625). This diversity of provision subjected teacher education providers to competition with each other and with schools in an unprecedented way (Passy, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). These two moves could be seen as contradictory – for example, increasing the freedom of choice of route, while simultaneously increasing the control of the content, both aspects are attuned to neoliberal approaches (Childs & Mender, 2013). Childs and Mender (2013) suggest that:

The freeing or creation of 'the market' can only be achieved through the introduction of repressive and constraining regulations that actually place severe limits on creativity and autonomy, at least for professionals working in the field (p94).

A significant development for teacher education was the introduction of rigorous regulatory inspections, with non-compliance resulting in closures or the reduction in student allocations for the following intake (Hill, 2007).

Neoliberalism in education

Neoliberalism as a concept is frequently deployed in recent educational literature, however it is rare that the nuances of this notion are defined (Rowlands & Rawolle, 2013). Rowlands and Rawolle (2013) suggest that neoliberalism and neoliberal are often used as a 'catch-all explanation for anything negative' (p261), particularly related to perceived right-wing phenomena. While there are those who suggest the neoliberalism merely encourages healthy competition amongst individuals and institutions, releasing them from progress-hindering social responsibilities (Hilgers, 2013), others warn that neoliberalism relinquishes too much authority to the state (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Rowlands & Rawolle, 2013).

The opacity of neoliberalism has also been identified in the mainstream press, claiming that the neoliberal ideology dominates our lives, yet is impossible to define (Monbiot, 2016). Monbiot (2016) proposes that it has been pivotal in a range of crises, from the collapse of public health and education services to the rise of populism. Yet, Monbiot (2016) claims that despite its impact, the population remain largely unaware that these crises have been precipitated or exacerbated by an ideology that is so nebulous. It is important therefore, to clarify the definition that is used in this study for neoliberalism, to ensure that assumptions are not made about an ideology that might be interpreted in diverse and even potential oppositional ways (Rowlands & Rawolle, 2013).

Specifically, the argument of this thesis relates to the propagation of an ideology that promotes and prioritises the economy of the free market, individualisation and competition (Hill, 2007; Passy, 2013), resulting in an antagonistic relationship between the dominant state and the (largely subdued) individual and community (Connell, 2013; Rowlands & Rawolle, 2013). In addition, the concept of neoliberalism used in this thesis has been influenced by the writings of Freire (1998, 2007). Freire's position regarding neoliberalism was unflinching:

Finally, I cannot avoid a permanently critical attitude toward what I consider to be the scourge of neoliberalism, with its cynical fatalism and its inflexible negation of the right to dream differently, to dream of utopia (Freire, 1998:22).

The fatalism associated with neoliberalism is a significant element of Freire's antipathy. In direct contrast to Freire's promotion of trust, respect and hope (1994, 1998; 2006; 2007), neoliberalism, he suggested, was an immobilising ideology that disempowered individuals, encouraging their acquiescence to state-imposed will (Freire, 1998). Freire's (1998) critique illuminates the inherent contradiction of neoliberalism; its stated aim is greater freedom, yet the outcome is decreased freedom. This disempowering was of great concern to Freire, who saw the power of this dominant ideology to mask the reality of the situation:

More serious still is the way we can so easily accept that what we are seeing and hearing is, in fact, what really is and not a distorted version of what is. This tendency to cloud the truth, to become myopic, to deafen our ears, has made many of us accept without critical questioning the cynical fatalism of neoliberal thought (1998:113).

In addition, Freire condemned the ethics at the heart of the neoliberal ideology, for being the ethics 'of the marketplace and not the universal ethics of the human person' (1998:114). It is argued that those who are passionate about the wellbeing of both individuals and society must challenge these agendas, providing alternative goals of education, founded upon a clear ethical framework (Mor, 2018). This will be returned to in Chapter Three.

Neoliberal agendas are argued to lead to the proliferation of values such as egoism and hedonism (Mor, 2018), marketisation, competition and calculation (McGregor, 2009; Apple, 2017; Holloway & Brass, 2018) and individuality at the expense of collegiality (Jeffrey, 2002). Collegiality is often cited as one of the first victims of the performative culture (Sachs, 2001; Ball, 2003; Holloway & Brass, 2018). While collegiality should not be assumed to be the principal concern of all involved in education, it is significant that discussions around teacher retention cite supportive colleagues as a contributing factor to teacher wellbeing and retention (Pillen *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b).

Apple (2017) suggests that neoliberalism has an increasing influence on society and education, promoting 'marketized solutions to educational problems' (p149). Specifically he discusses how private concerns are promoted over public, meaning that 'those with economic and cultural capital are advantaged in nearly every sector of society' (Apple, 2017:149). When considering education, Apple's concern is that this ideology is grounded in a belief that:

the more we marketize, the more we bring corporate models into education, and the more we can hold schools', administrators', and teachers' feet to the fire of competition, the better they will be (2017:149).

Significantly, those who are committed to this ideology believe that this accountability and measurement focus will improve standards, and the performance of teachers, schools and pupils (Apple, 2017). Apple refers to them as 'true believers' (2017:150) but cautions that there is evidence to show that this approach can cause as many problems as it purportedly solves.

Performativity in Education

A particular concern that is raised about neoliberalism and its effects on education is the associated performativity that this ideology promotes. The practice of neoliberal accountability has grown gradually over time, culminating in a normalisation of performativity expectations and regulation

(Ranson, 2003; Kilderry, 2015). Public accountability, means that 'the public (as consumer) was empowered at the expense of the (professional) provider' (Ranson, 2003:465). For practice in schools, this meant a parent could be provided with information to judge and theoretically select schools of their choice, with the belief that competition would automatically improve standards as well as ensure teacher accountability (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Passy, 2013; Strom & Martin, 2017). Consequently, school leadership became inextricably connected with inspection, with school's finances and reputations dependent on successful grading and rankings, resulting in a culture of 'coercive compliance' (McGregor, 2009; Wilkins, 2011:392; Strom & Martin, 2017) and a 'risk-averse, target-chasing ethos' (Wilkins, 2011:391).

Semantic changes in educational discourse also started to illustrate a more performative agenda, with terms such as performance, accountability, outcomes and effectiveness becoming common place (McGregor, 2009; Kilderry, 2015). In previous education periods (for example under the 2001 – 2005 Labour government) we see contrasting language in documents such as *Every child matters: Change for children* (DfES, 2004), where guidance for teachers promoted terms such as child-led, personal and inclusive.

It would be false to claim that there is no support for educational accountability; the performativity discourse can appear attractive, as it lauds excellence and achievements, with government rhetoric persistently claiming that it is raising standards (Jeffrey, 2002; DfE, 2014a; 2016; 2017; 2018). Some teachers report that focussing on data helps them to critically reflect on their own practice, seeing data 'as being able to positively influence the effects of teaching on student learning ... rather than merely being an end in itself' (Hardy & Lewis, 2017:677). Equally, Moore and Clarke (2016) found that many teachers reported no significant difference between their preferred practice and that dictated by current policy directives.

There is the argument that justifiable reasons underpin the move towards a more accountable education system to identify schools that were failing their students, fraudulent use of funds and poor governance. Schools and teachers need to account for the education that they provide for their pupils. Biesta (2009) claims that the measurement culture in education has been beneficial to some extent, as it enabled discussions to be based on factual data rather than just assumptions or opinions about what might constitute good education. His concern is that these discussions, which aimed to improve education for all children, seemed to lose sight of fundamental questions about values, purpose and the goodness of education, resulting in what he termed the 'qualification function of education' (Biesta, 2009:36). It is argued that the valid and laudable reasons to move

from what could be claimed to be the permissive education system of the 1960s and 1970s, has gone too far, resulting in over-controlled schools, teachers and teacher educators, to the detriment of the pupils, the teachers and the schools (Ball, 2003; Biesta, 2009; Keddie, 2017).

A concern raised by educators is that the competitiveness inherent in performativity has infiltrated education so successfully that it is now the dominant narrative (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Raymond, 2018). The implication of this competitive culture is seen as far reaching. Failure to 'perform' adequately in this competitive field, has seen teachers under threat of dismissal (Hill, 2007; Raymond, 2018), or children labelled as failures at the age of six (Pells, 2017).

A focus on accountability looks to maximise outputs and minimise inputs: rather than assessing the quality of education, the focus is on evaluating how efficient it is (Ranson, 2003; McGregor, 2009; Holloway & Brass, 2018). This effectively aligns public sector organisations with the values, methods and approaches of that of the private sector (Ball, 2003; McGregor, 2009). Consequently, a focus on teachers' performativity has developed. Inspections by Ofsted, introduced in the 1990s, created national benchmarks and criteria to assess both teachers and schools - viewed by many as a 'deliberate assault on professional autonomy' (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012:67). This presents an issue about who judges what is valued? While Ofsted and LA inspectors, as qualified and experienced teachers, are qualified to judge, the framework they are required to judge is influenced if not determined by government agendas that are not developed by qualified or experienced teachers. Turner-Bisset (2007) argues that formerly LA inspections were done in a supportive spirit of partnership and professional dialogue; but Ofsted inspections take a different approach and are 'done to a school rather than with them' (p194).

There is an on-going debate about the measures being used to hold schools to account, with a particular concern that this can undermine teacher autonomy, professionalism and responsiveness (Hill, 2007; Biesta, 2009; Keddie, 2017). The highly public exaltation or shaming of a school based on measurable targets (Biesta, 2009; Wilkins, 2011; Keddie, 2017), can result in a reductionist agenda, where a school's worth is solely evaluated on their success in achieving favourable inspection awards and the requisite data levels in national tests (Jeffrey, 2002; Biesta, 2009). Equally, this is used to inform performance-related pay systems for teachers, which are largely dependent on pupil performance in tests (Hill, 2007), with little or no consideration of contextual data. This performative culture, it is suggested, seeks to mould and regulate education towards a specific market-driven model, using 'judgements and comparison based on set criteria as a means of incentive, control and change' (Ball, 2003; Hill, 2007; Raymond, 2018:135). It is argued that this results in a school environment where teachers feel compelled to measure themselves against their colleagues

(McGregor, 2009), and teaching is reduced to something that is 'measurable, evaluate-able, and comparable' (Holloway & Brass, 2018:363). The focus or product of schools is argued to move away from the 'internal goods of excellence' – such as values, virtues and integrity, towards 'the extrinsic goods of effectiveness' (for example, wealth, status and power)' (Ranson, 2003:460). A tension is created that can be felt in the school environment, where there can be a permanent sense of worry, with teachers constantly doubting their practice: 'obsessed by what we have become by measurability, we have lost sight of what we know about pedagogy' (Berry, 2016:72; Keddie, 2017; Raymond, 2018), as whole school communities and practices become translated to a set of quantitative data (Ball, 2003).

The pressure felt by schools to meet these target-orientated measures, can lead to a manipulation of performance (Ranson, 2003; Troman, 2008), an 'intentional 'gaming' of teacher, school and system performance targets' (Hardy & Lewis, 2017:673). There is the potential that the focus can be on producing data that appears to maximise learning (Troman, 2008; Hardy & Lewis, 2017), rather than on any educational benefit of the data. Furthermore, considerable time is needed to produce this data, time that is taken away from teaching, planning and marking (Hardy & Lewis, 2017). Additionally, there is a danger that the preoccupation with data and targets can lead to a reductionist curriculum, where teachers focus disproportionately on subjects that are data accountable (Hardy & Lewis, 2017; Keddie, 2017; Strom & Martin, 2017), resulting in a pedagogy of teaching to the test (Turner-Bisset, 2007; Connell, 2013).

It should be noted however, that there continues to be a resistance to this agenda, with many teacher educators, teachers and schools actively seeking alternative ways to educate young people (Turner-Bisset, 2007; Berry, 2016; Raymond, 2018). This resonates with the pre-performativity culture, where education and educational learning theory was influenced by the humanist discourse, centred on holism, individuals and relationships (Jeffrey, 2002; Hill, 2007). Fundamental to the humanist approach was a mutual interdependency, where both the teacher and the child could influence the focus of the curriculum. This is in stark contrast to the performative discourse, where children can become dependent on the teachers to *deliver* the necessary knowledge to enable them to *perform* as expected (Freire, 1996; Jeffrey, 2002; Hardy & Lewis, 2017).

The 'Banking Model' of Education

Current performative education policies and reforms, influenced by prevailing neoliberal tenets have also redefined the model of a teacher, to one whose purpose is to deliver knowledge to, largely, passive students (Freire, 1996; Hardy & Lewis, 2017; Strom & Martin, 2017). This unidirectional transmission model of teaching sees the teacher deliver knowledge to the pupil, which is then reproduced by the pupil often in form of a test (Connell, 2013; Strom & Martin, 2017). These tenets reinforce a particular positivist conceptualisation of education, with knowledge seen as an objective and quantifiable content to be disseminated (Freire, 1996; Strom & Martin, 2017).

Likewise, this impacts on teacher education, as this model presumes that ITE is concerned with transferring a body of knowledge to its student teachers, that can subsequently be passed on, unmodified, to their pupils (Strom & Martin, 2017). Thus promoting the over-simplistic perspective that learning to teach is primarily about 'the acquisition of abstract knowledge,' which is then systematically deployed and evaluated (Joep, 2018:66). It could be argued that there are significant parallels with the *banking model* of education Freire (1996) describes in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and that of the current performative educational models as described above.

The context in which Freire writes is significant. Latin America had a deeply divided society and Freire saw this mirrored in education, leading, he suggested to a binary choice – on the one hand the prevalent banking system, deeply entrenched with concepts such as 'dehumanization, positivism, and authoritarianism' (Kohan, 2018:622), on the other his alternative 'problem-posing education' (Freire, 1996, 1998), an approach that embraces concepts such as 'liberation, humanization, true scientific knowledge, and dialogue' (Kohan, 2018:622).

The banking system as conceptualised by Freire (1996), is a transmission model of teaching, which advocates prescribed knowledge to be *deposited* into the minds of pupils by the teachers. The impact of this approach, he proposed, was that it created a dependency culture in pupils:

Worse yet, it turns them into "containers," into "receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher. The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are (Freire, 1996:52).

Freire (1996) suggests that when education is diminished to the 'depositor' (the teachers) and 'depositories' (the students), this encourages passivity in the students as 'the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits' (p52). This passivity, is one that is increasingly reported on, at both school and university-level (Al-Saadi, 2011; Mazenod *et al.*, 2019) and is seen as an impact of performative education (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Hardy & Lewis, 2017; Strom & Martin, 2017). Freire (1996) posits that this passivity leads students to

stop critically engaging in the world around them, meekly accepting and adapting to the worldview and its 'fragmented view of reality' (p54) presented to them by society. This ideology is strongly refuted by Freire, who asserts that 'the act of a correct way of thinking does not "transfer," "deposit," "offer," or "donate" to the other as if the receiver were a passive object of facts, concepts, and intelligibility' (1998:42). He suggests that minimising students' creative and critical thinking, and encouraging their credulity is in the interests of the neoliberal oppressors who have no interest in seeing 'the world revealed nor to see it transformed' (Freire, 1996:55), acquiescence in the performative culture serves the status quo.

This model of education was seen by Freire (1996) as so engrained that it unintentionally becomes a means to perpetuate oppression and inequality. He discusses how in banking education, knowledge is seen as 'a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing' (Freire, 1996:53). This attitude, he suggests perpetuates an imbalance of power regarding knowledge and ignorance, and in doing so negates any understanding of education and knowledge as processes of enquiry. Freire (1996) adds that as students passively accept the world that is presented to them by educator-depositors, this education encourages them to become ever more passive to fit better into the world. In this system of education, 'the educated individual is the adapted person, because she or he is better "fit" for the world' (p57). This, according to Freire, is how oppressors proliferate; if people fit into the world that has been presented for them, they will cease to question it, thus Freire's concern that 'everything in this ready-to-wear approach serves to obviate thinking' (1996:57). For Freire, true learning could not happen with this mode of delivery, but rather through 'the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other' (1996:53). Freire's (1996, 1998) writing, together with wider reading around neoliberal approaches to education, suggest that the move towards market driven education policies focussed on performative goals has had a significant negative impact, not only on the educational landscape of schools, but also on teachers and teacher-educators (Ball, 2003; Clandinin *et al.*, 2009; McGregor, 2009; Raymond, 2018).

Impact on Teachers

Research indicates that many teachers are struggling to reconcile the demands of neoliberal policies, with potentially diametrically opposed philosophies, values and beliefs about the purpose of education (Sachs, 2001; Clandinin *et al.*, 2009). One possible result of this is seen in poor teacher retention rates (Ball, 2003; Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Clandinin *et al.* (2009) describe how the

‘shifting landscapes’ evoked by these tensions, impact not only on a teacher’s identity, but also on the educational contexts of society.

Significantly, performativity is argued to produce new types of teachers; the ‘marketized teacher, managed teacher and performative teacher’ (Holloway & Brass, 2018:362), impacting not only the behaviour of the teachers, but also on the teacher themselves (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Raymond, 2018). In parallel with the realigning of the school’s values and ethics towards a more corporate culture, teachers’ values are ‘being challenged, compromised, or displaced by escalating regimes of managerialism, markets, and performativity’ (Holloway & Brass, 2018:363). The performativity regime demands that teachers behave in a particular way, in response to specified targets, inspections and reviews, and resistance to these expectations is portrayed by the government as ‘irresponsible’ (Ball & Olmedo, 2013:88). Indeed, the performative rationale is presented as ‘the new common sense, as something logical and desirable’ (Ball & Olmedo, 2013:89). Ball (2003:215) argues that this can necessitate an ‘existence of calculation’ and a side-lining of teachers’ values and beliefs. He suggests, that while some teachers might rise to this challenge, seizing opportunities for the ‘outstanding’ label, promotion and advancement, for others ‘it portends inner conflicts, inauthenticity and resistance’ (Ball, 2003:215). Thus performativity can be seen to be exerting both external and internal pressure: externally in terms of control, inspections, measures and accountability, and internally in terms of changing identities, objectives and philosophies regarding the purpose of education (Ranson, 2003). Accountability measures and target-led cultures can result in self-focussed teachers, primarily concerned with meeting/exceeding targets, with ‘commitment and service’ devalued in favour of productivity (Ball, 2003:217). Ball (2003:221) calls this ‘values schizophrenia’, where teachers choose, or feel compelled, to sacrifice their professional judgement and integrity for external performative validation. The impact of this can be a sense of inauthenticity for teachers, where practice is no longer based on theory, beliefs or even experience, rather on the dictate of what *works* (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013).

This inauthenticity can have a significant impact on a teacher’s self-esteem, sense of worth and wellbeing, when productivity becomes the main measure of success and validation (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Hardy & Lewis, 2017), and can develop a progressive cynicism in teachers as a result of feeling they are no longer trusted as professionals (McGregor, 2009).

Research has demonstrated that some teachers are able to resist the performative demands, successfully navigating the neoliberal policy measures (Wilkins, 2011; Kilderry, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2017). Coping strategies devised by teachers facing these demands, might include distancing

themselves from accountability measures, restructuring their identities, or even constructing multiple versions of themselves (Jeffrey, 2002; Wilkins, 2011; Kilderry, 2015). Wilkins (2011:649) terms this the 'post-performative' teacher and claims this generation of teachers are 'neither compliant nor resistant' to performativity but manage to balance accountability with autonomy. This links with Lloyd and Davis' (2018) research, which argues for a 'a pragmatic model of professional learning that allows teachers to balance public accountability with professional autonomy' (pp92-93). Similarly, in the research carried out by Moore *et al.* (2002), most teachers interviewed tended to be walking a middle line, neither comprehensively supporting nor rejecting the current discourses, rather attempting to negotiate or modify their practice to bring it towards current policy, in a 'spirit of compromise' (p552). While this research suggests that some teachers are successfully navigating neoliberal agendas, the ongoing crisis in teacher retention suggests that this still not the experience of many teachers (Wilkins, 2011; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012).

Critics of the neoliberal vision of education argue that the role of a teacher is more than the performative model (Korthagen, 2004; Mor, 2018). Mor (2018:10) asserts that teachers 'seek the development of their students, shaping their character while practicing [sic] certain virtues and leading them to a life of individual flourishing and self-fulfilment.' Relationships are argued to be fundamental to the role of being a teacher, with the decisions primarily being influenced by values such as 'attentiveness, sensitivity, empathy, responsiveness and trust' (Mor, 2018:10).

For many teachers, a driver of their identity concerns values and beliefs, that are deeply personal and central to who they are as a human (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Korthagen, 2004). If these drivers are no longer valued, or are even in opposition with current policy (Moore & Clarke, 2016), this can result in an uninspired and disenfranchised workforce. Indeed, one challenge levied against performative cultures is the propensity to limit teacher autonomy and agency due to their instrumental nature (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012), causing teachers to question the value of, and lose motivation for, teaching (Ranson, 2003; Lloyd & Davis, 2018).

Moore and Clarke (2016) propose that teachers currently fall into three groups: firstly, those who are broadly supportive of the current policy; secondly, those who markedly reject key aspects and seek out opportunities where they can practice alternative pedagogies, and finally teachers who, although resistant to the policy, remain within the system in order to try to alleviate the negative impact on children. Moore and Clarke (2016) term the latter 'reluctant compliance' and suggest that this is where significant tensions arise, when teachers become responsible for supporting and implementing policies to which they are ideologically opposed, but feel compelled to administer; arguably then supporting the very performative culture they disdain. Teachers describe the

psychological costs of this compliance, attributing feelings of shame, cynicism and loss of integrity (Kilderry, 2015; Holloway & Brass, 2018; Raymond, 2018). Significantly, those teachers who oppose the accountability discourse are said to be able to resist the narrative if they are supported by like-minded colleagues, otherwise they often leave education (Buchanan, 2015). One dispiriting consequence reported with some teachers who fall under the 'conflict model' (Wilkins, 2011:404), is of a growing survival mentality, with teachers becoming 'less obviously ideological or political in the construction of their profession' as they internalise 'discourses of compromise' (Moore *et al.*, 2002:551-552; Troman, 2008).

However Wilkins *et al.* (2012:68) challenge the suggestion that most teachers fall into Moore and Clarke's (2016) first or third category, proposing that the majority of teachers will actively 'mediate, interpret, resist and subvert policy imperatives, bringing their own values to bear on the implementation of performative objectives,' thus retaining their personal agency. This viewpoint does however seem in tension with the rising numbers of teachers leaving the profession within the first five years of service (Ball, 2003; Perryman & Calvert, 2020).

A conceptualisation of teachers who reject current policy is the activist-identity proposed by Sachs (2001:157) who posits that this emancipatory identity flourishes in democratic schools, where genuine open debate, trust in colleagues, critical reflection and concern 'for the welfare of others and the common good' sits alongside concern for dignity and rights for all. She warns however, that this identity does not always come naturally to teachers; rather it must be constantly 'negotiated, lived and practised' (Sachs, 2001:158). Sachs encourages perseverance however, proposing that this identity when developed in a community of practice that facilitates the values of 'respect, reciprocity and collaboration' (p158), can not only enable genuine debates around policy and practice, but in addition can enable an individual's personal and professional emancipation. A key criterion for Sachs is that democracy is embedded and central to the school's vision and leadership. The aim for such schools is to 'eliminate exploitation, inequality and oppression' and is centred in social justice and equality principles (Sachs, 2001:157). Although these schools still operate under the same policy dictates as other schools, they interpret and implement the policy in their own way. In such schools, where teachers have confidence in their identity and role, there is a 'sense of agency, of empowerment to move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context' (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009:183).

Literature demonstrates a mixed economy of practice in schools today, both in terms of policy implementation as well as in terms of their culture of beliefs/values. While many schools/teachers

are bowing to, or even complicit in, the prevalent accountability culture (Keddie, 2017), equally there are schools and teachers who are not only resistant to this, but are actively countering it (Ball & Olmedo, 2013).

There are of course contrasting views on the subject of the performativity discourse. Keddie (2017) cautions against an 'idealising' of former educational discourses, warning that there is no guarantee that the removal of performative constraints would result in the ideal progressive culture. Research with Head Teachers from LA schools and a large academy chain demonstrated a stark contrast in how the current neoliberal performative discourse was viewed by these two types of school systems (Keddie, 2017). The LA heads felt that the test-orientated culture and performative demands undermined trust in their professionalism and capacities, yet the academy Head Teachers embraced it, aligning it with their desire for excellence and success. The LA Head Teachers went as far as to designate this approach as 'perverse or anti-educational', whilst the academy heads felt it 'elevated the status of their professionalism' (Keddie, 2017:1254). Equally, Holloway and Brass (2018) reported that after ten years of increased accountability, testing, reductive policies and undermining of teacher autonomy and professionalism, many teachers were accepting that this performativity discourse was now becoming the norm. While the teachers in their first round of interviews, ten years earlier, had raged against this regime, the second group were now indicating that for them performance indicators equated with good teaching, data helped them to understand their own value and rank, comparison and competition motivated them, and inspections improved teaching. Holloway and Brass (2018) posited that this 'onto-epistemological shift' demonstrated that for some teachers: 'objectification, quantification, and measurement are no longer treated as antithetical to teacher professionalism, but as precisely what teachers need to know and monitor themselves, improve themselves, and fashion themselves as professionals' (p380).

It could be argued that this shift has its roots in ITE. As the criteria for the Teaching Standards (TS) (DfE, 2011) encourage a more performative expectation of the skills of the new teacher, this impacts on ITE provision. These TS are arguably influenced by neoliberal education agendas, essentially functioning as an assessment tool to measure student teacher progress (Clarke, 2013; Passy, 2013; Moore & Clarke, 2016). Clarke (2013) argues that the standards are both reductive and over simplistic, diminishing the complexity of teaching to a set of skills or bullet points to be ticked off, and compliance is obligatory if student teachers are to achieve the coveted Qualified Teacher Standard (QTS) recommendation. This 'banking focus' also impacts on student teachers on placements. School mentors will often be constrained by the neoliberal agenda, committed to

ensuring that standards do not drop while students are with them, thus potentially prioritising a performative focus for the student teachers in terms of their *performance*, that will be judged against prescriptive TS (DfE, 2011).

A generational response to performativity is a recurring concept in the literature (Passy, 2013; Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017). Older, or more experienced teachers, are seen as more likely to resist this culture, objecting to the restrictions on their autonomy, the perceived disinterest in “true” learning and ensuing tension with their values (Troman, 2008; Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017). In contrast, younger or less experienced teachers, appeared to be more compliant or accepting of the performative discourse, potentially due to the fact that they themselves have been educated in an increasingly performative culture (Wilkins, 2011; Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017). Wilkins’ (2011:404) research shows that the younger generation of teachers reported minimal or no conflict between their professional identity and the performative discourse. Indeed, in an interesting dichotomy, they often went as far as to welcome the accountability regime, while still feeling they kept their autonomy. Wilkins (2011) suggests; that one interpretation of this ‘could be that they are ‘in denial’; prisoners of a Foucauldian panopticon unaware of their invisible gaoler’ (p404). Whether this is due to the younger generation’s own educational journey taking place in a time of neoliberal educational policy norms, research suggests that younger teachers tend to accept the neoliberal agenda, while their older colleagues are demonstrating that there are means and strategies to subvert it. Wilkins’ interpretation aligns with Freire’s (1996) argument that teachers become so acquiescent of the discourse that they do not see their own oppression. What is clear in the literature, is that the younger generation articulated a different sense of professionalism than that of older teachers; a more accepting response to the performativity discourse (Troman, 2008; Wilkins, 2011).

The culture of performance equally has an impact on teacher identity – both the performance of the teachers themselves in inspections and reviews (McGregor, 2009), but equally that of their pupils; a teacher who manages to meet all of their prescribed targets for student achievement, will be deemed a success, regardless of their pedagogy, professionalism or relationships with their pupils (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). Additionally, the dismissal of the emotional or caring aspects of teaching by performativity narratives means that this can be marginalised in the developing teacher identity (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012) – if something is not valued or measurable, then there is no incentive to invest in this area. Wilkins (2012:68) proposes that the loss of the ‘ethic of care’ produces inauthentic relationships.

Teacher Identity

Over the last two decades, the concept of professional teacher identity has become an increasing area of debate and research (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Clandinin *et al.*, 2009; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a); not only focussing on defining or conceptualising this identity, but also on exploring how it is developed or shaped (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a). One unifying factor in the literature is the difficulty of defining identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). The challenge is due to its multi-faceted nature; questions of agency (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), self-reflection (Sachs, 2001), self-concept (Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010), life experience (Flores & Day, 2006), emotion (Korthagen, 2004) and contextual factors (Anspal *et al.*, 2012), all play a part.

This focus has become particularly pertinent as those involved in education explore the impact that shifting educational policies have on both the educational landscape, as well as on individual teachers and pupils involved (Clandinin *et al.*, 2009; Raymond, 2018). These ever-shifting policies mean that attempting to achieve a shared understanding of what is meant by teachers' professional identity is challenging – potentially each party involved, from government officials, unions, head-teachers, parents, pupils to the teachers themselves, might define it differently (Sachs, 2001). Furthermore, this concept of identity will be continually redefined and renegotiated with every new policy or initiative that appears (Sachs, 2001).

Taken at its most basic level, professional identity encompasses skills or characteristics that are attributed to a particular group, often by external parties or equally by the members themselves (Sachs, 2001). Teacher identity is central to the teaching profession; it not only informs and guides teachers on how they want to 'be' as teachers, but influences their behaviour, their standing and their philosophy on education (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Significantly, this is something that develops in tandem with experiences, meaning-making and understanding of both who they are as a person and what they bring to the role of teacher (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Buchanan, 2015); it is not a discrete or uniform entity, rather idiosyncratic and deeply personal (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

There are two distinct aspects of teacher identity; with the teacher's personal knowledge, beliefs and values endeavouring to mesh with the expectations, demands and standards of both schools and educational policies (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a). Attempting to reconcile these two complementary, or perhaps competing foci can cause conflict and significant stress for the individual (Korthagen, 2004). The inner self of the teacher could be argued to be a key determiner in

identity, but not exclusively, as the other more professional, or knowledge based elements also play a part (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Abrahão, 2012). Fundamental to the idea of developing teacher identity and the personal, is the role of critical self-reflection (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Not only does self-reflection help teachers to understand themselves better and their role in society, but also it helps them to adapt and reimagine their professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

A common theme in the literature, is that identity is not fixed, rather a fluid, dynamic process, that adapts, reinvents and refines over time in response to external and internal influences (Pillen *et al.*, 2013b; Buchanan, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2017). The internal influences encompass the teacher's characteristics, personal experiences as a pupil and student teacher, life experiences and beliefs or values held. Equally external influences, such as work context, colleagues and leaders, ITE content and ongoing continuing professional development (CPD), as well as educational policies and initiatives, all exert pressure and influence (Pillen *et al.*, 2013b; Buchanan, 2015; Raymond, 2018). Succinctly put, identity is both a product of these influences and an ongoing process as the teacher adapts and reconfigures over time (Pillen *et al.*, 2013b; Buchanan, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2017).

For many teachers, their values and beliefs are often cited as integral to their decision for entering the profession. Korthagen (2004:85) refers to this as the 'level of mission' and suggests that it can be a significant element in teachers' professional development. These values or ideals are often referred to as positive traits or character strengths in positive psychology, and are suggested to have a great influence not only on a person's wellbeing, but also on their ability to mediate between their own self, experiences and external pressures (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Korthagen, 2004), which is of relevance in education. Closely linked to this, is the role of emotion (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Emotion plays a significant part in identity, as well as in how teachers respond and react to external pressures and in the practice of being a teacher (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

The concept of self is a key element of teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010). This personal dimension encompasses the 'experiential, moral, emotional, embodied knowledge teachers hold and express in their classroom practices' (Clandinin *et al.*, 2009:141), and interacts with the teacher's social and work contexts. Central to identity development for teachers then, is not only a perceptive understanding of themselves, but also that of their relationship with others (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Korthagen (2004) proposes that a significant impact on the way teachers visualise their identity, has to do with individuals and events they have experienced. There is often a link between the self-concept element of teacher identity, and that of agency (Kelchtermans, 1993; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Robinson, 2012). Sachs (2001) celebrates the fact

that many schools encourage their teachers to act autonomously, however cautions that this should not be taken for granted, particularly when governments often do not encourage outspoken, autonomous teachers. Raymond (2018) also proposes that identity is fundamentally linked to self-concept or 'self-view', as she puts it (p136). She states that identity is 'the way in which we view ourselves, personally and professionally and agency as the ability to live out that self-view in our lives' (Raymond, 2018:136). She adds that focussing on teacher identity allows teachers to create time and space to consider their own agency and individuality, providing a contrast to the focus on performative metrics (Raymond, 2018). This is seen as a cyclical process, with agency stemming from identity, but crucially, this then informs and re-forms the teacher's identity (Buchanan, 2015). If this process is constrained by accountability directives, this potentially can impact on identities (Buchanan, 2015).

Teacher agency as a concept is a relatively unresearched area (Biesta *et al.*, 2015) and concerns about teacher agency were a factor that prompted the Ruskin speech (Ranson, 2003). It can be problematic in that it can be theorised in many different ways (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Robinson, 2012). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) suggest that it can be seen as a sense of empowerment, and link agency firmly with the notion of teachers having confidence in their identity, role and purpose. Biesta *et al.* (2015) emphasise that it is more about how people act and behave than something that they possess, such as a skill or competence. Significantly, when discussing teacher agency, there is a sense that agency should be particularly understood as a product of past experiences in work contexts (Biesta *et al.*, 2015; Buchanan, 2015), but also informed by current engagement and future aspirations (Biesta *et al.*, 2015). For the purposes of this thesis, as well as the definitions of agency discussed above, conceptualisation of agency will include considerations of autonomy (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020) with the associated notions of independence and freedom. Freedom as conceptualised by Freire (1998) was pivotal in the ability of teachers to maintain agency and stand against potential oppression.

It is Freire's (1996) contention that acquiescence (conscious or unconscious) in the guidelines and expectations of the neoliberal state can lead to a fear of freedom, and with it autonomy and responsibility. This, he suggests, is evident in education, schools and teachers. Freire (1996) maintains that those teachers who struggle to regain this freedom, are not only met with resistance from the oppressors but also significantly, from their fellow, oppressed colleagues, who, he suggests fear greater repression as a result of challenging the status quo. This can be seen in England in recent years, where many teachers and indeed Head Teachers rail against the excessive testing done in primary school (97% of 54,000 primary teachers who responded to the poll by the National

Education Union (NEU) indicated that they would like to see SATs banned) (Weale, 2019b) and yet fail to stand united to challenge such oppressive expectations. This possible oppression was further evidenced in 2010, when the government threatened to dock pay from Head Teachers who opposed testing (Patton, 2010).

For Freire (1996) it is a question of teacher authenticity:

The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided ... between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, in their power to transform the world (p30).

In his view, freedom to act autonomously is pivotal for both teacher integrity and identity (Freire, 1996).

Context is perhaps one of the most significant factors that can influence and shape a teacher's identity and agency (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Passy, 2013; Buchanan, 2015). Within any educational setting, teachers will be introduced to professional characteristics and behaviours that they are expected to assimilate into their identity, instructing them on how to be, how to act and how to teach (Sachs, 2001; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a). It is argued that the effect that different contexts might have on teachers, particularly beginning teachers, can be significant (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) warn: 'it is the exposure to these formative contexts that results in important confrontations with one's identity as a teacher' (p184). This might be a positive, growth experience, but equally, might cause a teacher to doubt themselves or question their ability, particularly for the beginning teacher (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012).

Buchanan (2015) proposes that two decades of standardisation and 'ubiquitous testing practices' (p700) have started to reshape the nature of teachers' professional identities. In particular, she highlights the emphasis on instrumental conceptualisations of the nature of being a teacher and ensuing accountability policies. However, Buchanan (2015) also emphasises the complexity of the nature of teacher identity, with its mix of professional and personal experiences, values and expectations. Teachers, she suggests, are not encountering these policies and diktats as a 'tabulae rasae' (Buchanan, 2015:701) but are interpreting them through the lenses of their previous experience, beliefs and expectations, resulting in the formation of their teacher agency. Robinson (2012) suggests that teacher agency emerges as a direct consequence of supposed impositions from policy reform, such as performance or accountability measures. She cautions that unless such imposed outcomes are resisted, 'teachers will be re-shaped as technicians' (Robinson, 2012:231).

Robinson proposes that despite these pressures, teachers will be able to continue to construct their agency if they are part of a strong collegiate network.

Connections have been made between teacher agency and retention (Wilkins, 2011; NFER, 2018; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). At a time in the UK when teacher retention is a growing concern, reflections on strategies to ameliorate this issue could prove pivotal (Wilkins, 2011; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). Worth and Van den Brande (2020) found a strong positive correlation between teacher autonomy, job satisfaction and retention, and found that teachers had a lower level of autonomy compared to other professionals, particularly beginning teachers. One area that teachers reporting having minimal autonomy over, was their ongoing CPD, with 38% of teachers stating they have 'little' or 'no' influence over their professional development goals' (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020:4); leading, it is argued, to diminishing job satisfaction and ultimately retention issues (Wilkins, 2011; NFER, 2018). Worth and Van den Brande's (2020) research found that although teachers reported having autonomy over areas associated with classroom practice and practice, in key areas such as assessment and feedback, data collection and curriculum content they held minimal autonomy.

However, Biesta *et al.* (2015) propose that there has been a move in the last few years to reclaim autonomy for teachers, rejecting the policies that sought to de-professionalise teachers by enforcing 'prescriptive curricula and oppressive regimes of testing and inspection' (p624). They suggest that a return towards teacher agency not only enables teachers to enact professional judgement, but also raises the status of professionalism.

Student Teacher Identity

When considering teacher identity, there are some specific concerns pertinent to beginning teachers. The process of becoming an effective practitioner is complex and lengthy, in particular the impact of potentially conflicting messages, practices and values encountered by the beginning teacher (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b; Buchanan, 2015). This can often result in challenges, at a time when the teacher is also attempting to navigate the day to day pressures of the job; 'for some, feelings of isolation, mismatch between idealistic expectations and classroom reality and lack of support and guidance have been identified as key features which characterize their lives' (Flores & Day, 2006:219). What is certain, is that in these demanding early days, the beginning teacher must also consider the development of their own teacher identity, ideally supported by their training mentors and colleagues (Pillen *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b). Research shows, that while initial

challenges for the beginning teacher, e.g. behaviour, planning etc., are often relatively straightforward to resolve, tensions around their professional identities are more complex, as they deal with deeply held values, convictions and feelings, and the attempt to reconcile their personal and professional selves, 'adapting personal understandings and ideals to institutional demands' (McGregor, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b:86).

Wilkins *et al.* (2012) and Pierce (2007) propose a key theoretical concept at play with beginning teachers is liminality, as teachers adjust from the ITE culture, to that of their new professional context. Derived from the Latin *limen* meaning threshold, liminality is seen as the dissonance or disorientation that occurs in the middle stage of a rite of passage, in this context beginning teaching, when participants no longer hold their pre-ritual status (ITE culture) but have not yet begun the transition to the status they will hold when the rite is complete, in this case QTS (Pierce, 2007). Wilkins *et al.* argue that successful or less successful negotiations of these potentially contested spaces might directly impact on beginning teachers constructing either 'a teacher identity at odds with their personal and professional values, or a more "authentic" identity that counters performative discourses' (2012:65). They suggest that in order for beginning teachers to become embedded in their school community, they will need to 'position' themselves with relation to colleagues, parents and pupils (Wenger, 1998; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). However, inexperience in negotiating the school culture means that they are vulnerable in appreciating how this might impact on their developing identities (Flores & Day, 2006; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). Wilkins *et al.* (2012) liken this process to an initiation ritual, but one where not all of the rules or expectations are necessarily clear to those involved. They suggest that this is not only pertinent for beginning teachers, but also experienced teachers joining new schools, and can, they propose, factor in poor retention (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012).

ITE programmes have traditionally focussed more on knowledge and competencies, than on areas such as identity formation (Pillen *et al.*, 2013a). If however, developing teacher identity is crucial for beginning teachers, then this might necessitate a re-evaluation of the importance placed on this in ITE, in order to successfully enable student teachers to enter the profession with a sense of confidence in their developing identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). It is suggested that the emerging student teacher's identity will for better or worse influence areas as diverse as their 'sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment and effectiveness' (Flores & Day, 2006; Anspal *et al.*, 2012:198).

Equally, it is suggested that a pivotal factor in encouraging teacher identity with beginning teachers is critical self-reflection (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Buchanan, 2015). Buchanan (2015) proposes that a systematic and rigorous engagement with teacher identity development in ITE and CPD will encourage not only critical reflection but ongoing engagement with issues outside pedagogy, such as how ideologies and policies impact on teachers' 'self-understandings' (p715). ITE content as well as CPD that encourages teachers to interrogate authoritative discourses are seen as a crucial factor for enabling teachers to challenge performativity (Buchanan, 2015) - this is problematic when CPD has been increasingly cut for teachers due to budget constraints (Anspal *et al.*, 2012).

One additional area of concern raised by student teachers when considering teacher identity is the experiences of teachers who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT+). Frequently LGBT+ teachers report issues in schools due to their sexuality or gender (Henderson, 2019; Lee, 2019b, 2019a). While this could be argued to affect only a minority of teachers, as only 2.2% of the population aged 16 and over identify as LGBT+ (ONS, 2020), statistics on homophobic incidents involving LGBT+ teachers are significant; with 40% of LGBT+ teachers reporting facing discrimination and/or prejudice (Wakefield, 2020). Equally, the statistic of 2.2% could very easily be under-representative, as fears of discrimination might prevent honest declaration of status.

Dissonance between ITE and School

As students enter ITE they will already bring with them a plethora of beliefs, expectations and assumptions relating to teaching from their own memories of being pupils (Kagan, 1992; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Buchanan, 2015). If time is not dedicated to specifically engaging with potentially problematic or simplistic understandings of the role of teaching while in ITE, as well as facilitating the cognitive dissonance, it is likely that these prior models of practice will remain uncontested (Kagan, 1992; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Joep, 2018). If ITE and school mentors are to fully support student teachers, they need to acknowledge the potential tensions that student teachers might be experiencing as they negotiate their personal and professional identity (Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). One particular challenge faced by student teachers is the potentially conflicting messages they receive from in particular university-based ITE and school contexts (Fung & Chow, 2002; Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Seymour, 2018). Specifically, the difficulty of transferring the pedagogy and philosophies of ITE into the workplace as well as negotiating the 'culture of their institutions' (Buchanan, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2017:4). Student teachers can experience a transition shock as

they move from the ideologies, values and expectations of ITE into the realities of teaching and potential constraints of practice (Fung & Chow, 2002; Pierce, 2007; Seymour, 2018). This tension can create a dissonance and evoke feelings of self-doubt and confusion as the beginning teacher attempts to mediate conflicting messages (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Seymour, 2018). The literature suggests that the practices endorsed by the school context often displace that of ITE (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005), with beginning teachers ceding to more pragmatic aspirations (Seymour, 2018) and consequently falling back onto transmission-based practices that potentially contradict those practices encouraged by their ITE programmes (Strom & Martin, 2017).

Specifically, Buchanan (2015) suggests that 'the theories and practices proposed by progressive, constructivist-oriented programs may come into conflict with the practices that teacher candidates have observed during their time as students' (p703). Beginning teachers discussed how enquiry approaches to teaching that were promoted by their ITE programmes were seen to be in conflict with the traditional, didactic methods of teaching that many saw in placements (Buchanan, 2015). Buchanan (2015) proposes that student teachers respond in many ways to this tension; some are determined to endeavour to do things differently, for example continuing to challenge authoritative practices, yet others reported how the schools encouraged them to assimilate and refrain from interrogating these areas of conflict. In her opinion, even those student teachers who are advocates of non-traditional classroom practice can potentially be cowed by the 'pervasive discourses of teacher as expert and authoritarian' (Buchanan, 2015:703). Breunig (2016) adds that many school experiences leave student teachers feeling marginalised, bullied or inadequate, in the very places which should encourage and foster learning and growth.

It could be argued that adequate preparation for such tensions should be examined explicitly through ITE, that student teachers should be made aware of the difference between supportive school placements and the reality of classroom practice, but also have built up through their ITE programme the resilience to cope with this reality (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). In practical terms, this might mean ensuring that students are encouraged to engage in opportunities to develop their reflective tools, as reflection is understood to be central to questions of self, identity and how you relate to others (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Buchanan, 2015).

Kagan (1992) proposes that the crucial tasks for the student teacher are to:

- (1) confirm and validate the image of self as teacher
- (2) acquire knowledge of pupils and use it to modify the image of self as teacher
- (3) experience cognitive dissonance and question the appropriateness of personal images and beliefs
- (4) acquire instructional practices

Figure 1 Primary developmental tasks for student teachers (Kagan, 1992:150)

These tasks, she claims, can all be achieved through school placements. In particular, Kagan (1992) suggests that students should be provided with deliberately contrasting contexts, to provide opportunities to challenge, or have challenged, existing assumptions, beliefs and norms. While Kagan advocates for challenging placements, this should not be confused with the ‘bad’ school experiences discussed earlier. Challenging placements, while coupled with supportive mentors/colleagues can be crucial to developing student teacher confidence and identity (Kagan, 1992; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012). It could be argued therefore, that this should be an explicit part of ITE programmes: not only that different experiences can provide these opportunities, but also that there is opportunity to discuss this as part of the ITE programme.

While education policy is governed by performative measures such as data and results, creative approaches to education will be challenged (Grainger *et al.*, 2004; Raymond, 2018). Raymond (2018) criticises ITE providers as naïve if they do not adequately prepare their student teachers for the performative agenda in schools. He argues that this will necessitate some ‘tensions and contradictions’ (Raymond, 2018:143) in ITE; for example balancing the dominance of Ofsted’s grading regime and the TS (DfE, 2011) alongside more inclusive, creative and holistic philosophies about education (Grainger *et al.*, 2004). While ITE providers need to ensure compliance with Ofsted and the TS for their students to obtain QTS, it is argued that ITE providers can and should embrace their creative agency (Anderson, 2016; Raymond, 2018). This will ensure the programmes are more than compliance; that they are able to work within the standards constraints, to ensure their ‘creative identity’ or practice is realised (Grainger *et al.*, 2004; Raymond, 2018:143).

It should not be presumed however, that creativity and the standards agenda are a binary choice, rather as Raymond (2018) suggests ‘creative teaching and learning should be seen as a good way to achieve the very standards that we cannot escape’ (p144). This resonates with the concept of *perform-ability* that I put forward later in this thesis; the possibility of empowering student teachers to flourish despite the performative culture.

For Raymond (2018), creativity in education is predicated on ITE providers turning the ‘terrors of performativity’ (p144) from being a disempowering or disenfranchising element, into simply part of the professional context. Raymond (2018) cautions that although it is possible to challenge the performative culture in education and in ITE, it is almost impossible for teachers or student teachers to avoid its influence. His argument is that developing ‘creative identity and agency’ (p131) empowers teachers to continue working in the performative climate without ‘abandoning our values, beliefs and our own creativity in the face of the pressures to conform’ (p131). He posits that this will enable beginning teachers to ‘begin, survive and thrive ... in a way that allows them to be true to themselves in the challenging performative culture of ... primary education’ (p144). Again, this resonates with my conceptualisation and belief in *perform-ability*.

Wellbeing

The final consideration for this chapter concerns the concept of wellbeing. Defining wellbeing is problematic for education, due to the diverse and contrasting array of terms to describe work in this field, with ‘emotional literacy, emotional intelligence, positive mental health, and emotional well-being’ most common (McLaughlin, 2008:353-354). Wellbeing is usually associated with ‘feeling good about oneself, self-esteem, being aware of one’s own and other people’s emotions’ (Eaude, 2009:187). Although an eclectic range of definitions can lead to ‘conceptual sloppiness’ (Morrison & Ecclestone, 2011:203), McLaughlin (2008) clarifies that this distinction is often to do with the context in which wellbeing is being referred to: for example the term ‘emotional literacy’ is used often by those in education and ‘positive mental health’ by psychologists.

This study seeks to interpret wellbeing as non-cognitive or affective outcomes, which include aspects such as self-esteem, confidence and empathy (Siddiqui *et al.*, 2017a). In so doing so there may be the appearance of representing wellbeing as an affective/cognitive binary, however the intention is simply to proffer a useful starting point for what is known to be a complex term.

Wellbeing resonates as a central discussion in education due to a growing awareness of an increasing number of teachers and young people that suffer from mental health issues and a concern that these needs are not being adequately addressed in education (Alexander & Armstrong, 2010; Acton & Glasgow, 2015; The Children’s Society, 2015; Turner & Theilking, 2019). These concerns have been particularly pertinent through the recent pandemic and the associated effects of lockdown on children’s education and wellbeing (Coughlan & Sellgren, 2020; Jenkins, 2020; UNICEF, 2020) as well as on teacher workload, stress and work/life balance (Allen *et al.*, 2020).

Champions of wellbeing in education stress how it permeates all aspects of school life, impacting on both teachers and pupils (Eaude, 2008; McLaughlin, 2008; Spilt *et al.*, 2011; Clarke *et al.*, 2014) and is inextricably linked to issues such as teacher autonomy, workload and retention (Vesely *et al.*, 2014; Thompson *et al.*, 2020; Brady & Wilson, 2021). England's current preoccupation with testing has created an education system where 'the product' (i.e. test results) is the focus rather than education of the child *per se* (Narayanan, 2007; McGregor, 2009; Acton & Glasgow, 2015). This, it is argued, has engendered a climate of stress for teachers, leading to job dissatisfaction, burnout and mental health crises (Vesely *et al.*, 2014; Turner & Theilking, 2019; Gordon, 2020; Brady & Wilson, 2021) as well as impacting on children's self-esteem and feelings of inability to cope (McGregor, 2009). Relationships are seen as a key factor in wellbeing in education (Roffey, 2011; Spilt *et al.*, 2011; Seligman, 2012), with a principal cause of stress originating in people's inability to navigate both adult:adult, adult:student or student:student relationships (Morris, 2009; Spilt *et al.*, 2011). McLaughlin (2008) found that schools that were successfully promoting wellbeing had 'teachers who took a personal interest' (p357). Conversely, Buchanan (2015) suggests that denying teachers the opportunity to engage authentically with colleagues and pupils on an emotional level, is linked with increased retention issues.

Though educational policy has traditionally been driven by a focus on the economic benefit for individuals and society (Siddiqui *et al.*, 2017a), it could be argued that a more aspirational vision of education would value non-cognitive outcomes, for their own sake. Brighouse (2008) advocates such a vision of education and expounds on the educational and schooling implications for taking wellbeing seriously (p58). He claims that education 'should aim to improve children's prospects for leading flourishing lives' (Brighouse, 2008a:60), and stresses that he does not equate happiness with flourishing, clarifying that:

Flourishing is a richer property than happiness, sensitive to many more features of a person's life than just her inner states. Flourishing involves people making meaning, making sense, of important aspects of their lives and the totality of their life (2008a:62).

Brighouse's (2008) definition and vision of 'flourishing' is a quality that has great affinity with the interpretation of wellbeing being used in this thesis, that is, non-cognitive or affective outcomes of education. Additionally this vision articulated by Brighouse (2008) is intricately connected in this thesis with conceptualisations of the 'perform-able' teacher, that is a is one who is able to thrive despite the performative education culture. The idea of 'perform-ability' presented in this thesis conceptualises the possibility of empowering student teachers to flourish despite the performative culture.

Cowburn and Blow's (2017) report into wellbeing in schools called on the Government to redress the imbalance of the education system that prioritised academic achievement over wellbeing. They encouraged the Government to adopt their key recommendations, which would embed emotional wellbeing at the centre of the education system. Two key components of these recommendations were particularly relevant for this thesis. Firstly, the call for ITE and teacher education in general to embed an understanding of mental health, resilience and wellbeing (Cowburn & Blow, 2017). In particular this report emphasised that it was not enough for ITE to embed this provision, but ongoing CPD with existing teachers was also crucial to ensure a balanced and cohesive approach to wellbeing (Cowburn & Blow, 2017). A second key recommendation was for Ofsted to strengthen the focus on wellbeing provision. Since the report by Cowburn and Blow (2017) was published, Ofsted's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman, signalled a clear change of direction for the inspection body. In her speech launching the consultation for the new *Education Inspection Framework* (Ofsted, 2019a), she spoke of wanting Ofsted to be a 'force for improvement' (Spielman, 2018:online), perhaps implying that it was not currently achieving this. She particularly criticised the previous inspection framework model for the burden it added to teacher workload and the diminishing of the curriculum, stating that it put pressure on 'school leaders, teachers and indirectly on pupils to deliver perfect data above all else' (Spielman, 2018:online), leading to schools prioritising test and exam results ahead of individual children's needs.

When the *Education Inspection Framework* (Ofsted, 2019a) was published in May 2019, key themes emerged that were signalled in Spielman's speech (2018), which specifically related to wellbeing. An increased focus on reducing teacher workload to improve teacher wellbeing, with specific mention of ensuring that assessment and data collection and analysis does not create unnecessary burdens for either teachers or pupils. The accompanying *School Inspection Handbook*, published in November 2019 (Ofsted, 2019b), explicitly mentions the extent to which leaders take into account the workload and wellbeing of their staff, in the judgements against Leadership and Management. In order to achieve the criteria for outstanding leadership, schools must be able to demonstrate that 'Staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues' (Ofsted, 2019b:74).

This new emphasis on wellbeing is also stressed with regard to pedagogy and curriculum, with inspectors set to judge the quality of provision in relation to the 'impact it has on children's learning, development and well-being' (Ofsted, 2019b:90). Although there is still a leaning towards a 'knowledge-rich curriculum', this is supported with a new emphasis on a broad and well-balanced curriculum, with a warning to the minority of primary schools for whom 'the determination to perform well in SATs was sometimes skewing the curriculum just too far towards literacy and maths, to the detriment of other subjects' (Spielman, 2020:online).

A further assertion by Cowburn and Blow (2017) that resonates with this thesis, was their contention that the *Framework of Core Content for Initial Teacher Training* (DfE, 2016a) was inadequate and subsequent iterations needed to include the expectation that ITE providers would ensure that student teachers were able to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing needs. The revised Framework (DfE, 2019), makes limited reference to wellbeing and pupils' mental health, mainly with regard to the expectation that ITE providers will ensure that their student teachers learn that 'Teachers have the ability to affect and improve the wellbeing, motivation and behaviour of their pupils' (DfE, 2019:9). Apart from this, the only detail given with reference to pupils' wellbeing or mental health in the whole framework is a single sentence that states:

The ITT Core Content Framework has been reviewed with consideration with how to best prepare trainee teachers to support pupils with their mental health, including – but not limited to – by creating respectful cultures within their classrooms where pupils feel motivated and valued (DfE, 2019:6).

The only other reference to wellbeing is related to supporting student teachers to manage their workload and wellbeing through the course and into their teaching career. Interestingly, more detail is given to exemplify this point, clarifying that this can be done by:

Manage workload and wellbeing, by:

- Observing how expert colleagues use and personalise systems and routines to support efficient time and task management and deconstructing this approach.
- Discussing and analysing with expert colleagues the importance of the right to support (e.g. to deal with misbehaviour).
- Protecting time for rest and recovery and being aware of the sources of support available to support good mental wellbeing.

Figure 2 Excerpt from ITT Core Content Framework (DfE, 2019:31-32)

It could be argued that there is still progress to be made in the area of ensuring that wellbeing and mental health is embedded in the Core Content for ITE.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored some key issues or challenges that are central to education today. In particular three key themes have been considered that are central for this thesis: ITE, neoliberal performativity in education and teacher identity. An initial exploration of the history of ITE demonstrated the ways that the vision of and for teacher education has changed over the last forty

years (Bailey & Robson, 2002; Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This is particularly seen with reference to how and where teachers are trained, with a specific move, originated and perpetuated by the political parties in power, to school-led training and away from perceived negative influences of university ITE programmes (Bailey & Robson, 2002; Childs & Mender, 2013; Menter *et al.*, 2017). This changing dynamic in ITE was mirrored in education by the growing neoliberal agenda. It is argued that this neoliberal discourse is often coupled with a performative emphasis for schools, teachers and pupils (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Cobb & Couch, 2018; Raymond, 2018). The impact of this discourse, this performative focus, has been linked to Freire's (1996) description of the *banking concept* in education.

It is argued that the neoliberal discourse can have a detrimental impact on teacher identity, for both established and beginning teachers (Ball, 2003; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Raymond, 2018). One particular conceptualisation of teacher identity that resonated with this thesis is the 'activist identity' as proposed by Sachs (2001). This emancipatory approach understands that democracy is more than just an 'ideal', but translates into values that are embedded and aims to 'eliminate exploitation, inequality and oppression', centred in social justice and equality principles (Sachs, 2001:157).

Another consideration from literature regarding teacher identity is related to the question of agency (Sachs, 2001; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Robinson, 2012). The concept of 'empowerment' that is highlighted by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009:183) seems to link agency firmly with the notion of teachers having confidence in their identity, role and purpose. There are clear resonances with the proposed conceptualisation of *perform-ability* that is central to this thesis.

Considerations of how and if ITE has a role to play in helping student teachers to navigate and survive the 'shifting landscapes' (Clandinin *et al.*, 2009:142) of current education policy, were considered. Advocates of explicitly engaging with questions of teacher identity in ITE programmes, have highlighted the importance of balancing the traditional knowledge/skills/competencies content with input on identity formation, in order to enable beginning teachers to enter the profession as successful individuals (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). The literature in this chapter has presented a growing desire amongst educators to counteract a current bias towards performativity and results/data driven education (Turner-Bisset, 2007; Berry, 2016; Raymond, 2018). A possible strategy might be a rethinking of how ITE, schools and teachers approach education. Chapter Three will consider possible solutions to the problems discussed in this chapter and will particularly reference Critical Pedagogy and the work of Paulo Freire.

Chapter Three: Possible solutions: Theories and Pedagogies

Introduction

This chapter begins by exploring Critical Pedagogy (CP) and the possibilities that engaging with this theoretical perspective might bring to student teachers and, where relevant, connections will be made with Philosophy for Children (P4C). Secondly, P4C will be explored as an approach that could be embedded as both a pedagogy and philosophical consideration in ITE. This chapter will consider how a form of P4C, Critical P4C, might synthesise these two areas, to provide a message of possibility and hope to counter some of the issues raised in Chapter Two regarding the neoliberal agenda's impact on education normalising a prevalence of accountability and performativity on schools, teachers and ITE.

While the literature engaging with these issues (see Ball, 1998; Clandinin *et al.*, 2009; Kilderry, 2015 and Keddie, 2017) predominantly focuses on negative outcomes of neoliberalism, this chapter seeks to build on this thinking, by exploring possible solutions to the issues faced by beginning teachers. In particular, it seeks to engage with the role that ITE might play in encouraging and enabling greater critical debate with and reflection on educational ideas such as those discussed in this chapter. Specifically, this literature has led to considerations of CP and the possibility of bringing a CP lens to ITE. The writing of Ball *et al.* connected for me with Freire's (1996) conceptualisation of banking education. However, although these authors offer no obvious answers to this situation, it is my contention, that Freire and his hopeful conceptualisation of *problem posing education* does.

The emphasis on Freire in this thesis is due to the resonance that I see with his vision for transformative and socially just forms of education (Freire, 1994, 1996, 2007) and P4C as a pedagogy. Key works of Freire; *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1996), *Pedagogy of Freedom* (Freire, 1998), *Pedagogy of Hope* (1994), *Pedagogy of the Heart* (2006) and *Pedagogy of the Unfinished* (2007) have been considered in this chapter, in addition to related themes of oppression, democracy, social justice, politics and their connections with P4C.

Freirean Critical Pedagogy as a theoretical lens

CP is argued to have been developed from Critical Theory, which has its origins in the early 1920s and can be seen as an umbrella term for a movement which stemmed from the influences of Kant, Hegel and Marx (Rasmussen, 2012). CP's educational approach was developed by Paulo Freire

(McLaren, 1999; Van Heertum, 2006; Giroux, 2010), introduced in the late 1960s in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1996). This approach seeks to contest dominant thinking and practices about education, specifically:

thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teachings, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relation of the wider community and society (Breunig, 2016:978).

There is diversity amongst the iterations of CP (Gur-Ze'ev, 2005; Apple & Au, 2009; Dunham, 2018), however Breunig (2016) argues that despite the variation, their commonality is a focus on education as one possible approach to bring about social transformation.

The writings of Freire on education, social transformation, freedom and hope (Freire, 1994, 1996, 1998) have influenced many generations of readers, educators and academics (Van Heertum, 2006; Giroux, 2010; Kohan, 2019). McLaren (1999) suggests that any supporter of progressive education will be drawn towards him. Central to Freire's writing is challenging all kinds of oppression and championing humanisation:

To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity (1996:29).

Freire (1996) argues that humanisation; the process by which oppressed people become freer and affirm their identities, concerns the desire of the oppressed for freedom and justice, and an opposition of exploitation and the dominance of those who would seek to oppress. CP seeks to expose and challenge considerations of power dynamics and relationships in the classroom, schools and society (McLaren, 1999; Breunig, 2016), resonating with educators determined to challenge inequalities in education policy on a range of issues, including class, ability/disability, racism, sexism and homophobia (McLaren, 1999). In simple terms, CP aims to provide learners with the tools to improve themselves and the world (Freire, 1996). The critical aspect of CP concerns the practice of enabling learners to analyse critically key concepts such as the nature of knowledge, power, society and oppression.

Oppression

Oppression can take many forms. At one end of the continuum there is the overt manifestations of oppression that Freire (1996) challenged in Brazil, where whole sections of society were marginalised and excluded from education. At the other end of the continuum oppression can take a more subtle form, including conscious or unconscious ignorance (Freire, 1996), shaped, or even

constrained, by 'social, political, economic, and cultural dynamics and norms' (Breunig, 2016:979). Consequently, it could be argued, that universities, schools, teachers, and pupils, might engage consciously or unconsciously in oppressive behaviour (Breunig, 2016). Freire (2007:3) argued that an 'awakening to oppression' was part of the role and duty of the educator: 'As progressive educators, we have the ethical responsibility to reveal situations of oppression'. In practice this suggests that ITE providers should seek to deliberately engage and explore such issues with their students.

Another example of oppression can be seen in the educational climate that is present in the neoliberal age. Freire spoke out against the nihilism of neoliberalism:

To me, it is impossible to live without dreams. How can we accept these neoliberal discourses which have been preached as if they were real and also keep our dreams alive?' (2007:3).

This is a pressing concern in the teaching profession currently. Teacher retention in the UK is a crisis that needs to be addressed (Weale, 2019a). Teacher workload, stress, unrealistic pay-related targets, and budget-cuts are just a few of the many issues facing teachers today (Tapper, 2018). ITE needs to reflect on how they engage with this reality with their students. This could firstly cover *awakening* (Freire, 1996) the student teachers to this reality, but also critically engaging and exploring in dialogue alternative visions or purposes of education and how this might impact on their emerging teacher identity.

Power structures in dialogue

A key aspect of Freirean CP is the role of dialogue in the classroom:

Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education (Freire, 1996:73-74).

This is in stark contrast with prevalent teaching pedagogies, where often unidirectional transmission models of teaching proliferate, often due to the acquiescence with the dominant model of the teacher as knowledge provider (Connell, 2013; Strom & Martin, 2017). Freire's (1996) emphasis on dialogue contains the belief that every individual is capable of critically engaging with others in dialogue about the world in which they live. Engaging in dialogic pedagogies has the potential to change the power dynamics of the classroom:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the

students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow (Freire, 1996:61).

This is pertinent for ITE. Mor (2018) and Noddings (2002) propose that one way of developing these characteristics in student teachers, is by promoting the use of dialogue, both in ITE and subsequently in the classroom. This, they argue can demonstrate to student teachers the potential to develop pupils as fulfilled, autonomous and virtuous individuals. Mor (2018) stresses however, that the definition of 'autonomous', is about the freedom to live with responsibility for those around them, striving to continually develop and improve more caring relations. This is in stark contrast to the neoliberal veneration of the individual, which promotes advancement at the expense, or irrespective of others (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Holloway & Brass, 2018).

One particular dialogic approach that would support this proposal, and is known for encouraging values such as 'trust, solidarity, mutual concern and empathic responsiveness' (Mor, 2018:25) is evidenced in P4C (Lipman, 2003; Kizel, 2016, 2017). In P4C the purpose of the dialogue is not to win the argument, but to connect with each other, to challenge and to engage with different points of view, leading to developing genuine caring within the classroom. While this notion of a caring community in P4C has been criticised as the 'advancement of emotional well-being at the expense of criticality, logic or reason' (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009:33) the claim of a lack of challenge from teachers over the content of the dialogue, with 'all views accepted unconditionally' (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009b:33) is erroneous. The community are at all times encouraged to engage critically, with the expectation that members will give reasons, challenge assumptions and provide examples (Splitter, 2014). The significance of the caring community is that each participant is listened to courteously, with all views considered, however with criticality present, where 'some contributions can still be treated as invalid, incorrect or irrelevant by the community of enquiry' (Haynes & Murris, 2011b:295).

This reimagined power relationship that Freire describes, is practised in P4C, where the teacher becomes a co-enquirer with the class/students (Haynes & Murris, 2011b; Burgh, 2018). P4C changes the conventional power structure in the classroom, creating new classroom dynamics, that of a Community of Enquiry (CoE) (discussed later in this chapter) where the children's voices (often marginalised in education) aspire to have equal weight to that of the teacher (Haynes & Murris, 2011a). The teacher in the CoE does not adopt the traditional roles associated with teaching, that is knowledge-deliverer, authoritarian or disciplinarian; instead the teacher is a facilitator and the community is seen as 'autopoietic, that is, as a dynamic, self-organizing system' (Kennedy, 2004:753). While there will be particular subjects and skills in the curriculum that will necessitate a more formal approach to content, with the teacher assuming the more traditional responsibility or

authority for the curriculum, the many curriculum areas that develop affective dimensions are seen to benefit from dialogical models such as P4C (Love, 2016, 2018b).

The transition to facilitator, with its corresponding move from transmission model to dialogical model can be challenging for both the student teacher, as well as for the established teacher (Haynes & Murris, 2011b; Burgh, 2018). The teacher-facilitator models and scaffolds particular skills and attributes of the CoE, encouraging the group towards a point where the teacher is less active in the community, almost just another member of the group, or co-enquirer (Kennedy, 2010; Burgh, 2018). This potential re-balance of authority is not without issue. Some teachers enact more traditional power roles in the classroom, confident as the authority figure 'to anticipate and correct, respond and direct an answer toward the goals of the lesson' (Haynes & Murris, 2011b:287). For these teachers, P4C's unpredictable nature is a barrier; 'the questioning and democratic nature of the CoE can be demanding and unsettling [...] presenting unaccustomed challenges and moral dilemmas' (Haynes & Murris, 2011b:285). Some teachers see this as a diminishing of the role of the teacher, rather than an empowering of the children (Lyle & Thomas-Williams, 2011; Splitter, 2014). Biesta (2017) builds on this idea, challenging the prioritising of learners and learning over teachers. He queries the move towards learning communities that reduce teachers to the 'peer at the rear' and suggests that such ideologies only hide the 'differing responsibilities of teachers and students in such relationships' (Biesta, 2017:423). While this might be true in some education settings, the reimagining of the roles of the teacher in pedagogies such as P4C can bring a new dimension for both the teacher and the students. Those teachers who risk ceding some power to their class, can experience that P4C has the potential to 'bring about an epistemological and ethical shift and the creation of social interaction experienced as alive and fresh, rather than as tired, imitative, compliant and repetitive' (Haynes, 2007:235). It must be stressed however, that this new role is not easy to inhabit and particular skills, such as developed through the SAPERE P4C training pathways, are required by the teacher to ensure that this is a positive learning experience for both teacher and students.

The idea of the teacher as facilitator is not unproblematic (Haynes & Kohan, 2018). Haynes and Kohan (2018) propose that the notion of facilitation can appeal to teachers who wish to disassociate with didactic and transmissive approaches, but caution that while for many it encapsulates more democratic ideas of the role of the teacher and power dynamics in the classroom, underlying elements of hierarchy will remain. They suggest that the underlying notion is of the teacher as one capable of 'understanding the complexities and difficulties of a given problem, situation or concept, and who has the task of reducing complexity so that ... the student, will be rendered able to engage in a discussion' (Haynes & Kohan, 2018:213). While it would be naïve to suggest that all notions of

hierarchy will, and even should, be eliminated from the classroom, striving towards a more equal teaching and learning environment should eliminate power dynamics that suggest 'knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing' (Freire, 1996:70).

Key characteristics of CP are humility, trust, faith, hope and criticality (Freire, 1994, 1996). Freirean dialogue, as with P4C dialogue, is embedded with critical thinking and operating at a different level to discussions in the classroom: there is a call to action, a challenge to oppose dominant forces and an expectation and hope that a more democratic, just and egalitarian world is possible (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Freire, 1994; Kizel, 2017).

Politics and Critical Pedagogy

The political element of CP is integral to its aims (McLaren, 1999; Breunig, 2016). Education is not seen as neutral, but as affecting change (Freire, 1998; Giroux, 2010; Breunig, 2016). CP's directive is to empower a sense of agency in students, a sense of responsibility for themselves and others and a corresponding role in striving for a more just and democratic society (Freire, 1996, 1998; Giroux, 2010). Freire described what he termed a 'culture of silence' (1996:12); a lethargy and ignorance of the dispossessed; victims as he saw it of economic, social and political domination. Freire (1996) argued that these victims were 'submerged' in a situation where critical awareness and response were almost impossible. For Freire (1996), the whole education system enforces and maintains this culture of silence.

Gur-Ze'ev (2005) laments the limited engagement with CP in ITE, arguing that CP has a relevant contribution to make to political challenges, particularly with regard to the marginalised or the oppressed. This is a pertinent challenge for both schools and ITE when education is increasingly being criticised when it engages in political debate (Rayner, 2017; Busby, 2019; Kula, 2020; Murray, 2020). Cobb and Couch (2018) argue that ITE programmes need to ensure student teachers are aware how broader political forces impact and influence education.

For Freire, discussions of *conscientização* (translated as critical consciousness or conscientization) are fundamental considerations for education. He writes:

My role in the world is not simply that of someone who registers what occurs but of someone who has an input into what happens. For this reason, I do not accept (because it is not possible) the ingenuous or strategically neutral position often claimed by people in

education ... No one can be in the world, with the world, and with others and maintain a posture of neutrality (Freire, 1998:73).

Central is this rejection of the neutral (Freire, 1996, 1998). The context that Freire was writing in, Latin America, had a deeply divided society and Freire saw this mirrored in education. For Freire, to ignore the politicism of education was tantamount to acquiescence, proposing instead that education should be 'a subversive force' (1996:11) presenting two opposing models of education; the *banking model* and the *problem-posing model*. The former, transmission model, sees prescribed knowledge *deposited* into the minds of pupils; and was viewed as a means to perpetuate oppression (Freire, 1996, 1998; Funston, 2017; Kohan, 2018). The latter liberatory 'problem-posing' approach (Freire, 1996, 1998) was a dialogic model, where the teacher and the pupils learnt from and with each other, with the potential for 'promoting social justice and transforming society' (Funston, 2017:8; Kohan, 2018). It embraces concepts such as 'liberation, humanization, true scientific knowledge, and dialogue' (Kohan, 2018:622) and challenges the traditional paradigm of the knower (the expert/teacher) and those who need others to know or to think (the student) (Kohan, 2018). Through a dialogical approach to teaching; 'the person in charge of education is being formed or re-formed as he/she teaches, and the person who is being taught forms him/herself in this process' (Freire, 1996:31). Freire proposes that new conceptualisations of teachers and learners are formed, the aforementioned 'teacher-student with students-teachers' (1996:61). This is not an unequal relationship, or a transaction between superior and inferiors, rather a cooperative, egalitarian experience (Kohan, 2018), where 'knowledge is constructed in the educational interaction, rather than transmitted to students from teachers' (Funston, 2017:8). While there will be inevitable inequalities that arise from the adult's greater experience, knowledge, linguistic skills etc., the role of the teacher fundamentally changes, from the authoritative source of truth model, to that of a facilitator of learning (Funston, 2017). This aligns closely with the model of the teacher facilitator in P4C practice.

Freire (1996) would maintain that it is the responsibility of ITE to engage with political issues. The recently published *ITT Core Content Framework* (DFE, 2019) aims to define the 'minimum entitlement of all trainee teachers' (p3). Although this is not a statutory document, ITE providers are inspected against these expectations. When considering CP issues such as civic responsibility, visions of social justice and transformation, the reading of this document is discouraging. Over 49 pages of the document, there is not a single reference to curriculum content that might engage with such areas. Purportedly, the framework is designed to help 'trainee teachers take their first steps towards becoming expert teachers of the future who can transform the lives all pupils' (DFE, 2019:5); however this 'transformation' is only exemplified with regard to 'knowledge, capabilities and beliefs

about learning' (DFE, 2019:17), rather than alluding to the affective or non-cognitive elements of education. As 'the minimum entitlement' however, this does not prohibit ITE promoting different kinds of education. The main content of the document is an exemplification of the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011), but Part 2 of these standards, which might potentially cover such areas, is completely omitted, signalling perhaps the status that this section is given. Once again, this does offer the opportunity for ITE providers to explore creative interpretations of engagement with Part 2.

Interestingly, Baumfield (2016b) compared teacher education in the four jurisdictions of the UK and found that the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland's conception of the teacher surpassed that of England in this regard, with an expectation for teachers to 'embrace activism for positive social change and a commitment to the radicalism that construing teaching as a reflective profession entails' (p62). This is however tempered with an acknowledgement of the challenges of the economic climate in Northern Ireland, with scarce resources allocated to education and a deterioration in the employment opportunities for young teachers (Devlin, 2011; Baumfield, 2016b).

Gur-Ze'ev (2005) posits that CP continues to be relevant in times of increasing political change, and that education is vital to challenge the ongoing oppression inflicted on minority groups. Only then, he argues, can CP achieve the emancipatory goal that it espouses. In ITE this emancipatory goal might refer both to engaging in critical dialogue about the content of curriculum that is presented to the students, but also to enable the students to knowingly engage with issues such as neoliberalism. The tension for ITE providers is the necessity to ensure students meet the success criteria set by the DfE (2011) as well as themselves passing Ofsted inspections and meeting the Core Criteria for ITE (DfE, 2016a).

Likewise, Ann Sharp, the co-founder of P4C, believed that P4C has a political dimension:

In a real sense, it is a commitment to freedom, open debate, pluralism, self-government and democracy ... It is only to the extent that individuals have had the experience of dialoguing with others as equals, participating in shared, public inquiry that they will be able to eventually take an active role in the shaping of a democratic society (Sharp, 2018:248).

P4C contains an imperative to action that is fundamental in CP, Freire (1996) insists that we each need to make the choice between being 'spectators or actors ... between speaking out or being silent, castrated in [our] power to create and re-create, in [our] power to transform the world (p30).

Criticisms levelled at CT and CP centre around a view that the espoused philosophies remain at a theoretical level, and offer no clear guidance or encouragement for engaging in political action or praxis (Larsen & Wright, 1993; Gur-Ze'ev, 2005; Breunig, 2016). However, Freirean CP emphasises pedagogy in practice, not just theoretical considerations of pedagogy: '[It] cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action' (Freire, 1996:47). Breunig (2016) clarifies that 'action', according to Freire is not just an activity, but is 'action as activism' (p979); that is, purposeful, relevant to an ever-changing society and always oriented to social justice. She suggests that for education, key issues are ensuring a 'safe space' in the classroom, enabling genuine dialogue and embracing the possibility of disrupting hierarchies and empowering student voices (Breunig, 2016). This is a key principle in P4C: the CoE is a safe place where all participants are given a voice (Baumfield, 2016a), but equally through the dialogue, they must listen and reflect on the voices of others, critically analysing contributions (D'Olimpio, 2015). For Freire (1996), only action coupled with reflection had the potential to transform society.

Social Transformation

CP is enmeshed with considerations about the values inherent in education (Giroux, 2010). Its prime focus is to empower students to be critical, analytical and self-reflective about what they experience in the classroom and in society. This poses a further consideration for ITE provision as to the extent to which ITE programmes encourage students to be ready to challenge power structures or inequalities.

The educator who is influenced by Freirean philosophies is argued to be found working 'silently but steadfastly in the margins of culture and the interstices of collapsing public sectors' (McLaren, 1999:54). These educators endeavour to create opportunities to engage with counter narratives, to challenge injustice and to advocate for all those who are disenfranchised or oppressed by the current regime. It could be argued that McLaren's (1999) model of the educator is similar to the third type of teacher proposed by Moore and Clarke (2016) and Wilkins *et al.* (discussed in Chapter Two) who suggest that teachers actively 'mediate, interpret, resist and subvert policy imperatives, bringing their own values to bear on the implementation of performative objectives' (2012:68).

CP's engagement with questions of politics and morality in addition to critical thinking, should enable self-determination and civic engagement in students (Giroux, 2010). Once again, there are connections that can be made here with the work of Sharp (1987) in P4C, who explains that the CoE can develop both pupils' moral and ethical nature; to 'care for one another's happiness equal to the

concern one has for one's own happiness' (p13). For Freire, the ethical or moral aspect of education was crucial for achieving social transformation:

Without certain qualities or virtues, such as a generous loving heart, respect for others, tolerance, humility, a joyful disposition, love of life, openness to what is new, a disposition to welcome change, perseverance in the struggle, a refusal of determinism, a spirit of hope, and openness to justice, progressive pedagogical practice is not possible (1998:108).

Joep (2018) suggests that the current policy for ITE, promoting a knowledge delivery model of education, is highly problematic as it can lead to a model that is morally blind, with student teachers oblivious to the ethical realities and considerations of real-life teaching. This is the challenge specifically for ITE providers; to consider how student teachers begin to develop this ethical and educative approach, as well as to critically reflect on how much of their programmes are dedicated to discussing or promoting an awareness of 'phronesis' (wisdom relevant to practical action or practical virtue) or 'ethical responsiveness' (Joep, 2018:67) on the part of their students. It is my contention that engaging with CP in ITE, theoretically and practically through the pedagogy of P4C, might enable these considerations to be explored with integrity. Lipman *et al.* (1980) and Kizel (2016; 2017) emphasise that the practice of P4C should have a transformative impact on the CoE.

Joep (2018) discusses the development of phronesis for student teachers on placements, as being 'in moments of surprise, where experiencing an unexpected situation can initially involve feelings of anxiety, fear, awkwardness, or overwhelmedness (sic)' (p79). There is a connection here with the work of Haynes and Murris (2011b) and their discussions about 'disequilibrium' and 'epistemological shifts' that they propose happen with student teachers as they engage with P4C. Murris adds that although these moments highlight challenges for P4C facilitators, it also emphasises the rich opportunities that P4C can bring to the teacher; their practice will be shaped, informed, renewed and potentially transformed:

Disequilibrium is a positive force that opens up a space in which educators need to reflect upon their values, their beliefs about learning and teaching, and ultimately encourages educators to rethink their own role (2008:667).

Murris *et al.* (2009) propose that this disequilibrium should indeed be encouraged and provoked in ITE in order to challenge student teachers' thinking about teacher/pupil relationships and their role as an educator. Introducing P4C into the classroom can also cause a paradigm shift in how student teachers (and teachers) perceive pupil capabilities, as pupils often exceed the expectations of the teachers, thus inducing a state of 'positive dissonance for them, encouraging them to be curious about the complexity of their students' thinking' (Baumfield, 2016a:123). Joep (2018) suggests that as student teachers start to develop this phronesis, these insecurities segue into a confidence in

involving emotions such as compassion and care in the classroom, which he argues embeds a relational element to their practice. Jope (2018) asserts that ITE programmes need to emphasise 'cultivation of emotions' in relation to teaching practice (p79). The role of emotions or the relational side of teaching is a recurring thread throughout this thesis and is central for Freire's (1996) vision for education.

Love, Hope & Neoliberalism

A distinctive element of Freire's writings, is his 'unashamed stress on the importance and power of love' (McLaren, 1999:53). Freire's position was that love underpinned CP and was crucial for genuine dialogue and change:

Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people ... Because love is an act of courage, not of fear, love is commitment to others. No matter where the oppressed are found, the act of love is commitment to their cause—the cause of liberation (1996:70).

In *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire (1998) argues that in addition to love, hope was essential and was the only way to overcome the cynical fatalism of neoliberal ideology. Hope is argued to demolish the neoliberalist preoccupation with individualism, instrumentalism and diminishing of humans to 'passive receptors of objective being' (Van Heertum, 2006:46). Freire's critique of the neoliberal conceptualisation of education emerged particularly in *Pedagogy of Freedom*, where he decried 'the scourge of neoliberalism' (1998:22). From an educational perspective Freire accepted that practical knowledge was important, however he saw the rise of neoliberalism as narrowing learning and knowledge to training students 'techniques' (Roberts, 2003:461). Freire (1998) resisted the fatalistic narrative of neoliberalism, which assumed that inequality was a necessary by-product of the free market.

Mor (2018) suggests that values stem from an ethics of care, which she argues is the 'most suitable ethical framework for guiding teachers' practice nowadays' (p10) and distinguishes between the professional ethics that underpin teachers' practice and the ethics, or moral education that teachers seek to develop in their classroom. This approach focuses on 'actual relationships and activities as well as on the dispositions and traits of character of individuals' (Mor, 2018:22). Fundamental to this approach is the view of people as 'relational and interdependent' (Mor, 2018:22), with caring for others and being cared for, as a central focus. This is in direct contrast to that of performative neoliberal pedagogy. Freire (1996) discusses how the banking approach effectively dehumanises education. He stresses that transactional teaching diminishes authentic dialogue, which he argues, is

crucial for authentic thinking: 'Yet only through communication can human life hold meaning' (Freire, 1996:58). Freire argues that educators who are committed to freedom in education and thought must reject the neoliberal approach decisively: 'They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world' (1996:60). Creating such an environment, Mor argues, is dependent on genuine interpersonal relationships between the teacher and the pupil, embracing values of 'trust, solidarity, mutual concern and empathic responsiveness' (2018:25).

Approaching ITE with an ethics of care framework might mean a realigning, or re-education on the part of the teacher educators, if they are to encourage such an approach with student teachers (Mor, 2018). Teacher educators will need to reassess the status or priority that they place on moral education and the caring dimension, and model this approach, if it is to be seen as important by the student teachers (Mor, 2018).

Problem Posing Education in Praxis

Freire (1996) proposed that neoliberal educational models, as conceptualised in his banking education model, needed to be challenged in praxis; which is where his vision for problem posing education is offered. For Freire, this model was the only way to transform reality, and saw a rejection of transmission education, in favour of genuine relationships with each other and the world.

Neoliberalism is claimed to encourage passivity in its students and disinterest in learning (Freire, 1996; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Strom & Martin, 2017). Freire challenged educators, to awaken in students a genuine interest in their learning:

Opening up paths and of challenging, doing whatever it takes so that the students cannot fall asleep at the switch. Falling asleep here is not just meant from a physical point of view, in reality, but rather from the standpoint of becoming uninterested (2007:36).

The learner in CP is no longer a passive recipient waiting to be filled, but an active participant in their education as 'critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher' (Freire, 1996:61). The disruption of the teacher as the knowledge-deliverer and the student as deposit-accepter (Freire, 1996, 1998) enables the focus of students to move from pleasing the teacher and the system (Breunig, 2016). Thus countering the institutional norms that emphasise 'silent, passive obedience' (Breunig, 2016:980).

Democratic practice is firmly situated in a values and ethics-led education ideology such as problem posing education. For Freire, a key aim for education was to encourage particular qualities or virtues. P4C is commonly viewed as an example of democracy in action (Lipman, 2003; Anderson, 2016; Kizel, 2016), even as an approach that can help to achieve particular political and social outcomes (Burgh & Yorshansky, 2011; Kizel, 2016; 2017). Underpinning this is a vision of education as enabling and empowering children to conduct their lives in a thoughtful manner (Burgh & Yorshansky, 2011). Haynes (2007) proposes that P4C has the potential to contribute to 'democratisation' in schools, if it is embedded as 'an authentic form of critical pedagogy, rather than an instrumental means to other ends' (p229). For this authenticity to be assured, P4C needs to ensure an engagement and critique of contemporary issues such as racism, gender bias, homophobia etc. (Gregory, 2019). Equally overt 'un-veiling' (Freire, 1996:51) of oppressive practices such as power structures in the classroom, school or playground, to champion the marginalised (Freire, 1996; Gregory, 2019).

Burgh and Yorshansky (2011) however, caution the assumption that the CoE is always a democratic practice. They are particularly concerned with the realities of the distribution of power amongst the members of the CoE, specifically the presuppositions around 'openness to inquiry and readiness to reason, and mutual respect of students and teachers towards one another' (Burgh & Yorshansky, 2011:436). Burgh and Yorshansky (2011) suggest that these conditions require a shared commitment to such ideals and the ability of the members to enable power-sharing effectively. This might ironically necessitate the teacher using their conventional authority to encourage students that they should interrogate notions of authority. Freire advocated the equality of teachers and students throughout his life: 'Nobody is superior to anyone else ... one of the few certainties that I am sure of' (1998:108). Fundamental to these democratic aspirations is a willingness to accept, and importantly respect, difference (Roberts, 2003; Kohan, 2019). Freire (1998) claimed that only when treated with respect can we claim that we are considering others our equals.

Respect, literally to look again or reconsider, is a core principle of P4C and sits under the concept of *caring thinking* (Haynes, 2008; Murris, 2008; Fisher, 2013). Differences of opinion between people are welcomed for the opportunities to learn from each other, constructing new collaborative meaning in the process (Murris, 2008). In the CoE, characteristics such as 'empathy, agreeableness, cooperation, attentiveness, and so forth, become non-cognitive factors systematically fostered' (Colom *et al.*, 2014:55), helping to develop both children's thinking and their moral and social development (Haynes & Murris, 2013; Ward *et al.*, 2015). Concerns that a focus on promoting tolerance, understanding and respect can lead to criticality being lost are often wrongly confused

with the implicit belief that opinions cannot and should not be challenged (Haynes & Murriss, 2011b). Gardner (1996) argues, that skilful facilitation by the P4C teacher ensures that enquiries are not 'mere conversation' (p102), rather push at all times for depth and progress towards truth. Respectful dialogue is at all times non-negotiable in P4C, yet crucially, opinions must be justified and critically examined (Haynes & Murriss, 2011).

This principle of respect was one of the deciding factors when choosing the research approach for this study. The respect and equality that is advocated by Freirean CP and demonstrated in the CoE, was fundamentally aligned to my axiology as a researcher. In particular, the rejection of conventional teacher-authority in the CoE meant this method resonated with CP and my pedagogical and philosophical influences. These considerations will be explored in Chapter Four.

Kohan (2019) explores how Freire's (1996) notions of equality in education have occasionally been misinterpreted by educators who took a too literal understanding of this proposal, where all pedagogical authority is redundant. He proposes that a more accurate reading of Freire's work, would lead to a nuanced understanding, with a realisation that Freire was referring to 'an ethical and civic equality in education' (Kohan, 2019:3). This aspiration accepts that in certain areas there will be an epistemological inequality in the classroom, due to the greater knowledge of the teacher, yet strives for a shared belief that all have a capacity for knowledge and that emancipatory education is committed to restoring this capacity to all (Kohan, 2019). This resonates with the authority of the teacher-facilitator or researcher-facilitator in P4C; although they are a co-enquirer with the participants, they still retain their pedagogical authority and responsibility, as this is essential to a well-functioning CoE (D'Olimpio, 2015). Kohan clarifies that while teachers and pupils hold differing positions of power, this does not mean there needs to be a hierarchy: 'No form of knowledge has more legitimacy than any other as a result of the position of power occupied by the people who employ it in the pedagogical relationship' (2019:15). This particularly resonates with Freirean thinking; the teacher cannot assume superior position simply by virtue of being the/a teacher; epistemological humility from the teacher is essential. Freire's challenge to teachers was to be 'courageously humble in the adventure' of education (1998:33).

So far, this chapter has explored the role of CP and how it has impacted on the thinking in this thesis. Connections have been highlighted between Freirean CP and P4C. It is my contention that the pedagogy of P4C is resonant with problem posing education (Freire, 1996). In the next section of this chapter P4C will be further explored in order to ensure a shared understanding of the aims, processes and philosophy behind this movement, but also as the foundation of the pedagogy and practice behind the method for my research.

Philosophy for Children (P4C)

The movement known as P4C was first developed in the late 1960's in the USA by Matthew Lipman and his colleagues, in particular Ann Sharp (Fisher, 2013). The designation of the word *movement* when discussing P4C is in itself interesting. J. Haynes (2018b) discusses how the term carries an acknowledgement of 'something change-seeking and dynamic' (p38). She goes on to propose that:

Being part of such a movement is motivating for those involved, opening new philosophical pathways and creating a vital counterbalance to the oppressive effects of neoliberal policies and practices in education (J. Haynes, 2018b:37).

Taken simply, the word can be defined in multiple ways; from physical action, to political and cultural associations, but equally in terms of affective impact; relating to emotional or spiritual changes (J. Haynes, 2018b). All of these connotations, it can be argued, are present in the worldwide movement of P4C (J. Haynes, 2018b).

Initially developed as a thinking skills pedagogy for young children (Fisher, 2013), over the last sixty years this movement has evolved from its original focus of children, to being used with all age groups, from settings as diverse as universities, prisons, street work with youth and in care homes and in the UK a move has been made by the national charity supporting P4C to expand the term to 'Philosophy for Children, Colleges and Communities' (SAPER, 2020).

Central to P4C is the philosophical Community of Enquiry (CoE). The concept of the CoE was introduced by early pragmatist philosophers Peirce (1955) and Dewey (1923, 1933) (Pardales & Girod, 2006; Burgh & Yorshansky, 2011; Baumfield, 2016a). Inspired and informed by Dewey's and Pierce's ideas, Lipman developed the P4C programme where children form communities to collaborate in their search for meaning and understanding (Golding, 2015). The influence of Dewey's (1897, 1923, 1933) writing and thinking on Lipman and Sharp and the creation and development of the CoE as envisaged in P4C is well documented (see Lipman, 2003; Burgh & Yorshansky, 2011; Echeverria & Hannam, 2013; Venter & Higgs, 2014; Burgh, 2018). This thesis recognises Dewey's influence on P4C, but also acknowledges it has been comprehensively covered elsewhere.

Dewey's (1897) confidence that children would develop a democratic character in school was connected to the ability of teachers to create an environment in the classroom where social growth could be assured. In P4C children are encouraged to question, to think, to reason and to make connections between philosophical concepts and their own experiences (Murrin, 2000), as well as to generate their own questions as a focus for the enquiry.

Simply defined, the CoE as practised in P4C, is practical philosophising through group dialogue, created from a question posed by the enquirers that is provoked by a stimulus (Kennedy, 2010). This democratic discussion is led by the participants and facilitated by a teacher and describes a particular pedagogical approach to teaching, that seeks to transform the classroom into a place where philosophical thinking, questioning and dialogue is encouraged (Lipman, 2003; Lipman *et al.*, 2010; Golding, 2015). However, whereas Pierce (1955) suggested that a CoE provided an opportunity for people to collaboratively judge ideas and hypotheses (Pardales & Girod, 2006), Lipman *et al.* (2010) proposed this could also enable people to critique, evaluate and change their views and mindsets.

Lipman's (1982, 2003) vision for P4C was that classrooms would become communities where respectful listening, connecting and building on ideas would become standard practice. Additionally, the expectation that unsupported opinions would be challenged, defined by Lipman as 'the method of systematic self-correction' (2003:163). This self-correction was seen as a key component of both critical thinking and dialogue and was at the heart of the CoE (Lipman *et al.*, 2010). Lipman went as far as to say that such a community would find 'disrespect for persons repugnant' (2003:163). In short, Lipman *et al.* (2010) proposed that the CoE must be formed on three key preconditions: a readiness to reason, mutual respect and the absence of indoctrination.

Sharp (2007) expands on the consideration of self-correction, proposing that the CoE helps children to make 'better judgments when it comes to relating to other people, other religions, other cultures, other states and other nations' (p302). Sharp has a particular conceptualisation, *going visiting*, to enable better judgements:

Going visiting is what children do in such a community when they share each other perspectives and try to build some bridges between their different ways of understanding a situation. You learn to put yourself in another's place and see the world - through your own eyes - from there (2007:302).

Viewing different perspectives in this way is equated by Sharp (2007) to visiting a foreign country with sensitivity, care and understanding, not as a tourist, nor attempting to assimilate, but endeavouring to genuinely engage with different ways of seeing the world. Sharp (2007) cautions that this is a challenging process, considering one's own views and thoughts on an issue, while simultaneously 'permitting yourself experience the disorientation and discomfort that is a necessary prerequisite to understanding just how the world looks to someone else and how you look to them' (p309). Critically, she clarifies that this does not mean that the community has to empathise or

accept these different viewpoints, rather that they understand that the world is subjective. This for Sharp, is how better judgements are formed.

The process of a CoE is not intended to be a fixed or constrictive model, rather more of a set of guidelines. In practice I advocate using these guidelines quite flexibly, however, as my use of the CoE is part of an emerging research method (Munro-Morris, 2017), I deliberately chose to follow the SAPERE guidelines that are the most commonly used in the UK:



Figure 3 The 10 step model of enquiry (SAPERE, 2019:12)

The formation of the CoE as a learning environment takes time to develop (Pardales & Girod, 2006). Guided by the teacher as a facilitator, the community collaboratively practise and hone the agreed-upon procedures, skills, mutual respect and critical thinking necessary for an effective CoE (Lipman, 2003; Pardales & Girod, 2006; Fisher, 2013). Pardales and Girod (2006:305) state that the community forms by being 'dialogically inquisitive, active and reflective, articulate, cognitively adept, cooperative, sensitive to context, and explorative.' An integral condition for a well-functioning CoE, is for there to be an atmosphere of trust amongst all enquirers; teacher and students (F. Haynes,

2018; Sharp, 2018). F. Haynes (2018) argues that this assumption of trust is foundational to the CoE, and to the reciprocity of the relationships within it. Her proposition is that the term 'Community' embodies 'mutual care and respect' and that as reciprocity, openness and mutual trust is practised in the CoE, so the CoE is strengthened (F. Haynes, 2018:145). There is an appreciation and acknowledgement of each member's worth and right to existence, even, or particularly, if that person has a contradictory opinion to offer (F. Haynes, 2018). As the CoE develops in maturity, the community become experienced in hearing contrasting perspectives and opinions. Kizel (2016:508) suggests that a successful CoE is a 'heterogeneous space where learners speak out of a variety of life styles and experiences, where different beliefs as to what is important are explicit, and where a plurality of thinking styles exists,' this, he claims is where philosophical and critical thinking and dialogue can flourish. Exposure to these 'alternative versions of truth' (Kennedy, 2010:137) helps members to accept that their particular truth might need challenging or amending, and enables better resolution of conflicts when there are disagreements (D'Olimpio, 2015).

For Freire (1996), trust was seen as flourishing through dialogue, but was contingent on intention and action: 'To say one thing and do another—to take one's own word lightly—cannot inspire trust' (p72). When using the CoE with student-teachers, one of the first discussions that we have is centred around the importance of safe spaces, to enable the students to feel confident to share even the most undeveloped thinking, in order to refine it in collaboration with the community. However, qualities such as discernment and prudence are vital alongside of trust (D'Olimpio, 2015). This links to one of the other foundations of P4C, *Critical Thinking* (Murriss, 2001; Splitter, 2014; D'Olimpio, 2015). If trusting natures are to be encouraged in students then it is crucial that this is in tandem with skills in critical thinking to enable good decision making (D'Olimpio, 2015).

Certain dispositions or attitudes are encouraged in the CoE, although the ability to reason is crucial, so too is being open to be reasoned with (Splitter, 2014). There is a direct connection here with the assertion by Freire, that problem posing education encourages in students a 'disposition for change' (1998:44), that is, an openness to the symbiotic learning discussed earlier in this chapter. These dispositions are often referred to as the '4 C's of P4C' – namely collaborative, critical, caring and creative attitudes towards thinking and being (Fisher, 2013; Splitter, 2014). Although Freire in the main focuses on critical thinking and dialogue in his writing, in P4C the creative, collaborative and caring aspects are equally important. The disposition of creative thinking in P4C is inherent in Freire's problem posing education:

Problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation (1996:64-65).

Equally, the symbiotic learning that Freire (1996) advocates between teachers and students, has resonance with collaborative learning in P4C. Finally, caring thinking, a key underpinning disposition of P4C can be associated with Freire's insistence on respect, love, trust, hope and humility as key drivers of CP (Freire, 1996, 1998, 2007).

Wellbeing and P4C

Until recently, research into non-cognitive impacts from P4C has generated limited interest possibly due to the prevailing performative focus, which can lead to a fixation on the impact of P4C being 'measured' (Gorard *et al.*, 2015; Siddiqui *et al.*, 2017a). This meant historically that academic attainment related to P4C was rated above more philosophically informed outcomes such as self-esteem, empathy, equality and inclusion (Murrells, 2008; Haynes & Murrells, 2011b). However, a key conclusion of Gorard *et al.*'s (2015) research was that 'P4C had a positive influence on the wider outcomes such as pupils' confidence to speak, listening skills, and self-esteem, wellbeing and happiness' (p28). This was replicated in Siddiqui *et al.*'s (2017b:9) research, which reported that P4C could impact on areas such as 'resilience, determination, motivation, confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy.'

Inclusiveness is a fundamental principle of P4C (Cassidy & Christie, 2013) connecting with Freire's (1996) struggle against oppression and the marginalisation of certain voices. Its primarily oral nature enables all pupils to participate, giving an equal voice to students who are traditionally excluded from a curriculum biased towards writing (Murrells, 2008; Ward *et al.*, 2015). This freedom not only has the potential to empower students in the classroom but can be liberating for teachers who often feel a pressure to control the dialogue or fill the silence. Reported benefits of P4C include disadvantaged children closing the attainment gap (Gorard *et al.*, 2015; Siddiqui *et al.*, 2017a); transformed attitudes towards learning and more thoughtful and reflective responses across the wider curriculum (Trickey & Topping, 2004; 2007). However, J. Haynes (2018b) sounds a note of caution regarding the aforementioned claim of closing the attainment gap, suggesting that there is a danger that P4C can be reduced to 'a compensatory intervention of particular benefit to poor children: a treatment to fix lower attainment in academic tests' (p42). This attitude marginalises P4C as merely another intervention-strategy, rather than the holistic pedagogy that it has the potential to be. There is a concern that P4C can become instrumental and process-focussed (Haynes, 2007; Biesta, 2011; J. Haynes, 2018b), driven by current initiatives such as raising standards, improving maths scores, even challenging fundamentalism or encouraging Fundamental British Values (DfE,

2014b). Biesta (2017) suggests however, that engaging in P4C with children can provide a welcome relief for teachers and a reminder that ‘there is more to education than where policy makers and politicians keep wanting to push it, and also that education ought to be more than this’ (p418).

P4C and ITE

In addition to the use of Socratic questioning as part of the Higher Education (HE) experience, Murriss *et al.* (2009) argue that the pedagogy of P4C can play a useful role in HE in general and ITE specifically as a ‘critical pedagogy and democratic method for decision-making’ (online) and can be used eclectically to enhance and deepen the student learning experience (Demissie, 2015; Anderson, 2016). P4C can be used as a pedagogical approach for engaging students in collaborative, creative, caring and critical thinking on any number of topics and disciplines (Murriss *et al.*, 2009), or indeed as a research method (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017) (see Chapter 4). Murriss *et al.* (2009) reported anecdotal evidence from HE that suggested that where P4C had been used in university seminars, the feedback from students had been similar to that seen in school classrooms:

more profound engagement with the subject at hand, increased tolerance of and appreciation of new ideas, rise in self-confidence, better questioning and responsive listening, more creative and thoughtful writing [online].

This has also been my experience, ITE students’ feedback from P4C modules has been overwhelmingly positive, stating that it has challenged their thinking in new ways, developed their Socratic questioning, and impacted significantly on the kind of teacher they wanted to be (Love, 2016). Additionally, many student teachers highlighted the democratic principles of P4C as something they wanted to emulate in their future classrooms, seeing the philosophy behind P4C as having the potential to impact across the curriculum (Love, 2016).

The CoE can provide a useful learning environment in ITE to engage in diverse questions around education; for example discussing democratic approaches to the classroom, questions around power and approaches to behaviour management (Murriss *et al.*, 2009; Anderson, 2016). Burgh (2018) proposes that the transformation of the classroom into a CoE, is reliant on effective ITE programmes, which actively encourage and model how to integrate creative approaches to teaching and learning that embrace pedagogy, including philosophy as a pedagogy.

Equally, research has shown that engaging in a CoE can help to develop reflective practice amongst student teachers and teachers (Demissie, 2015; Baumfield, 2016a). The structure and environment encouraged by the CoE can provide opportunities to challenge dominant mind-sets, philosophies

and even the role of the teacher (Murris *et al.*, 2009; Anderson, 2016). Baumfield (2016a) found that teachers who practise the CoE with their students not only become 'more reflective, curious and experimental themselves' (p119) but equally potentially transform their classrooms 'into places where students teach as they learn, and teachers learn as they teach' (p121). There are resonances here of Freire's contention that in problem posing education, the teachers are learners as much as the students: 'teacher-student with students-teachers' (1996:61).

There are some challenges when introducing P4C into ITE. A key challenge is philosophy itself. Many teachers or student teachers desiring to engage with P4C have no formal background in philosophy (Haynes & Murris, 2011b; Splitter, 2014). This can cause tensions in the philosophy community, with some members insisting that a knowledge of academic philosophy is crucial for teachers to help children make progress (Murris, 2008; Haynes & Murris, 2011b; Baumfield, 2016a). Splitter saw a danger that if students were not engaged in genuine inquiry, grappling with concepts on a philosophical level, their thinking could potentially be stuck at 'the level of the purely experiential and anecdotal' (2014:96). However, SAPERE (2013) suggest that as P4C involves practical philosophy not academic philosophy; qualifications in philosophy are not necessary, however trainers do need to provide at least a philosophical overview, in order to help teachers to facilitate appropriately (Haynes & Murris, 2011b; Splitter, 2014). The necessity of philosophical rigour can cause anxiety for student teachers, leading to concerns that they will not be capable of enabling the children to form philosophical questions (Haynes & Murris, 2011b). Baumfield (2016a:125) stresses that the CoE is a 'powerful pedagogical strategy in its own right' and argues against the reification of the philosophical aspect, suggesting that this runs the danger of diminishing the capacity of the CoE to be a 'radical challenge to power, status and conventional knowledge'.

Other challenges for ITE students include embracing the new role as teacher-facilitator and the ensuing shifting power in the classroom. All of these challenges can conversely become positive, causing student teachers to reassess both their philosophy on education as well as their personal philosophy as teachers.

It is my contention that P4C provides opportunities for student teachers to critically consider and reflect on their practice, their values, and beliefs about education, and can have a transformative impact (Murris *et al.*, 2009; Demissie, 2015; Baumfield, 2016a). This critically reflective element of pedagogy has connections to Freire's (1998) vision for teacher education and his opposition of reductionist training in teacher preparation.

Critical P4C: A way forward?

Many authors have explored connections between P4C and CP (Haynes, 2007; Funston, 2017; Kohan, 2018; Gregory, 2019). Kohan (2018) describes how there have been many attempts to clarify a relationship between Lipman and Freire, due to the apparent methodological and theoretical similarities, shared ideas around dialogue and the mutual emphasis on the social construction of knowledge. Kohan (2018) explains how neither Freire nor Lipman referenced each other's writings or works in their own writing, leading us to conclude that Lipman's ideas had no obvious influence on Freire, nor Freire's ideas on Lipman. Kohan (2018) cautions us to be aware that despite the similarities between the two approaches, there are clear distinctions. In particular, he notes the dominant theme of ideologies and politics in Freire's writing, and the absence of any method or clear model to which he would ascribe (in comparison with the methodology practised in P4C).

For some, the differences are more marked. Silveira (1998) argues that Lipman's approach is incompatible with transformational critical pedagogy inspired education, going as far as to say that it is an 'pedagogia oposta' – 'opposed pedagogy' [translation mine] (p377). Central to Silveira's critique, are Lipman's novels and manuals for teachers of P4C. Silveira asserts that Freire would not have approved of materials being used that were not selected or prepared by the teacher themselves. This is an interesting reflection, as in many countries, the UK included; less use is made of the Lipman novels, thus negating this key point of critique.

Gregory (2019) proposes that P4C scholars are divided about its efficacy as a form of CP, or social justice pedagogy as he calls it. He posits that opinions are generally split four ways.

Firstly, Gregory (2019) suggests are those who feel P4C is antithetical to CP. For example Biesta (2017) sees P4C as a potential example of what he terms 'learnification' (p421); a result of neoliberal practices that situate learning as an individualistic rather than communal enterprise, with the purpose of benefitting economic systems. His critique of P4C stems from a belief that a prevalent focus on argumentation, reason and rhetoric, can in itself be oppressive (Biesta, 2017). Biesta takes issue with the 'learnification' of education discourses, suggesting they hide 'the power differential that is always at stake in educational relationships but also ... the differing responsibilities of teachers and students in such relationships' (2017:423). This is the tension mentioned earlier in this chapter, that there is the possibility that while striving to avoid being oppressive towards students, responsibility to those students might be lost (Chetty, 2017). It should however be raised, that Biesta (2017) himself admitted that his opinions resulted wholly from observing P4C practice, as he is not himself a practitioner and P4C advocates maintain that experience in the pedagogy of P4C is essential for understanding the practice (SAPER, 2019).

The second group consider that P4C is inadequate for CP (Gregory, 2019). Kohan (2018) discusses P4C's reluctance to overtly engage in political action or questions of in/justice. He states that though Freire emphatically challenged neutrality and challenged teachers to side with the marginalised, P4C has 'failed in this regard' (Kohan, 2018:626). In part, Kohan (2018) suggests, this is to do with certain conceptualisations of the teacher as a neutral, impartial facilitator.

The third view on this issue, considers P4C as only *potentially* a kind of critical pedagogy (Gregory, 2019). Kizel (2015) proposes that careful choice of texts as stimuli in the CoE can raise political themes such as poverty, which can help students to develop *conscientização* (Freire, 1996). In this way, Gregory (2019) suggests, there is the potential that the CoE can move from dialogue to politically significant action. Furthermore, where students are included in decision-making processes, this potentially frees them from dominant power structures (Gregory, 2019).

This leaves the final group who ascribe to the stance that P4C is already aligned with critical pedagogy (Gregory, 2019). Gregory (2019) sees the CoE as an ideal environment for recognising and challenging ideology of all kinds. His assertion is that involving students in dialogical thinking, where they deliberate collaboratively on issues such as justice, truth, and freedom, can introduce ideas of social criticism (Gregory, 2019). In addition, Gregory (2019) maintains that the classroom environment in the CoE, where dialogue replaces teacher monologue, and power is shared, fulfills Freire's (1996) vision for problem posing education. Where this happens, Gregory (2019) posits, education can become an emancipatory tool. Kohan advocates that there needs to be a reconsideration of philosophical practices, to 'affirm education as political and to inhabit a different rationality; one committed to equality and difference, and to justice and freedom' (2018:627).

Kohan invites us to consider a rationality that is sensitive to many different forms of oppression: these might include racial, cultural or economic inequalities, gender and LGBT+ tensions. Finally, Kohan provokes us to consider 'the political potential of P4C' (2018:627). He asserts that currently this potential is not actualised in P4C, presenting the challenge that it is not enough to just be interested in democracy and social justice, in his view, it is time for P4C practitioners 'to begin to walk differently' (Kohan, 2018:627). Funston (2017) argues that situating P4C within a critical pedagogy framework can both increase the reasoning skills of the participants, but also serve as a means to include critical pedagogy in schools. Indeed, Funston goes as far as to say that if P4C has any hope of being an emancipatory educational approach, then it must engage seriously with the principles of critical pedagogy. For Funston (2017) the goals of P4C and CP are aligned; to help young people to understand the world they live in, while simultaneously enabling them to improve their reasoning, questioning and understanding.

Funston (2017:2) conceptualises a new form of P4C that he terms *Critical P4C*. This synthesis of CP and P4C has, he claims, the capacity to engage critically with issues of agency and freedom that are key tenets of critical pedagogy (Funston, 2017; Kohan, 2018), offering authentic strategies to dialogue around social issues and the lived lives of students (Funston, 2017). For Funston (2017), the commonality between P4C and Freire rests on the common critique of neoliberal education or banking education (Freire, 1996, 1998). Funston (2017) recognises that CP's definition of critical thinking is deeper than the reasoning skills seen in P4C, containing a clear political dimension; leading to him proposing a more politically committed version of P4C, the aforementioned Critical P4C. This conceptualisation of Critical P4C is encouraged by Kizel (2016, 2018), who proposes that P4C envisages children as political beings capable of social critique and transformation. I propose, rather than seeing Funston's (2017) conceptualisation as a new vision of P4C, conversely it aligns with the original purpose and aims of P4C as proposed by Lipman and Sharp. An underlying principle of P4C is its potential for engaging with issues around social justice in the community (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Kizel, 2016; 2017). Kizel (2016) expounds that Lipman's thinking was built on the belief that the CoE might enable the community not only to identify societal problems, but also collaboratively propose solutions. The two particular elements of the CoE that Lipman believed could promote activism, were its democratic nature coupled with the personal dimension, namely encouraging children to think for themselves (Kizel, 2016). Kizel (2016) suggests that the goal of encouraging activism through the CoE is to enable the participants to find meaning in their lives. Through their philosophical discussion, asking of questions and the expectation of reasonableness and justification of opinions, he claims that the members of the CoE 'gain both a sense of purpose and a sense of direction' (Kizel, 2016:506).

The possibility for P4C to encourage engagement with social justice resonates with Freire's vision for challenging oppression in society. He challenged his readers to become radicals, this in his opinion was the only way to transform reality:

This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within history, to fight at their side (Freire, 1996:21).

A point that Freire stresses, is that this is not a passive challenge of inequality, or as he terms it, 'an armchair revolution' (1996:48). For Freire true reflection on the challenges of the oppression, must lead to action, corresponding with the views of many advocates of a more 'critical' P4C (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Kizel, 2016; Funston, 2017).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored considerations of CP and deliberated on themes of oppression, power and relationships and how these can be addressed through Freirean dialogue as conceptualised in problem posing education (Freire, 1996). This vision of problem posing education is offered by Freire as an alternative to the neoliberal banking/deposit educational model that was explored in Chapter Two. Freire's (1994, 1996, 1998) suggestion is that through embedding values such as faith, hope, and love, there is the potential to achieve a freedom in education, and with it the hope of social transformation.

One of the most striking considerations exploring this literature was how little education has moved on since *Pedagogy of Oppression* was written. Shaull, writing in the 1996 foreword, expressed his belief that education can effect two distinct outcomes; it can be an instrument to enforce conformity on students or conversely, to introduce freedom and the possibility of transforming society (Freire, 1996). Endeavouring to bring about such change would not be easy, or indeed welcomed by those who espouse the current narrative (Freire, 1996), however striving towards such ideals is perhaps part of the hope that Freire (1998) mentions as being so fundamental to those involved in education.

This chapter has also explored literature pertaining to P4C and the potential benefits of this approach and the role of P4C in ITE. It has also considered contrasting views over the potential relationship between P4C and CP, before finally exploring Critical P4C (Funston, 2017), a suggested synthesis of CP and P4C. As a result of my reading, I now advocate a more politicised P4C, firmly embedded in critical pedagogy, aligned with Funston's (2017) synthesis of *critical P4C*.

Chapter Four: Methodology, Methods & Data Analysis: Developing an Ethical Critical Research approach

Introduction

This chapter contains three distinct, yet related areas: the chosen methodology, methods and data analysis approach. Firstly, this chapter explores my positionality as a researcher before exploring in detail the ethical considerations that pertain to my thesis and my methodology. It then examines the particular research approach that was taken before detailing the choices that were made with regard to the sample. Secondly, this chapter will consider the methods chosen for this study. Reflections on the similarities and distinctions between the two methods will also be explored. The three data collection opportunities for this thesis will be discussed. The final section of this chapter will explore thematic analysis, the data analysis approach taken. The use of thematic analysis for analysing qualitative data is a common choice for researchers who favour an inductive approach: allowing themes to emerge from the data set (Harding, 2018). However, the strong influences in my thesis with regard to Critical Pedagogy and Freirean thinking, meant that arguments for using a deductive or theoretical approach, needed also to be considered.

Ethical considerations are at the heart of my positionality as a researcher. Framed by Freirean considerations of respect, humility, equality and love (Freire, 1996, 1998) as well as the importance placed on dialogue and listening (Freire, 1996, 1998); at each step of the research process I reflect on how congruent my behaviour, intentions and interactions are with these principles.

The research aims, objectives and questions have been repeated here for clarification purposes:

Research Aims

Main Aim

To examine student teachers' experiences of teacher identity, agency and education in a neoliberal climate.

Sub Aims

- Examine participant experience of neoliberal education agendas from within Initial Teacher Education and school placements
- Explore opportunities for participants to critically engage with neoliberal discourse
- Consider relationship between Performativity and Teacher Identity in Initial Teacher Education and practice and the emerging concept of 'Perform-ability'

Objectives

- To offer participants a voice to engage in discussions around performativity, 'perform-ability' and teacher identity
- To offer recommendations for how Initial Teacher Education might manage discourse around neoliberal education agenda in their taught programmes
- To offer a scholarly contribution to the literature on how pedagogies such as Philosophy for Children can be used as strategies to engage with neoliberal education agendas
- To offer a scholarly contribution to the literature on using Philosophy for Children's Community of Enquiry as a research method

Research Questions

- 1) What are the experiences, concerns and observations of the participants regarding the neoliberal education culture and how this might impact on their teacher identity?
- 2) What are the participants' reactions to the concept of 'perform-ability'?
- 3) What elements of Initial Teacher Education have shaped the participants' teacher identity?
- 4) What strategies are the participants developing to enable them to flourish despite the performative climate?

My stance as a Critical Researcher

Influenced by this imperative, my stance as a researcher has been influenced by the theoretical, philosophical and conceptual framework of CP, which has had implications for all stages of the research design and data collection. A theoretical framework provides a guide to focus the researcher on to a particular issue, or particular way of considering that issue, providing them with their 'own unique perspective, concepts and ways in which to explore the world through a critical gaze' (Dunham, 2018:1). When considering my epistemological and ontological underpinnings, I have been drawn to Freire's belief that it is in dialogue with others that knowledge is problematised,

clarified and indeed created: 'Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about reality, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication' (1996:58).

Freire's basic assumption is that 'man's ontological vocation is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively' (1996:14). Central to this assumption is hope as an imperative that drives humans towards transformation:

I do not understand human existence, and the struggle needed to improve it, apart from hope and dream. Hope is an ontological need. Hopelessness is but hope that has lost its bearings, and become a distortion of that ontological need (Freire, 1994:8)

In addition to hope, two other key drivers underpin Freire's ontology: humility and equality. Kohan (2019) suggests that humility is a central pedagogical virtue for Freire and that its affirmation is 'simultaneously ethical, political, and epistemological' (p2). Coupled with humility, Kohan (2019) proposes that equality is more than a worthy goal for Freire; rather it is a fundamental ontological principle. Informed by these perspectives, the motivation for my approach was to embody humility in my interactions with my participants as well as to ensure that the research experience promoted equality of all involved and was a hope-filled experience.

Critical Research

Drawing on the work of Critical Theory, but also other approaches such as feminist or antiracist perspectives, the critical research approach to qualitative research impacts not only on the methods chosen, but also how research is conducted (Henn *et al.*, 2009; Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014; Harding, 2018). This approach situates research 'within an understanding of social structures (social inequalities), power relationships (power inequalities), and the agency of human beings' (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014:166; Harding, 2018). Specifically, this means that my research will be theorised and practised from an antipositivist, qualitative standpoint, with a determination to ensure that the methods chosen provide a research environment that challenges inequality and power hierarchies, where the participants are empowered to share their voices and experiences (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014; Harding, 2018). Critically, critical research seeks to challenge conventional research paradigms, for example exposing potential androcentric or heterocentric (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014), ethnicity, social class or disability biases (Henn *et al.*, 2009; Harding, 2018). This was an interesting reflection for my study, as my participants all identified as women, and issues of gender and sexuality biases were raised in the data collection, discussed in Chapter Five. Additionally, Bhavnani *et al.* (2014) stress the importance in critical research on engaging in 'invigorating politics' (p72), something that, they argue,

researchers often avoid. This again resonated with Freire's (1996, 1998, 2007) emphasis on political engagement and the aim of Critical P4C (Kizel, 2016; Funston, 2017), but equally my conceptualisations of the teacher-agent (Love, 2019) and desire to see ITE engage decisively with the politicalisation of education.

To ensure that this research was compatible with critical research practices, the study considered four determining filters (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014). The first filter challenges researchers to reflect on how dominant research practices have, and continue to marginalise and stereotype participants, and the second considers methods that challenge this prevailing dominant practice, to enable more inclusive, democratic participation (Henn *et al.*, 2009; Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014; Harding, 2018). My determination to avoid power imbalances and inequalities that can side-line participants' voices and experiences (Harding, 2018), led me to consider qualitative methods that would ensure a genuinely participatory, interactive and relational approach where the data was generated collaboratively, inclusively and respectfully.

The third filter of critical research relates to ensuring that the research has a purpose: '[it] shifts research away from the production of knowledge for knowledge's sake and edges or nudges it toward a more transformative vision of social justice' (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014:12). This was an important consideration for my research as my 'hope' (Freire, 1994:8) was that the impact of this study would not only be a constructive educational experience for the participants but also encourage them to consider their role as agents of social change. This vision is coherent with a CP approach, where considerations of social justice and social transformation are at the heart of education (Freire, 1996), but also with the aims of Critical P4C (Funston, 2017; Kizel, 2017). A key principle of critical research is 'to change society for the better' (Henn *et al.*, 2009:27), this study seeks to improve the experiences of student and beginning teachers by a potential refining of ITE provision.

The final filter for critical research, is that researchers need to accept that their research 'is generative of narratives and knowledges' (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014:177). This point resonated with this study as while generating the data with the participants, one member shared how an earlier data collection generation had caused her to re-evaluate and refine her ideas on a particular topic, leading to a new understanding of her own strengths as a beginning teacher (see Chapter Five).

The aims and principles discussed above are all complementary with my stance as a researcher and have led me to adopt a Critical Research approach for this study.

Participatory Research

My chosen methodology is a qualitative, relational participatory approach that seeks to be interactive and dynamic to generate new thinking. At its heart, it seeks to involve participants and myself as co-enquirers in participatory, active modes of data generation and analysis. Participatory research is seen as complementary to critical research as it is primarily concerned with challenging traditional power relationships between researcher and participants (Birch *et al.*, 2012; Munro-Morris, 2017). Integral to participatory methods is the designation of the researcher as a facilitator; 'whose responsibility is not to produce knowledge, but rather to help participants to produce knowledge about themselves (Gallagher, 2008:138). This aligns with the re-imagined roles of the 'teacher-student with students-teachers' as visualised by Freire's problem posing education (1996:61). Gallagher (2008) clarifies that conventional research sees the researcher as all powerful, in sole control of 'the aims, methods, the data collected and the knowledge produced', thereby effectively marginalising the participants 'by their exclusion from the process of knowledge-production' (p140). Adhering to a participatory research approach can redress this balance and ensure a more equitable relationship. This approach also aligns with the feminist approach to research ethics, as discussed later, which facilitates a 'rejection of exploitative power hierarchies between researcher and researched' (Edwards & Mauthner, 2012:14).

The interactive collaboration and genuine dialogue at the heart of the CoE mean that it is an ideal method for those considering participatory research approaches (Golding, 2015).

Positionality and Reflexivity

Positionality can be defined as 'the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participant' (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015:57), and impacts on the whole research process (Punch & Oancea, 2014; Berger, 2015). In practice this meant considering how my values, life experiences and views *will* affect the approach to my study, my judgements on data and even my ethical approaches (Chavez, 2008; Berger, 2015). Such critical reflection and acknowledgement of my positionality adds credibility and rigour to the research process (Cousin, 2010; Berger, 2015), so the advantages can be maximised and the disadvantages minimised (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Or put another way, demonstrating reflexivity (Cousin, 2010; Yin, 2016). Reflexivity is often described as ongoing critical self-reflection on the part of the researcher, acknowledging their positionality and recognising the impact this may have on both the research process and the outcome (Berger, 2015; Harding, 2018).

By reflecting on 'the dynamic interplay whereby participants may be influenced by the presence and actions of the researcher' (Yin, 2016:339), this necessitates a deliberate consideration of the impact I have on the research process, but equally the impact of the research process on me (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015; Harding, 2018). Qualitative researchers often emphasise their reflexivity to provide a claim of trustworthiness rather than referring to ideas of validity or reliability, however this is a subjective process, and will depend on how rigorously the researcher has considered their own positionality (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015; Harding, 2018).

While in quantitative research this impact is considered to be a bias to be controlled, in qualitative research this is often viewed more positively (Cousin, 2010), seen as an 'enriching and informative' part of the work (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015:174). Cousin describes how thinking has shifted away from minimising subjectivity, towards an 'acknowledgement that our knowledge of the world is always mediated and interpreted from a particular stance and an available language, and that we should own up to this in explicit ways' (2010:10). She discusses how positional reflexivity has typically been 'addressed through the categories of 'race, ethnicity, class, gender, disability and sexuality' (Cousin, 2010:11), the assumption being that these were significant factors that control questions of privilege and/or disempowerment. From these categories I am aware that I represent what could be claimed a *privileged* category, my significant factors are: white, British, middle class, educated, cisgender, heterosexual and able-bodied. It could be argued that only in my gender might I possibly meet any form of inequality in either society or the workplace, but that my characteristics will generate a particular set of world understandings that might affect my research plans and behaviours and the lens through which I analyse the data. Cousin (2010) argues however, that the influences on the research are far more varied, and significant factors can even be seemingly banal: 'the time of the day and the heating can be as facilitative or inhibitive of disclosure as are the biographies in the room' (p14). Good practice will consider all factors to reflect on how they might contribute to power or equality concerns (Cousin, 2010).

The Ethical Critical Researcher

Ethics, simply put, concern the morality of choices made. When related to research, it pertains to the 'moral deliberation, choice and accountability' of the researchers across the research process (Edwards & Mauthner, 2012:14). My ethical stance for this study was influenced by my alignment with CT and CP as my theoretical framework and critical research as my approach.

A central premise of CT is a desire for pursuing an ethically sound existence (Held, 1980) with a hope that a more democratic, just and egalitarian world is possible (Freire, 1994, 1996; Kizel, 2016). This necessitates that my research approach and methods chosen foreground ethical principles, and embody democratic, equitable participation for participants and researcher. The emphasis on active involvement and partnership with the participants (Gallagher, 2008) was fundamental to my philosophy of a democratic and empowering research relationship, where research was a communal venture: 'Research is done with participants rather than to them' (Golding, 2015:210). Mutual beneficence is critical (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012), rather than envisaging the participants merely in terms of producers of knowledge for my study. In addition, CP is seen as enabling self-determination and civic engagement (Giroux, 2010). The topic of my research and the critical engagement through the methods will, I argue, provide opportunities for genuine dialogue on questions of agency and social responsibility with the participants (Freire, 1994, 1996, 1998; Giroux, 2010; Mor, 2018). Listening and hearing the participants' voices; is not only ethical, but equally carries the expectation of creating new knowledge that could improve the lives of the group represented (Tangen, 2014).

Therefore, critical research seeks to empower participants and ensure that their contributions are substantial and acknowledged (Harding, 2018). Educational research can often be designated 'socially sensitive' (Tangen, 2014:678), due to potential implications for either the participants directly or those represented by the research. This study, with its critical research lens, which strives to 'change for the better' (Henn *et al.*, 2009:27), means that concerns regarding implications for the participants, or beginning teachers represented by the research should be mitigated. In this study the motivation is to critique existing ITE provision, in order to strengthen and clarify a rationale for including and strengthening of political considerations and CP. Tangen (2014:679) suggests that these ethical challenges can strengthen the quality of research as they can highlight criteria such as the 'validity, reliability, and trustworthiness' of the study as well as scrutinising their usefulness and relevance for educational policy and practice. Therefore, I have the responsibility, not only of considering the participants' protection, but also how the research will be disseminated (Tangen, 2014).

An ethical approach to research is far more than completing the requisite approval forms (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008); concerning the 'ethical posture' (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012:237) of the researcher in how they approach all stages of the research, underpinned by their ontological, epistemological and methodological stance (Tangen, 2014). By its nature, qualitative research can give access to participants' intimate thoughts and lives, resulting in complex ethical considerations (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008). A prime consideration for this research was the maxim of avoidance of harm for the participants (University of Winchester, 2015; BERA, 2018). This maxim does not just

consider potential risk to participants, but also considerations of dignity, integrity, respect, autonomy and freedom (Tangen, 2014).

In addition to reflections on Freirean influences (Freire, 1994, 1996, 1998), Mortari and Harcourt's (2012) consideration of ethical posture has been significant when considering my role as a researcher. They propose two distinct approaches towards ethics, namely the 'ethics of justice' and the 'ethics of care' (p234). Specifically, the ethics of justice covers procedural aspects, such as 'guidelines, protocols, codes and rules' (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012:240). Of particular relevance was the consideration of unequal power relationships between myself as the lecturer and my participants, who were students at the university. Although adults, they could still be classed as vulnerable due to their status as students on programmes that I taught and assessed on (Clark & McCann, 2005; Cleaver *et al.*, 2014; University of Winchester, 2015). Consequently, it was important to acknowledge potential power issues, as my role as an authority figure might have meant students felt compelled to participate in the research (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012; Cleaver *et al.*, 2014; O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015). Therefore, influenced by the 'ethics of justice' approach, I repeatedly reassured the students, both in the associated paperwork, but also in my communications with them, in person and by email, that their participation, or not, in this research would have no consequence for them, either with regard to marks, or indeed my perception of them (Cleaver *et al.*, 2014). It could be argued that reassurances might not be sufficient to ensure this ethics of justice, however I suggest that my pre-existing relationship with the students, which was founded in relationships of trust and respect (Freire, 1994, 1996), in conjunction with these reassurances secured an ethics of justice approach.

The concept of power in relation to research can be seen as having both negative and positive elements (Hill *et al.*, 2004; Gallagher, 2008). Gallagher (2008) and Hill *et al.* (2004) propose that considerations of power automatically consider issues of dominance, control or hierarchy, or even slightly more subtle manifestations such as manipulation. However, they contest this one-dimensional view and suggest that power can also be seen as positive, as the 'ability or capacity to act' (Hill *et al.*, 2004:88), meaning that the power can be shared by different elements – for example the researcher and the participants. This conceptualisation is coherent with the influences of CP on this thesis, with its inherent considerations of power dynamics and relationships in the classroom, schools and society (McLaren, 1999; Breunig, 2016). For my study this can be seen in the choice of the principal research method (discussed later in this chapter). The nature of the CoE empowers the community (i.e. the participants) rather than the researcher. The 'researcher-role' in a CoE is that of a facilitator (see Chapter Three), meaning my role was to guide and support, rather than to lead, direct or control (Haynes, 2008; Kennedy, 2010; Burgh, 2018). This was central to the adoption of

CoE as a research method; minimising the researcher role, helping to avoid potential researcher-bias (Thomas, 2013; Kumar, 2014). This shared power, is also congruent with a Freirean (1996, 1998) approach to research, which would emphasise democracy, equality and empowering relationships. One suggested way of diffusing power-imbalances is to actively involve the participants in the research from the outset (Cleaver *et al.*, 2014; O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015). As the CoE requires interactive collaboration at all stages, prioritising the participants' voices, my hope was this would help to mitigate power-imbalances.

Mortari and Harcourt (2012) propose however, that an ethics of justice, although compelling, is not sufficient in itself, but needs to be matched with an ethics of care. This, they suggest, moves beyond rules and procedures, towards an attitude of 'beneficence' for each individual involved in the research (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012:240). Beneficence moves the standard premise that research must cause no harm, to a new level, namely that the research should offer a 'worthy experience' for the participant (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012:240), which, is argued to lead to a worthy experience for the researcher. This approach is counter to the current neoliberal culture of individualism and will ensure that the researcher conducts themselves 'in a way that embodies ethical values' (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012:241). My hope was that participating in the CoE would take the form of a professional dialogue for the participants, providing opportunities to consider questions of teacher identity, performativity and related issues, and would be beneficial for all concerned.

Considerations of a feminist approach to research ethics further influenced my thinking (Birch *et al.*, 2012; Edwards & Mauthner, 2012). This approach moves beyond procedures, reasoning and rationality to consider specific contextual considerations that enable 'the acknowledgement of feelings and emotions' and has the potential to perceive the researcher as a 'caring professional demonstrated through being a committed and responsible researcher' (Birch *et al.*, 2012:6).

Edwards and Mauthner (2012) emphasise that these contextual considerations are not abstract, but embedded within emotional relationships and consequently, nurture and care is necessary to ensure ethical conduct. In this way, they argue ethics will become enmeshed with the values and interactions in the research relationships (Birch *et al.*, 2012; Edwards & Mauthner, 2012). This approach is situated within the ethics of care and revolves around 'caring relationships as essential for life to flourish and for individuals, groups and communities to reach their potential and achieve a sense of well-being' (Birch *et al.*, 2012:6). There are resonances here with Freire's (1998) emphasis on relationships and P4C's *caring thinking* (Haynes, 2008; Murriss, 2008).

Specifically, Edwards and Mauthner (2012) suggest that a feminist approach to research ethics can see a 'rejection of exploitative power hierarchies between researcher and researched and the

espousal of intimate research relationships, especially woman-to-woman' (p14). As my participants were all women, this provided an interesting avenue for me to reflect upon, and the data generated did indeed cover intimate contributions (see Chapter Five). One aspect of this feminist approach can be a call for the researcher to 'step into the shoes of the persons being studied' (Denzin, 1997:273; Edwards & Mauthner, 2012), which, it is argued can help the researcher build genuine 'collaborative, reciprocal, trusting, and friendly relations' with the participants (Denzin, 1997:275; Edwards & Mauthner, 2012). There is a connection here with the conceptualisation of the researcher as an insider/outsider in relation to the participants (Punch & Oancea, 2014; Berger, 2015). In my position as a teacher first and foremost, it could be easily assumed that I might be able to 'step into the shoes' (Denzin, 1997:273) or to be considered an insider, as all of my participants were in the process of becoming teachers. However, it must be acknowledged, that although there were some shared experiences between us, there were more things that separated us. The participants were not yet teachers, so although we had a shared experience of training to be a teacher, it was not together, nor significantly at the same time. The educational climate in the early 1990s when I was a student teacher was very different to the neoliberal drive facing student teachers today. Equally, growing up as Generation Z (born post 1996) (Dimock, 2019), as the majority of my participants did, with its new conceptualisation of gender, sexuality, women's rights, to name but a few; means that my lived experiences cannot be compared to theirs. Therefore, rather than attempting to step into their shoes in the research process, I am more aligned with the concept of *going visiting* as conceptualised by Sharp (2007) (see Chapter Three). Importantly, Sharp (2007) clarifies that:

the "visitor" is invited into the culture to dialogue with the multiple perspectives she encounters, always comparing and contrasting them with each other and her own, while at the same time trying to make sense of the whole story (p308).

This was my approach with the research participants; open and interested in the different perspectives and experiences of the group, without trying to falsely claim unwarranted insider perspective.

A fundamental concern, if research is to be ethical, is that participation is both voluntary, and based on informed consent (Robinson, 2014; Yin, 2016; BERA, 2018). All participants completed a written consent form (Appendix 1), that was clarified at an introductory meeting. The form informed them about the nature of the research and the commitment required, as well as stressing the right to withdraw consent at any stage up to the analysis of the data (University of Winchester, 2015; BERA, 2018). This form was then countersigned by myself as the researcher, to signify my commitment to them as an ethical critical researcher. At this meeting I also discussed the intended stimulus for the CoE that I asked each participant to annotate and bring to the first data collection.

Anonymity, and associated areas of privacy and data protection were also integral to the ethics of the research design (Punch & Oancea, 2014; University of Winchester, 2015; BERA, 2018). The transcripts were all anonymised: as I had not asked the participants to provide a pseudonym, I decided to use a simple method of P1 etc., allocated alphabetically by surname. It has been argued, that anonymity can allow a lack of accountability, potentially enabling researchers to ‘interpret the participants’ statements without being gainsaid’ (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008:267). Therefore, I shared the scripts of both enquiries with the participants and invited them to discuss their observations on the data as well as any clarifications or amendments as they saw fit. This supports BERA (2018:8), that ‘researchers have a responsibility to consider what the most relevant and useful ways are of informing participants about the outcomes of the research in which they were or are involved.’ In addition, this ensured the commitment to participatory research and equal power relations in this research, to ensure that the participants were involved not only in the data generation, but also in the data analysis.

Sample

Defining the target population is specified by inclusion criteria: particular attributes that the participants need to possess to be considered for the study (Yin, 2016; Harding, 2018). For this research, the relevant attributes were that the participants needed to be final year student teachers. My main focus was purposive sampling to ensure that the participants would yield rich, relevant and plentiful data (Robinson, 2014; Etikan *et al.*, 2016), holding a ‘unique, different or important perspective on the phenomenon in question’ (Robinson, 2014:31). The potential purposive sample can be seen below:

ITE programme route (2018/2019)	Size of cohort
BEd Primary (Undergraduate) Year 3 finalists	158
BEd Primary (Undergraduate) Year 4 finalists	27
PGCE Primary (Postgraduate)	67
PGCE Secondary Religious Education (Postgraduate)	8

Figure 4 Breakdown of potential purposive sample

It was pivotal to my research that the participants were finalists as half of the data collection was to be gathered prior to their final school placement, and half post-placement. However, having identified the sample, timetable constrictions meant that it was not possible to meet the postgraduate students as they were on school placements when the data collection was happening.

Therefore, the focus was on students who were part of the undergraduate B.Ed programme, leading to the recommendation of qualified teacher status (QTS), offered either as a three-year or four-year route. Both of these year groups had ‘relevant and plentiful data’ for my study (Yin, 2016:93), and equally fulfilled the conditions for credibility, as they would be reflecting on several years of relevant study and assessed school placements (Yin, 2016).

A mixed approach of purposive and convenience sampling was adopted. The convenience approach is non-random sampling where the target population ‘meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate’ and is seen as a relatively simple, economical way for researchers to gather a set of data (Etikan *et al.*, 2016:2; Yin, 2016). For commercial researchers this might mean approaching people in the street, whereas for academic researchers, such as myself, this often means the students that one is teaching or colleagues (Kumar, 2014). Suri (2011) advises that a combination of two or more sampling approaches is common, to ensure that the research needs are met.

Consequently, the revised purposive sample was then as follows:

ITE programme route (2018/2019)	Number in cohort	Actual sample
B.Ed Primary (Undergraduate) Year 3 finalists	158	9
M.Ed Primary (Undergraduate) Year 4 finalists	27	4
		Total = 13

Figure 5 Breakdown of final purposive sample cohort and participant numbers

A further reflection which strengthened my considerations of the final potential sample, was their previous experience in a CoE, the principal method of data collection. Golding (2015) suggests prior experience with the CoE, while not essential, can be beneficial when using it as a research method, to ensure the participants are comfortable with the process and expectations. The undergraduate B.Ed/M.Ed programmes at the University of Winchester have embedded P4C into a range of modules, meaning that all of the identified participants had at least achieved the ITE Introductory certificate in P4C (SAPER, 2013) therefore were familiar with the CoE process.

The Gatekeepers of the year 3 B.Ed and year 4 M.Ed routes, the Programme Leaders, were approached and asked to share my research request with their cohorts (Devers & Frankel, 2000). I was prepared for a low response rate (Robinson, 2014), as the population being invited were coming to the end of their final taught semester, with many academic deadlines imminent. Pleasingly participants from both cohorts responded. While their courses are fundamentally similar in content, the four-year M.Ed route contains a module which considers political influences on education. In

addition, their increased experience in schools would potentially add to their reflections on practice. Both of these elements, I considered, would give the diversity of opinion and range of perspectives advocated by Yin (2016) as crucial for a well-functioning purposive sample.

The sample size for a research study is generally dictated by both practical as well as theoretical considerations, governed by what enables the research question to be adequately answered (Marshall, 1996; Robinson, 2014). For my study, the practical considerations were minimal. I needed to ensure that I had access to a room large enough, with flexible seating to conduct a CoE, located on the campus for ease of access for the participants and myself. The theoretical considerations were underpinned by principles of CT and critical research as discussed above. The final sample size was a group of 13 students, all of whom were female and of a White British ethnicity. This reflects literature that suggests that women are more likely than men to volunteer for inclusion in qualitative research (Robinson, 2014), but equally mirrors the over-representation of women in primary education. Recent figures show 82.4% of primary teachers are women, and 88.7% of primary teachers identify as White British (DfE, 2020b).

My target sample size was between ten and twenty. This had been due to practicalities of space and time from a research point of view, but equally pedagogical considerations of CoEs. There is a critical mass below which it can be challenging to run an effective dialogue, ideally at least 10 members. Golding (2015), while not specifying suitable numbers for the CoE research model, suggests that the important criteria is that all of the participants are 'expert practitioners, experienced in the issue being researched' (p208), which was the case with my participants.

It was important to recognise the potential bias of the participants towards the research (Kumar, 2014; Yin, 2016). Due to their engagement with P4C in their ITE programmes, the participants would have been aware of my views regarding the transformative potential of P4C pedagogy in the classroom. In addition, most of the participants had a pre-existing relationship with me and were keen to support me and my research. Reflecting on considerations of positionality and reflexivity mentioned earlier, I realised that I could not mitigate for these influences, adopting the advice of Cousin (2010) and O'Reilly and Kiyimba (2015) to approach this bias positively as an 'enriching and informative' part of the work (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015:174), resolving to 'own up' to the way the data was mediated and interpreted from this particular stance (Cousin, 2010:10).

The ethical considerations of involving my sample in the CoE were central in my request for ethical approval, in particular due to the added dynamic that I was also responsible for teaching some of the participants. Practical steps were taken to reassure them that there were no conditions placed on

their participation, with no penalty or discrimination for refusal of, or withdrawal from, the study (Clark & McCann, 2005). Moreover, that the decision to participate or not, would have no impact on our lecturer/student relationship either positively or negatively (Clark & McCann, 2005). In addition, practical steps included creating an environment that was clearly not a formal teaching session, achieved by informal dress by myself as researcher, moderated and conversational language (Yin, 2016) and an affirmation and recognition of their agency and expertise in what was being discussed, which meant that we were entering into a reciprocal relationship (Gallagher, 2008; Mortari & Harcourt, 2012). This was important from both an ethical and methodological perspective. The former in trying to mitigate, as far as possible, power imbalances of lecturer/student coupled with researcher/researched. The latter to build a trusting, safe environment that is a pre-requisite for an effective CoE; where participants feel empowered to honestly share their opinions and experiences in a respectful and supportive, yet still critical environment (D'Olimpio, 2015).

A final ethical consideration regarded the possibility that participating in the CoE could in fact provoke cognitive dissonance amongst the participants. There was the potential that deliberating on questions of neoliberal influences on education and associated performative outcomes could initiate confusion and questions for the participants around approaches to education that they had not previously considered.

However, Freire's (1996) insistence that the first stage of challenging dominant narratives was to 'unveil the world of oppression' (p36) was really influential on my reflections regarding this point. In particular, his insistence that this is a process that should not be *done* to people but *with* them: '[they] must reach this conviction as Subjects, not as objects. They also must intervene critically in the situation which surrounds them' (Freire, 1996:49). This, Freire (1996) argued, was the only valid approach to transformational thinking. Consequently, my considerations led me to believe that temporary cognitive dissonance was not something to be avoided, rather welcomed, as Murriss (2008:667) states:

Disequilibrium is a positive force that opens up a space in which educators need to reflect upon their values, their beliefs about learning and teaching, and ultimately encourages educators to rethink their own role.

Methods

The Community of Enquiry as a research method

The principal method of data collection for the thesis was a CoE as conceptualised in P4C. This choice was influenced by several considerations.

Firstly, drawn by democratic principles, I was keen that my research should be *with* the participants rather than *on* them (Gallagher, 2008; Golding, 2015). This is consistent with this study's theoretical underpinning of CP, as well as of a critical research approach's commitment to equal power relationships and agency (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014; Harding, 2018). As the focus and direction of the CoE was determined largely by the participants, this disrupted traditional power imbalances of researcher:participants (Munro-Morris, 2017). My role as the researcher in the CoE was as co-enquirer with the participants, with a responsibility for creating the environment and relationship in the community to enable the participants to interact freely and generate ideas (Haynes, 2020).

However, the deciding factor when considering different method options was the coherence of the CoE with Freirean principles. In particular, the dominance of collaborative dialogue in the CoE is complementary to Freire's vision for problem posing education and his belief that it is only in dialogue with others that knowledge is problematised, clarified and indeed created:

Yet only through communication can human life hold meaning ... Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about reality, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication (Freire, 1996:58).

For me, there are six key and interwoven connections between the CoE as a research method and Freirean principles, and they are humility, equality, respect, trust, autonomy and hope. For Freire (1996), humility is fundamental to his vision for education: 'Dialogue cannot exist without humility. The naming of the world, through which people constantly re-create that world, cannot be an act of arrogance' (p71). This declaration is intimately connected to the principle of equality between the teacher and students – or in the case of this thesis, between the researcher and participants. Reciprocal respect was non-negotiable:

There are two tasks I have never dichotomized. One is to make it always obvious to the students that respect for them is fundamental. The other is to respect myself (Freire, 1998:87).

This is also interlinked with the concept of autonomy: 'another kind of knowledge necessary to educational practice ... is the knowledge that speaks of respect for the autonomy of the learner, whether the learner be child, youth, or adult' (Freire, 1998:59). This respect and autonomy alluded to here are implicit in the CoE and sit under the concept of *caring thinking* (Haynes, 2008; Murris,

2008). Although the community are collaboratively searching for a better understanding of the topic in hand, individual autonomy is paramount:

Figure 6 Extract from *Conditions for good dialogue* handout (SAPER, 2013)

We have a responsibility to stand up for what we believe. It doesn't negate the value of learning from and with the group, but there are times when we feel we must defy the group and go our own way. The importance of autonomy reinforces the idea that groups are strongest when individuals are affirmed and allowed to voice their views.

As discussed earlier, hope is integral for Freire, not only to enable genuine and effective dialogue, but also as a vision for an alternative (better) future:

Nor yet can dialogue exist without hope. Hope is rooted in men's incompleteness, from which they move out in constant search—a search which can be carried out only in communion with others (1996:72).

An important distinction here is that this is an expectation, not a naïve dream. This focus on a hope for a more democratic, just and egalitarian world is again complementary with P4C and the CoE (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Kizel, 2016, 2017). As clarified by F. Haynes (2018): 'A conversation is simply the exchange of ideas, but within a [community of enquiry], dialogue takes place with the intention to bring about change, or transformation (p149).

These considerations underpinned my deliberate choice of the CoE as the principal method for my study. It is my contention that the CoE is congruent with an ethical critical research approach and Freirean principles and created a respectful research environment, where the participants were empowered to speak freely about their experiences and thinking.

Due to its emerging nature as a research method, there is currently limited literature that specifically discusses using a CoE (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017). Golding (2015) suggested that reconceiving the CoE as a research method, where the community (the participants) use philosophical dialogue to explore the enquiry (the research question) provides a new method of data collection and analysis. He argues that the CoE, can be easily adapted for use as a research method, because the process of inquiry for both learning processes and research processes are similar in nature (Golding, 2015). Golding (2015) suggests that the CoE as a research method would have the following characteristics:

It is used to address philosophical problems and questions; the method blends collaborative philosophical inquiry and empirical data collection and analysis; the research is thus done with the participants, and; produces philosophical and empirical results (p208).

Golding (2015) clarifies that the method of the CoE is that of philosophical enquiry coupled with the gathering of empirical data, synthesising some features of a philosophical argument and some

features of a qualitative focus group. Consequently, he terms this method 'philosophical-empirical' (Golding, 2015:210). This is an important distinction for this thesis. The CoE as used as a method of data collection retains integrity with the CoE as practised in P4C (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017). In all aspects, bar that data is collected from the enquiry, the process is the same.

Golding (2015) acknowledges that there are challenges to this method. He concedes that it is a 'messy process' which requires the researcher to be able to be responsive to the participants' direction, as a defining characteristic of using a CoE as a research method, is that the control and path of the enquiry cannot be predetermined (Golding, 2015:211). This means that the researcher cannot rely on questions or prompts that they have prepared in advance, rather they must be confident to trust the participants with the direction of the dialogue of the enquiry (Golding, 2015).

That is therefore a challenge for the researcher, as potentially the focus of the enquiry might veer significantly from where the researcher might like it to go (Golding, 2015). Golding suggests that the success of this method rests with the competence of the researcher, proposing that they must:

operate as philosophical guide, enabling the participants to make progress in their joint inquiry while ensuring the inquiry is philosophically rigorous, but without leading participants to the moderator's judgements and conclusions (2015:212).

Focus Groups

The supplementary method of data collection used for this thesis was a focus group (FG). This increasingly popular research method (Rabiee, 2004; Packer-Muti, 2010) is described as a 'small group of people having similar attributes, experiences, or "focus"' (Yin, 2016:336). Participants are chosen due to their knowledge of the subject to be discussed, enabling the researcher to collect a variety of individual responses on the same topic simultaneously (Rio-Roberts, 2011; Cyr, 2016). Advocates of FGs suggest that the group interaction means the data collected can be far richer than from individual research approaches (Cyr, 2016; Yin, 2016). Rabiee (2004) suggests that the participants should be within the same age-range as each other, share gender, and socio-characteristics. This, she suggests will lead to an effective group dynamic, which will lead to richer and deeper dialogue. Rio-Roberts (2011) also emphasises the importance of the relationship between the participants and the researcher, cautioning that if the participants do not feel comfortable, it is unlikely that a genuine, insightful dialogue will ensue. All of these pre-requisites were met with my group. The participants were all drawn from the original research group and therefore had all taken part in the CoEs together, with me as facilitator, they were all female, of a similar age range, all white British and had the shared experience of ITE. A possible disadvantage of

these characteristics however is that the group could be argued to be all coming from a very similar and particular worldview.

There are three specific requirements of a FG: the session will be focussed on a stimulus or experience that is shared equally by all of the participants, the emphasis is placed on the group dynamics to elicit information, and finally that there is a facilitator to moderate the group's interaction (Denscombe, 2010; Harding, 2018). In the FG for this study, the stimulus or shared experience was the transcripts of the previous CoEs as well as their experience as ITE students, while the group dynamic and the facilitator role were already familiar to the participants due to their use in P4C and the CoE.

An important distinction of the FG, is that its goal is not to always to form a group consensus, rather to gather a range of information (Denscombe, 2010; Rio-Roberts, 2011). The main aim is to 'understand, and explain, the meanings, beliefs and cultures that influence the feelings, attitudes and behaviours of individuals' (Rabiee, 2004:655). Rabiee clarifies that the format of the FG should allow for illuminating different perspectives of the participants as well as their shared understanding. The dynamic of the group interactions allows participants to not only share their opinions, but also to form new ideas, created by listening to the contributions of others (Webb, 2002; Cyr, 2016); a significant similarity with a CoE. Cyr (2016) expands on this idea, suggesting that the group synergy enables participants to engage with complex phenomena, sharing 'the burden of high-effort cognitive thought' (p235). Collaboratively they tackle challenging concepts, and can come to a level of agreement, if not a consensus, that is useful for the researcher's analysis (Cyr, 2016).

Opinions vary on the optimal size of a FG, but generally it has been found that smaller groups can yield greater depth (Rabiee, 2004; Denscombe, 2010; Rio-Roberts, 2011). While very small groups might limit discussion, over-sized groups can become challenging to manage effectively, and for everyone to have sufficient time to share (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Denscombe, 2010). An important consideration, is that there is not the expectation that everyone will answer every question, as with an interview (Harding, 2018). Rather, the questions are posed to stimulate a group discussion around the topic, with participants responding to and building on the contributions of others (Harding, 2018). Rabiee (2004) clarifies that the criteria for size is about enabling a variety of perspectives to be gained. My four FG participants were equally split between the three-year B.Ed. and four-year M.Ed. programmes, I hoped that their distinct yet complementary ITE experiences might encourage and 'illuminat[e] the differences in perspective' alluded to by Rabiee (2004:656).

Although conducting a FG might seem straightforward and intuitive, the facilitator must be well prepared if they are to produce a credible study (Rabiee, 2004; Packer-Muti, 2010). Effective

preparation goes beyond considering the questions, and includes practical considerations such as the impact of the location and room layout where the FG is held (Packer-Muti, 2010). A comfortable venue, ideally with refreshment, is said to encourage easy discussion (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Packer-Muti, 2010; Rio-Roberts, 2011). Although my room choice was limited to a teaching classroom, reflecting on this advice, I provided chocolates to encourage a relaxed atmosphere.

It is generally advised that between an hour and ninety minutes is an optimal time to gather information without participant fatigue (Denscombe, 2010; Packer-Muti, 2010). Influenced by the fact that there were only four participants, I decided that an hour would be an appropriate time frame to explore the required areas in depth.

As a general rule, FGs will normally be recorded (Gill *et al.*, 2008). The use of recording equipment does raise ethical considerations, as such the group were again reminded of their right to withdraw and the anonymity of the research (Gill *et al.*, 2008; BERA, 2018). I used both audio and video, with the participants' consent (University of Winchester, 2015; BERA, 2018). The choice of audio recording was for accurate transcription of the dialogue (Gill *et al.*, 2008), and so that I would not have to rely on taking notes concurrently with facilitating. The use of the video was primarily so that I would be able to identify participants in order to track their contributions (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Harding, 2018). Gill *et al.* (2008) warns that the transcription of FGs is more laborious than interviews; suggesting that generally an hour's FG will generate up to one hundred pages of text and take eight hours to transcribe. Denscombe (2010) adds to this caution, stating that transcribing is more challenging as often participants interrupt or talk over each other. In this case, the pedagogy of P4C which stipulates that only one person speaks at a time meant that this was not an issue for transcription, as the participants continued to follow these expectations.

Cyr (2016) undertook a meta-analysis of FG use over ten years, from 2004 to 2014. She found a lack of rigour in the reporting of the use of FGs, and an under representation of this research method despite its apparent popularity. Her proposal is that rigorous reporting of data from FGs must ensure that three key pieces of information are clarified. Firstly, the aim and purpose of the FG: if it is a stand-alone method providing the primary data, or alternatively a supplementary method (Cyr, 2016), as in this study. Secondly, Cyr (2016) advocates that it is important to 'specify the unit of analysis exploited in the data collection process' (p258), that is whether the data focus is on the individual, group, or the interactive dialogue. Thirdly, she emphasises that the complete set of questions used in the FG should be included when the research is disseminated. Without these three pieces of information Cyr (2016) suggests that it is impossible to assess the reliability or validity of the research design, or to evaluate whether the goals of the data collection have been met, and

therefore suggests using them as a set of guidelines. For the purposes of this thesis, I have stated the aim and purpose of my use of FGs and shared the complete set of questions (later in chapter). The 'unit of analysis' (Cyr, 2016:258), will be a mixture of all three types, individual, group and interactive dialogue.

Limitations of FGs normally centre around the group dynamic and the possibility of the group conforming to the majority opinion, or that of a dominant member (Webb, 2002; Denscombe, 2010). The participants in the FG were all practised in P4C dialogic expectations, particularly relevant in this case is the expectation that individuals challenge (respectfully), justify and ask for clarification of others' opinions (Lipman, 2003). Therefore, issues of dominance or majority sway were not considered to be of concern. The insights and commentaries given through the group discussions, can help support the researcher with their interpretation of the data (Harding, 2018). This format, where participants clarify, refine, potentially challenge and build on the ideas of others, leads the participants to explain their reasoning in more depth in order to be understood by others, which is of great benefit to the researcher (Harding, 2018). In this way there is a clear connection to the dynamics of a CoE. There are certain contexts where it is recommended not to use FGs, this is often due to the sensitive nature of the research being gathered, where participants might be reluctant to divulge or disagree with each other openly (Harding, 2018).

Focus Groups and Communities of Enquiry: Similarities and Differences

There are many commonalities between FGs and the CoE, suggesting a synergy to combining these two methods. In particular, both methods are predicated on empowering the voices of the participants (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012; Thomas, 2013; Kumar, 2014), and are useful choices for those interested in critical and feminist research because they can address the research power-imbalance (Harding, 2018). Consequently, the term facilitator is often used to describe the role of the researcher for these methods, signifying the emphasis on guidance and co-enquiry (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Harding, 2018).

There are however some distinctions. Whereas the direction of the CoE is influenced significantly by the participants (Golding, 2015), there is a more formal aspect to FGs, with the facilitator preparing question prompts, often following a recommended format (Packer-Muti, 2010; Rio-Roberts, 2011). This was of particular relevance as it enabled specific concepts to be raised and interrogated with the group that had not emerged in the preceding CoEs. For Golding (2015) a particular distinction

between the two methods concerns philosophical considerations. While he sees the CoE focusing on collaboratively and philosophically enquiring, the FG, he proposes, does not allow the opportunity to probe and question in the same depth (Golding, 2015). Golding (2015) does concede however that it is possible for a FG to include elements of philosophical enquiry. Reflecting on the two methods, I can see the similarities and distinctions between the two methods as discussed here, however I would argue that due to the participants' expertise and experience in engaging in philosophical enquiries, the discussions in the FG also tended to reflect these qualities, rather than a simple response to the questions posed. The participants confidently probed each other's comments and sought clarification or posed alternatives as they would have done in a CoE.

Data Collection

Data was collected on three occasions, once in December 2018 and twice in May 2019. The initial collection was from a CoE shortly before the participants' final teaching placement, and the second collection was a CoE with the same group at the end of their academic year (post final school placement); to explore how/if their thinking had developed. The second CoE was followed up 2 weeks later with a Focus Group (FG), to provide greater detail to expand and interrogate the data from the two CoEs and to provide an opportunity to support the generation of deeper understanding on the topics of interest (Drever, 1995; Munro-Morris, 2017). Timings of all three data collections were determined pragmatically according to availability of the participants. CoE1 occurred first thing in the morning in the last week of the Autumn semester, while CoE2 and the FG both occurred in the early afternoon.

My decision to use focus groups to follow up the two CoE data collection points was instigated by Munro-Morris (2017). In her thesis she described how she had conducted supplementary data collection to the CoE through focus groups to support the generation of deeper understanding on the topics of interest. This was of particular relevance for my thesis as due to CoEs being participant-generated and led, the addition of a FG enabled me to explore and examine in more detail particular concepts and ideas that had not naturally emerged through the dialogue. As a consequence, this allowed me to gather specific data to be able to answer my research questions and thus mitigate one of the challenges of using the CoE as a research method.

There are many commonalities between focus groups and the CoE, suggesting a synergy to combining these two methods. As with the CoE, the focus group as a method of data collection is seen as an approach that necessitates minimal influence from the researcher (Yin, 2016), which was

congruent with both the CoE as a research method and my own philosophy on research (discussed in chapter four). As with the CoE, the term facilitator is often used to describe the role of the researcher (Gill *et al.*, 2008; Packer-Muti, 2010), although moderator is also commonly used (Harding, 2018). It is argued that Focus Groups can also be a valuable method of data collection for those interested in feminist research because they can potentially readdress the research power-imbalance (Harding, 2018).

The decision to use both the CoEs as well as a FG to gather data for this thesis also enables validity through triangulation, as two different sources of evidence will be used to corroborate my findings and help to influence the validity of my data (Denscombe, 2010; Yin, 2016; Harding, 2018).

Data collection 1: CoE1

The data collection commenced with a warm-up activity as routine in a CoE; this is generally seen as serving a number of purposes: firstly, to build a sense of community (Fisher, 2013; SAPERE, 2019). The concept *community* is used in a specific way in P4C: 'A group of people used to thinking together with a view to increasing their understanding and appreciation of the world around them and of each other' (SAPERE, 2019:7). P4C research indicates that the more familiar participants are with working as a group, the more confident they will be to share new ideas, to take risks and to challenge the thinking of others (Pardales & Girod, 2006; Golding, 2015). Methodologically this principle is coherent with CP where a "safe space" is seen as crucial to enable genuine dialogue and embrace the possibility of disrupting hierarchies and empowering marginalised voices (Breunig, 2016). Equally it is resonant with Freirean considerations of respect, humility, equality and love (Freire, 1996, 1998) as well as adhering to critical and feminist research principles that seek equality of power relationships and the agency of participants (Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014; Harding, 2018). Finally it also reflects the aim of participatory research where the researcher's responsibility is not to produce knowledge, but to help participants to produce knowledge about themselves (Gallagher, 2008).

This was particularly relevant with the participants in this study, as they were not 'used to thinking together' (SAPERE, 2019:7). This was their first joint CoE because they were from two different year groups, and while the M.Ed participants were from a single teaching group, meaning they had a pre-established working relationship, the B.Ed participants came from across seven teaching groups, so prior working experience could not be assumed. The challenges of creating 'Pop-up Communities' (J.

Haynes, 2018a) were discussed with the group and an entertaining warm-up activity was used to create community bonds, as well as to start to engage the group with thinking and enquiry, both common aims of starter activities (Fisher, 2013; SAPERE, 2016). Facilitators of the CoE often choose to use an activity specifically linked to the chosen stimulus for the enquiry (SAPERE, 2019). This can be very productive, as the participants immediately start to engage with the chosen topic. Considering this, as a warm up activity for this CoE I used images of *Little Miss Characters* (Hargreaves, 2020) and asked the participants to stand by the image that they felt drawn to, and to consider the reason why:



Figure 7 Example of *Little Miss* characters (Hargreaves, 2020)

This was a successful warm-up, for both of the two aims listed – firstly, the group found this amusing, with shared laughter and anecdotes, which served to bond the new community (J. Haynes, 2018a). Additionally, the discussion predominantly focused on identity, which provided a smooth transition to the focus of the stimulus, teacher identity.

The third aim of the warm-up activity, was to rehearse the aims or guidelines of P4C (Fisher, 2013; SAPERE, 2019). I used this opportunity to remind them of the need to give reasons, to listen respectfully and courteously, and to be critical in their considerations of each other's contributions. These considerations all follow Lipman's (2003; 2010) guidelines for P4C.

The stimulus for CoE1 was the annotated diagrams completed by the participants:

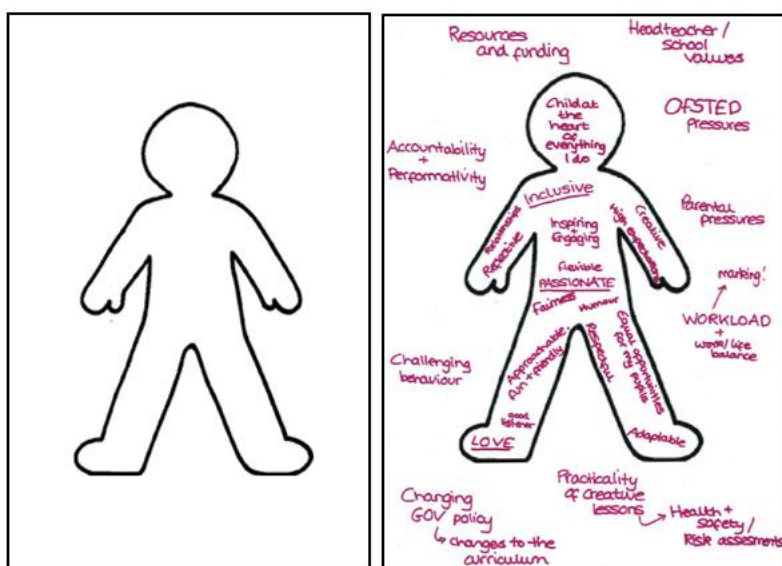


Figure 8 Stimulus provided (left), as annotated for CoE1 (right)

This diagram stimulus was to reflect their current thinking regarding the qualities that they felt were critical to them for their teacher identity. Their internal values, philosophies and non-negotiables were annotated inside the figure, while external values, influences and pressures, that might negatively impact on these values, possibly seen as ‘Threats’ on them as teachers, were annotated around the outside of the figure (further examples in Appendix 2).

The idea to use these images as the stimulus for the CoE arose following a discussion with a colleague around the challenges of providing the right sort of stimulus, that was attuned to the research area, but that would not overly lead or influence the participants (Mortari & Harcourt, 2012; Golding, 2015). It was also prompted by a desire to continue to situate them as participants firmly in the heart of the research (Kumar, 2014; Golding, 2015), by inviting the participants to provide the stimulus in this way, the ownership of the enquiry rested with them.

Following the 10 step model of enquiry (SAPER, 2019) discussed in Chapter Three, the participants spent some time individually considering the images before discussing them in small groups, exploring commonalities and distinctions between each other’s images in order to identify key concepts that had emerged prior to creating a philosophical question. After their thinking was shared communally with the whole group and key concepts identified, these small groups then generated questions, which were voted on, to determine the enquiry question.

For CoE1 the questions raised were:

- *Can we always be autonomous under the pressures we face?*
- *Is inclusivity causing undue pressures in schools?*
- *Will society/education ever be truly inclusive?*
- *Is pressure always a bad thing?*
- *If there was no pressure, would we still perform as well as educators?*
- *How important is autonomy as a teacher?*
- *Do we ever really achieve autonomy as teachers?*

The community voted for '*If there was no pressure, would we still perform as well as educators?*' The whole enquiry lasted for approximately an hour (transcripts of CoE1 & 2 and Focus Group in Appendix 3). Concerns over possible limitations due to the group's inexperience working together seemed unfounded. The critical thinking of the participants as they collaboratively explored this question in dialogue was evident (Pardales & Girod, 2006; Lipman *et al.*, 2010). At all times respectful interactions were prioritised (Sharp, 2007; Lipman *et al.*, 2010), but this included an expectation that thinking would be critiqued, challenged and refined as appropriate (Pardales & Girod, 2006; Lipman *et al.*, 2010).

Data collection 2: CoE2

The second data collection deliberately followed a similar pattern to the first, as the purpose was partly to explore any changes in their positioning. The CoE2 took place five months after the CoE1 and was conducted immediately upon the participants' return to university after their final teaching practice. A similar warm up activity was chosen; the participants could either chose one of the Little Miss characters, or had the opportunity to bring in an image that they felt represented their identity as teachers in their final week before gaining the recommendation for QTS. From the group, four participants chose the Little Miss characters, and the rest had brought in images, in the main they were drawings that children in their placement classes had done of them.

The group was slightly smaller for CoE2 as 3 participants were unavailable on the date agreed, this meant CoE2 had 10 participants, which still met my target size of 10 - 20 participants (Robinson, 2014; Golding, 2015).

The stimulus for the enquiry were amended diagrams used for CoE1. The diagrams were returned to the participants prior to CoE2 for them to annotate in a different colour. The purpose here was to

enable the participants to explore potential shifts in their thinking as a result of their recent school experience:

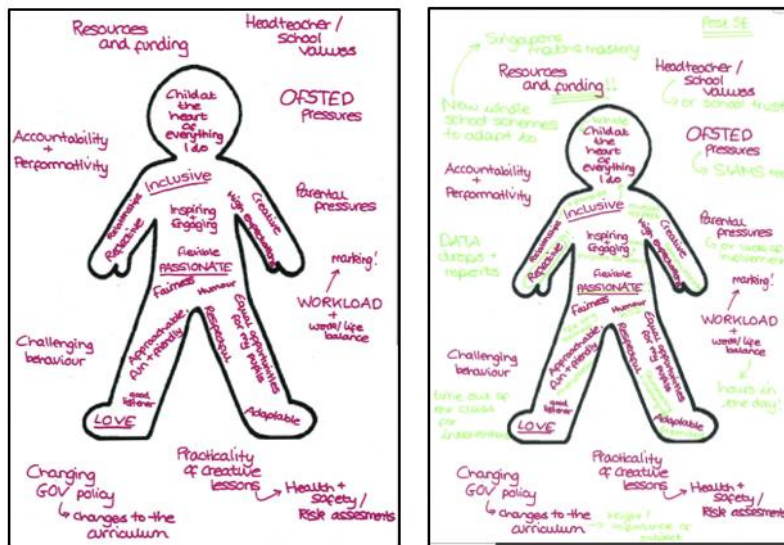


Figure 9 Example of stimulus annotated for CoE1 (left) and amended for CoE2 (right)

The warm-up activity was followed by small group discussions with their amended diagrams as the stimulus. The participants highlighted key concepts from these diagrams of *power*, *compassion*, *leadership*, *confidence*, *inclusiveness*, *change* and *balance* and created questions focusing on one or more of these concepts, before voting to discuss the chosen question of: ‘*Should the leadership’s power always be obvious?*’ The enquiry again lasted approximately an hour and a similar research environment was evident. The session finished with a discussion about the follow up FG, which was scheduled for ten days after CoE2.

Data Collection 3: Focus Group

The original 13 participants were all invited to take part in the follow up FG, which took place on the last week of the summer semester, and four elected to participate. I was aware that attracting participants can be challenging (Rabiee, 2004), equally this FG was an additional component of the data collection, and had not been anticipated at the start.

Recommended guidelines for a FG were followed (Packer-Muti, 2010; Rio-Roberts, 2011; Harding, 2018); the questions and prompts prepared for my focus group were as follows:

<p>1) Welcome and introduction to Focus Groups.</p> <p>2) Introductory Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shall we start by raising any points from the scripts – anything that you would like to comment on/clarify/or expand on etc? <p>3) Key Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do you think ITE should teach more explicitly about Student Identity in the programme? b) Do you think ITE should teach more explicitly about Performativity in the B.Ed programme as they do in the M.Ed? c) Positive/Negative for teaching about Performativity? d) Explain concept of 'Perform-ability' – thoughts? e) Anything of the taught programme that you think has/will help you to 'thrive' as a teacher? f) Anything that you would have like to have been part of the taught programme/more of something? <p>4) Follow up Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any final points that you wold like to comment on? Anything that you feel is important or that has not already been mentioned? Your final position?
--

Figure 10 Focus Group Prompt sheet

While in general the facilitator will simply ask questions of the group, there is also the opportunity to share other information to stimulate discussion (Harding, 2018). I chose to follow this suggestion. Prior to the FG I emailed the transcripts from the two CoEs to the participants and asked them to highlight any sections that they felt were interesting, pertinent or perhaps that they wanted to clarify or explore further. These highlighted sections then became the stimulus for the Introductory Question (as shown above). The aim of using the transcripts as the stimulus to start the FG was prompted by Munro-Morris (2017), who suggested that this can provide nuances that the researcher might have missed or failed to understand the significance of. Equally this enabled my ethical commitment to involve the participants in the research process. The rest of the FG generated an interactive, collaborative dialogue on the focus questions shown above, before time was given to follow up with any points that had not been covered thus far. The atmosphere of the FG was informal, welcoming and conducive to dialogue, and enabled me to explore key foci in detail with the group.

The quality of questions are seen as central to a successful FG (Packer-Muti, 2010; Rio-Roberts, 2011). General advice is to limit the questions to 4 or 5 to ensure adequate time for the participants to engage critically and thoughtfully (Rio-Roberts, 2011). I decided to pose 6 questions as the group size meant I felt confident that sufficient time would be available to engage effectively. This was

reflected in practice, as the hour allocated to the FG proved an optimal time to gather information without participant fatigue (Rabiee, 2004; Denscombe, 2010).

Data Analysis: An Iterative Process/Journey

A software package was used to facilitate the management of the data (see Appendix 4 for exploration of this decision). NVivo (version 12) was the software chosen, primarily due to its adoption by the institution. While NVivo provided this study with a systematic method of managing and organising data, its use for this study was not to facilitate analysis. This is where thematic analysis was engaged to add rigour to the process and enable a coherence with the study's theoretical framework (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013).

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis (TA) appealed as an approach for many reasons. This commonly used approach for qualitative researchers, enabled me to identify, analyse and report particular patterns or themes in the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Gibson & Brown, 2009). The three key aims of TA are: examining commonalities, examining differences and examining relationships (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Harding, 2018), concepts that particularly resonated with Freirean CP:

To listen, in the context of our discussion here, is a permanent attitude on the part of the subject who is listening, of being open to the word of the other, to the gesture of the other, to the differences of the other (Freire, 1998:107).

Harding (2018) defines a commonality as being when two or more cases have features in common, such as characteristics, experiences or opinions. He stresses the importance of identifying differences across the dataset and examining the relevance of these to the identified themes and research questions.

I was mindful that I needed to be explicit in acknowledging my theoretical position to ensure a transparent research process (Marshall, 1996; Robinson, 2014). This study, with its connection to CP, locates the theoretical position as what Braun and Clarke (2006) term the 'contextualist' method; which:

acknowledge[s] the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of 'reality' (p81).

A key decision for this study was whether an inductive or deductive approach to data analysis would be adopted. This is often portrayed as false dichotomy, with researchers needing to choose between a 'bottom up' inductive approach, where the themes are seen as emerging from the data, or a deductive 'top down' approach, which is strongly influenced by the researcher's theoretical interest and knowledge of the topic in question (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013). I was aware that I was not approaching the data in a vacuum, but influenced by my CP theoretical framework (Cyr, 2016), yet I was also keen to approach the data corpus open-minded, to allow the data to emerge as I felt this embodied an ethical approach. Consequently, I adopted an 'abductive' approach, where both inductive and deductive approaches are taken (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013; Silver & Lewins, 2014:18). It is argued that a purely deductive approach can provide a less rich description of data, tending to focus too much detail on particular aspects of the data that are resonant with the researchers' theoretical interest, this was a key consideration for me as I reflected on my data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) discuss how a deductive approach might see the researcher coding for a specific research question, compared to the research question evolving through the coding process, which is more attuned to the inductive process. While my research questions had been decided prior to the data generation or analysis process, in line with the abductive approach that I was taking, my initial codes emerged empirically, and it was only later in the process, after the themes had been generated, that cross checks were made back to the research questions.

Another consideration for choosing TA was that it ascribed to the 'factist' perspective, which 'assumes data to be more or less accurate and truthful indexes of the reality' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013:400). This perspective resonated with my stance as an ethical critical researcher, as it presumes the researcher's intent is to find out about the 'actual behaviour, attitudes, or real motives of the people being studied' (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013:400), this, I felt, meant that the participants' voices would be presented with integrity.

The decision to use TA was determined early in the research process. The principles underpinning Content Analysis share many commonalities with TA (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013; Harding, 2018) and was briefly considered as an approach. Content analysis is described as a:

systematic coding and categorizing approach, suitable for exploring large amounts of text ... to determine trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships, and the structures and discourses of communication (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013:400).

There is however a different emphasis to TA; with content analysis aiming to describe the characteristics of the data by examining ‘who says what, to whom, and with what effect’ (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013:400). While I was interested in the interplay between the participants (see Chapter Five), this was not a priority focus for me. In addition, as this was the first time that I had approached qualitative data analysis I was drawn to the more comprehensive, step by step model to analysing data proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) (see Table 1 below).

Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase approach is respected by qualitative researchers as a systematic, rigorous and iterative approach to analysing data (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013; Silver & Lewins, 2014), which additionally provides a methodical guide (Rabiee, 2004). Although this is a formulaic approach to manage the data, the steps outlined in Table 1 should not be seen as rigid, rather as a model to lead the researcher through pertinent reflective stages of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2018).

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Table 1 Phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006:87)

The iterative nature of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) approach involves constant recapping of the entire data set and in particular the coded extracts of data. As a result, note-taking formed a key part of this process, with ideas, emerging codes and themes being continually noted down, from Phase 1 onwards. A critique of many qualitative research papers according to Braun and Clarke (2006) is that the approach to TA and the assumptions that informed the analysis, is often not clarified by the researcher, meaning that it is hard to evaluate the research. With this in mind, I detailed a clear account of my engagement with the six-phase approach to the analysis of my data set. While a summary of my approach is provided below, the detailed account of each phase of the TA has been appended (Appendix 5) to ensure confidence that the analysis was both rigorous and systemic.

Phase 1 Familiarisation with data

The initial phase of this approach involves immersion in the data, reading and re-reading the data as initial themes and ideas are recorded. Initial ideas were manually recorded, sorted and linked (see photographs in Appendix 6). Rabiee (2004:180) describes this as the 'long-table' technique, useful for initial considerations of the data. I concurrently took field notes to record my initial ideas regarding emerging codes (Appendix 7). The Phase 1 data from each data set was recorded in a table and word cloud to provide an initial visual representation of Phase 1 considerations (Appendix 8).

Phase 2 Generating initial codes

During Phase 2 the data corpus was systematically coded, with relevant data collated to specific codes. Codes were not limited at this phase, nor was data restricted to a single code. From the data corpus (transcripts from the two CoEs and FG plus the annotated posters used as stimuli) over forty codes and thirty sub codes were generated following two sweeps of the data. These ranged from empirical codes of commonalities that emerged during the coding practice (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Bazeley & Jackson, 2013), as well as theoretical concepts derived from prior reading, particularly those pertaining to Freirean Critical Pedagogy (for example connections with love, respect, power and justice) (see Chapter 3) in addition to those lined to the pedagogy and practice of Philosophy for Children (for example resonances with Caring Thinking) (see Chapter 3). Phase 2 concluded with a list of codes collated from the entire data set (Appendix 9).

Phase 3 Generating themes

In Phase 3 codes were collated into potential themes, followed by the gathering of all relevant coded data extracts. Since the original publication of their approach to TA in 2006, Braun and Clarke (2018) have revised their thinking about Phase 3 and naming it *Generating themes* to better capture the active role that this process entails. My experience of working with Phase 3, was that it was not a discrete step and on occasion blended into the approach designated for Phase 4. For example, generating the themes developed into concurrently reviewing and amending these themes, meaning that some aspects of Phase 4 were completed in tandem with Phase 3. Five initial themes were generated:

Theme 1: Agency (Teachers as Agentic Beings)

Theme 2: Conscientização (Critical Consciousness) (Teachers as Political Beings)

Theme 3: Relationship (Teachers as Relational Beings)

Theme 4: Threats (Teachers as Constrained Beings)

Theme 5: Miscellaneous

Although it could be suggested that this phase is a mechanical process, my experience of working with the data was the opposite. Phase 3 was a dynamic experience, reliving the data and the experiences and relationships generated as part of being in the community with my participants.

Phase 4 Reviewing themes

Phase 4 included a deliberation on the themes chosen to justify their inclusion and to ensure a clear coherence within the data in that theme, and identifiable distinctions between the different themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As a result of this deliberation the themes were amended to:

Theme 1: Teachers as Agentic Beings

Theme 2: Teachers as Political Beings

Theme 3: Teachers as Relational Beings

Theme 4: Teachers as Oppressed Beings

Theme 5: Teachers as Hope-full Beings

The collated extracts for each theme were individually scrutinised to check for coherence, firstly to ensure the story of the themes resonated with the linked data, but secondly to provide an opportunity to code any additional extracts that might have been overlooked in previous stages. This was an onerous iterative process, that necessitated careful reflection on each extract (Carcary, 2011). During this phase individual coded data was reviewed and re-evaluated as to its relevance to the research questions. This was a challenging process as I felt there was a tension between my ethical responsibilities as a researcher to appreciate and value all data generated by my participants and to do justice to it and them, and the necessity of refining the data set to that which was specifically relevant to my research questions. The benefit of such scrutiny was a growing confidence with regard to the data corpus and clarity about the patterns that were starting to emerge.

Phase 5 Defining and naming themes

This phase required a detailed reflection on each individual theme, in order to identify the story that it was telling, as well as the consideration of how each theme fitted within the overarching story of

the data corpus and research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I considered amalgamating Theme 1 and Theme 2, as the amount of coded data gathered for Theme 2 was considerably less than for the other four themes. However, Braun and Clarke (2018) emphasise that the formation of a theme is not dependent on the quantity of coded data, rather the researcher should consider how many ideas that theme contains, and its relevance in answering the research question. As a result, Theme 2 was retained despite considerable links with Theme 1.

As a result of these considerations, a further version of the thematic map was produced, to clarify the final iteration, including refined sub-themes arranged in order of priority:

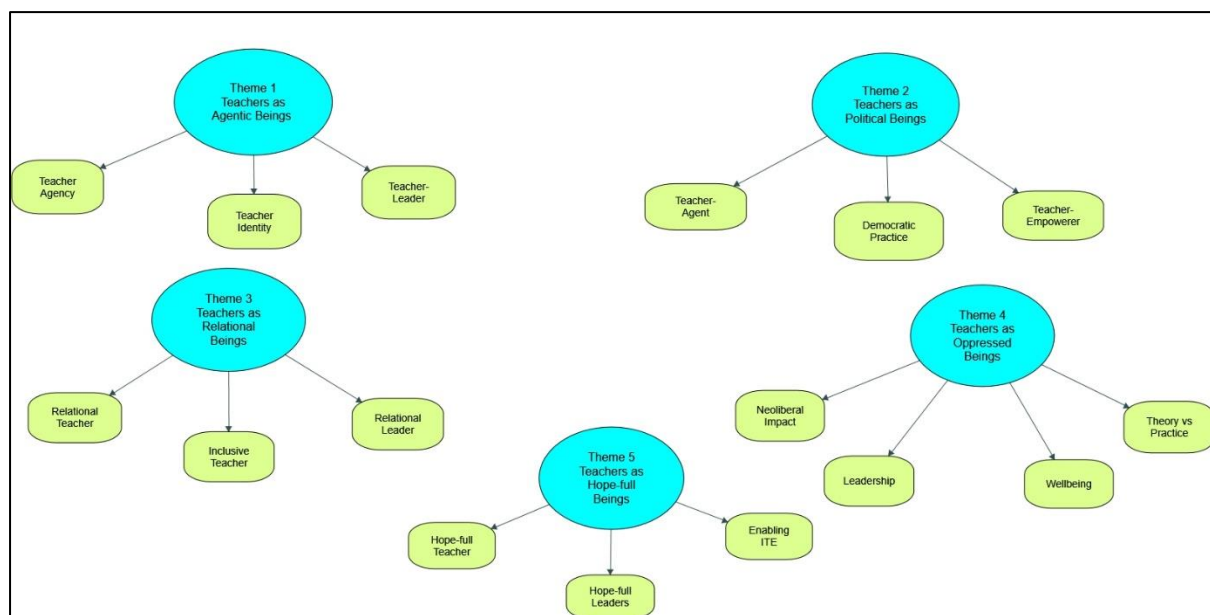


Figure 11 Phase 5 Thematic Map

Phase 6 Producing the report

The final phase in the process is the writing of the academic report of the study, which follows in Chapter Five.

Presenting the Findings

The findings present the data from the CoEs, FG and stimulus drawings collectively. Each data collection point brought unique contributions to the themes, however when viewed together they provided another layer of understanding and depth to the thesis. Equally, a collective approach resonated with both the emphasis that Freire (1996) places on community and collective dialogue,

as well as with the collaborative aspect of P4C, with its underpinning philosophy that the community works to bring a shared understanding to concepts and questions (see Chapter Three). The dialogue in the CoEs as well as the FG did not always proceed in a linear manner; often the content of the discussions meandered across multiple sub-themes and even themes. Participant extracts were placed where they seemed best located in terms of the message that they were sharing and their connections with patterns that were forming (Braun & Clarke, 2018; Harding, 2018).

While validity is a central concept throughout the research journey, crucially this remained at the forefront of my reflections through the analysis and reporting of data, to ensure that the conclusions drawn provided a fair representation of the data (Yin, 2016; Harding, 2018). This highlighted the ethical integrity required of me as the researcher. The subjectivity that is involved with both the interpretation of the generated data, as well as the selection of specific data extracts was acknowledged (Rabiee, 2004; Harding, 2018). In particular, it was important to be cognisant of selective or insufficient data presentation (Rabiee, 2004; Braun & Clarke, 2006). While it might be impossible to eliminate all bias, following a systematic and well-documented approach to the analysis, as demonstrated in this chapter, can minimise it (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Rabiee, 2004). All of these considerations have helped to ensure the validity of this study.

Analysing data from groups

In the first published example of using a CoE as a research method Golding (2015) posits that it is possible to separate the analysis into empirical and philosophical facets. The empirical facets, are descriptions of 'the participants' conceptions, both their initial, unreflective formulation of their conceptions and their refined formulations at the end of the inquiry' (Golding, 2015:211). Contrastingly, the philosophical facets focuses on the strength of the participants' arguments; to see if it is 'well-reasoned, justified or supported, using the standards of philosophical inquiry, logic and argumentation' (Golding, 2015:212). For the purpose of this thesis, the focus was on the empirical facets and data was coded accordingly.

Particular considerations need to be made when analysing scripts generated by groups (Harding, 2018), as the group dynamic means individuals can be influenced by each other, opinions change and new meanings emerge (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Harding, 2018). There are three considerations when analysing group-generated data; what the individual says, what the group says, and how the group interacts (Morgan, 2010; Harding, 2018). These foci enable the researcher to gain a sense of

the commonality and agreement of the viewpoints raised as well as alternatives that are presented. While individual contributions are often the most powerful data shared, interaction amongst the participants can add a nuanced understanding of the topics discussed (Duggleby, 2005; Morgan, 2010). I was aware that group interaction data is often undervalued, and its influence on the data marginalised (Duggleby, 2005; Morgan, 2010). Consequently, I included interactions between the participants when they contributed to a considered understanding of the topic being discussed, thus ensuring a comprehensive engagement with the richness of the data generated (Morgan, 2010; Harding, 2018).

An important element of the group dynamic in the CoEs and the FG was the dominance of *Caring Thinking* as conceptualised in P4C (see Chapter Three). This meant that all interactions in the groups were respectful, calm and supportive, even when participants were disagreeing with each other. The challenging dynamics often present in FGs, such as heightened emotions, participants who are marginalised, or conflict breaking out, did not appear to be present (Duggleby, 2005). As is the expectation for a CoE, participants took it in turn to speak, which made accurately recording all interactions straightforward.

Disagreements certainly were present. Harding (2018) proposes that the 'strength with which a respondent holds a view may become clear if they are faced with alternative perspectives' (p199). This results in participants potentially refining, defending or modifying their viewpoints as the CoE or FG proceeds. Therefore it was important that I continually returned to the original transcripts to verify findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and interrogate potential inconsistencies in the data from the start of the group dialogue to the end (Harding, 2018). All findings were considered not only for the meaning that they offered, but also the group response and any challenges or alternatives that were raised.

Three potential pitfalls cited for researchers using TA are a failure to analyse, unconvincing analysis or a mismatch between the data story and the analysis presented (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To prevent against the former all extracts were accompanied by related analytical narrative, that interrogated the data beyond the specific content (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To ensure that analysis was convincing, a coherence and consistency across the themes was explored, with sufficient examples from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This ensured that the importance of more idiosyncratic views or opinions was not over-emphasised or misrepresented. In order to avoid a mismatch between the data and the analysis, the data was frequently revisited to ensure that the interpretations and analysis of the data demonstrated consistency with the extracts, and possible alternative interpretations were considered (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Presenting group data

When presenting group data there is a choice of focusing on isolated extracts from individuals, sequences of interactions, or even to collate a range of related quotations (Duggleby, 2005; Morgan, 2010). While specific quotes can present a point emphatically and impactfully enabling concise and pertinent presentation of data, grouping related quotations that support a particular viewpoint can add credibility to the findings (Duggleby, 2005; Morgan, 2010). The presentation of sequences of data also ensures integrity of context and avoids misrepresenting viewpoints, which aligns with my ethical stance. Equally, summaries of sections of discussion can on occasion be most effective (Morgan, 2010). I decided to be open to all approaches, the priority being accuracy and integrity in my representation of what the participants were discussing. This led me to try wherever possible to leave the participants' words exactly as spoken, however sometimes, for sake of clarity or precision, words were removed or added but this was always denoted with ... or [] respectively. Extracts of one sentence or more are presented in text boxes, while shorter extracts are contained within the text. Participants were allocated numbers to provide anonymity (University of Winchester, 2015; BERA, 2018), this number remained consistent across all data collections. Occasionally in the recordings it was unclear which participant had spoken, in these instances, extracts will be labelled as Participant X (PX).

When considering the pages of data that had been generated through the three data collection opportunities (the two CoEs and the FG), pragmatic decisions had to be made as to which quotations would be selected for the findings. A key consideration centred around ensuring integrity with the tone and motivation of the thesis. A priority therefore was to ensure that the participants' voices were heard as the aim of this thesis was to examine student teachers' experiences. Consequently, quotations were chosen that demonstrated commonality of thought (Duggleby, 2005; Morgan, 2010) but also those that demonstrated contrasting or even contradictory opinions and perspectives (Harding, 2018).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the many considerations that were reflected on with regard to my research methodology, methods and analysis approach.

Ethical considerations were fundamental to this chapter. The ethics of justice and care approach and the focus on beneficence, as explored by Mortari and Harcourt (2012), is particularly resonant for my research approach, due to the connections with Freire's (1998) focus on respect. Additionally, respect is central to the pedagogy and practice of P4C (Haynes, 2008; Fisher, 2013), as well as congruent with wellbeing, another key concept in my research.

An integral consideration for this thesis was the adoption of a critical research methodology due to its affiliation with CP, particularly with regard to research's social purpose and integrity (Henn *et al.*, 2009; Bhavnani *et al.*, 2014; Harding, 2018). These considerations have also impacted on my reflections on my positionality and reflexivity and the impact on my research, research participants and data.

Of increasing significance for this thesis is a consideration of the feminist ethics of care with the consideration of the role of emotions, ethics and values in intimate research encounters (Bhavnani, 1993; Birch *et al.*, 2012; Edwards & Mauthner, 2012). This approach encouraged me to reflect on power imbalances and oppression in research, potentially encouraged by androcentric tendencies.

These perspectives and their influence on me as a researcher have been captured in the following diagram:

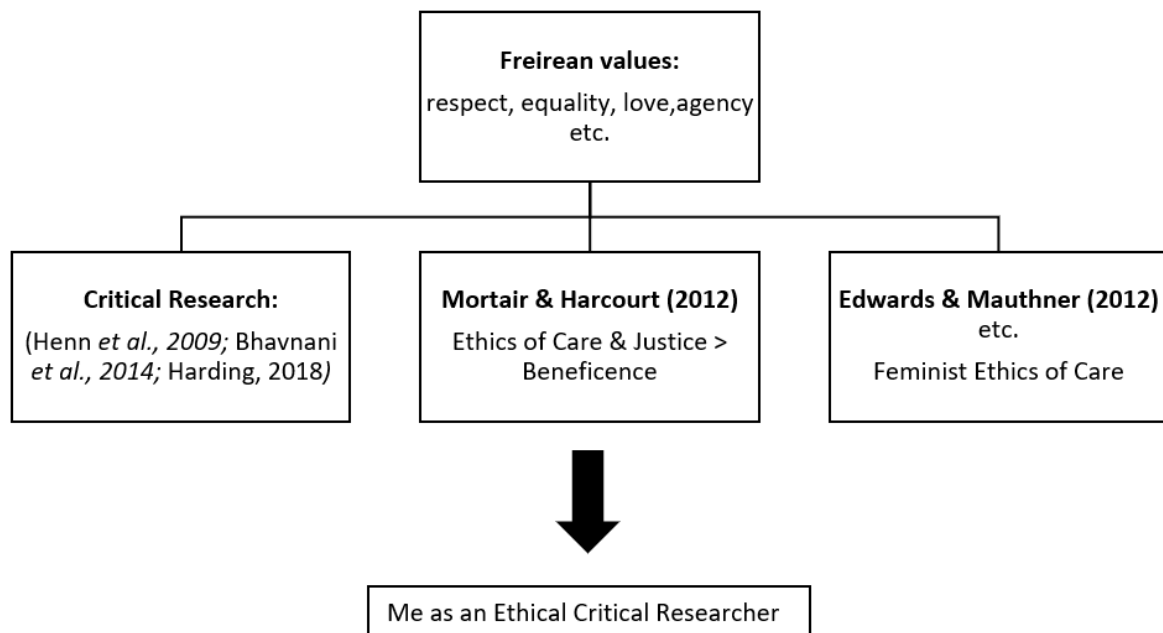


Figure 12 Influences on my positionality as a researcher

This chapter has also explored the two methods of data collection used in this thesis. The CoE was presented in a new conceptualisation from that which is generally seen in P4C: as a potential

research method for gathering qualitative data. Prior use of the CoE in this way is limited (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017), meaning that considerations are drawn as much from my own experience as from literature in the field. The approach of FGs was also considered. Advantages and disadvantages of this supplementary method were explored and particular similarities and distinctions with the CoE were considered. Reflections from the two CoEs and the FG carried out for the data collection were explored.

Connections with Freire's (1994, 1996, 1998) approach to problem posing education are drawn out, in particular with the importance of dialogue and the concepts of humility, equality, respect, trust, autonomy and hope. Likewise, a synergy with the thinking of critical and feminist research and the methods chosen for this thesis were indicated.

In the final section of the chapter the decisions behind the chosen data analysis approach of thematic analysis were discussed. Connections to the study's theoretical framework, ethical and research approach were made. Considerations of how to analyse the data alongside the decisions that influenced the presentation of findings for this thesis were discussed. The underlying complexities for analysing group data were explored, with justification for what was and what was not included. At all times these were influenced by my ethical considerations as a researcher and co-enquirer with the participants.

Chapter Five: Findings, Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter forms the first of three parts which aim to explore the findings from particular themes. Themes were chosen to be discussed together where a coherence across their messages was perceived:

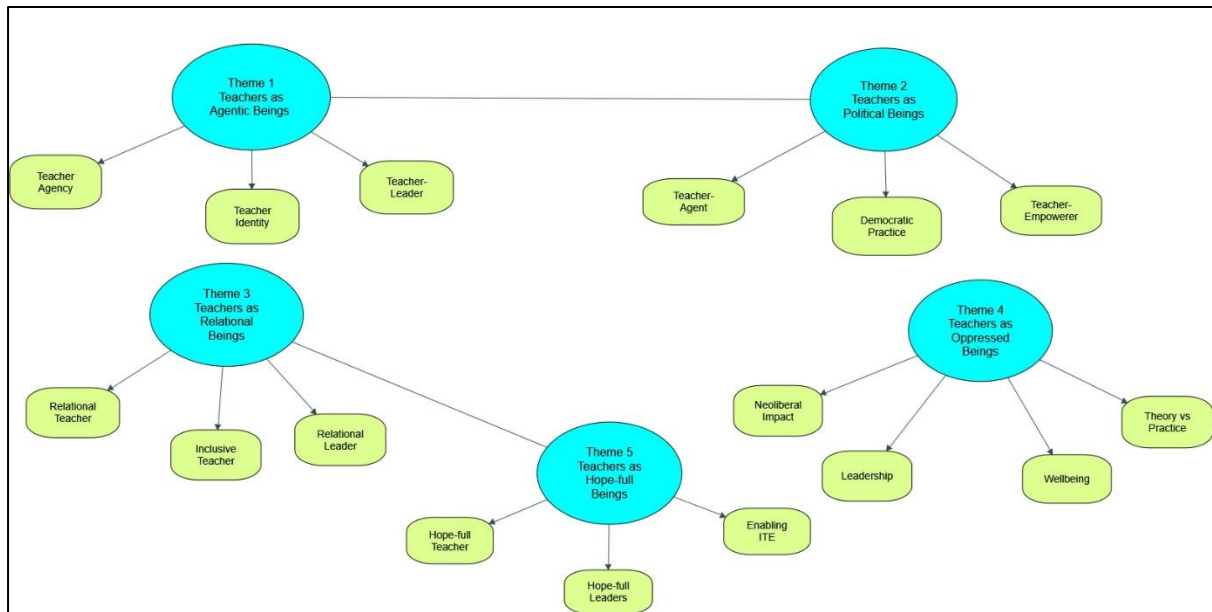


Figure 13 Linked Themes for Findings

In this first part *Teacher as Oppressed Beings* the findings of Theme 4 are reported. This theme was presented first due to its dominance in the coded data. The second part *Teachers as Agentic and Political Beings* presents Theme 1 and 2, while the third part *Teachers as Relational and Hope-full Beings* explores the final two themes and concludes with a summary of all three parts of this chapter. Data from the stimuli posters for CoE1 and CoE2 were analysed separately, where relevant, under each theme. Increased interpretation was necessary for this data set, due to the content being written words/phrases, rather than from the discussion. Consequently, this evidence was used to support the analysis for a theme, rather than as an integral part.

The coding references across the entire data corpus were recorded to show the occurrence of the data against each of the five themes (Table 2):

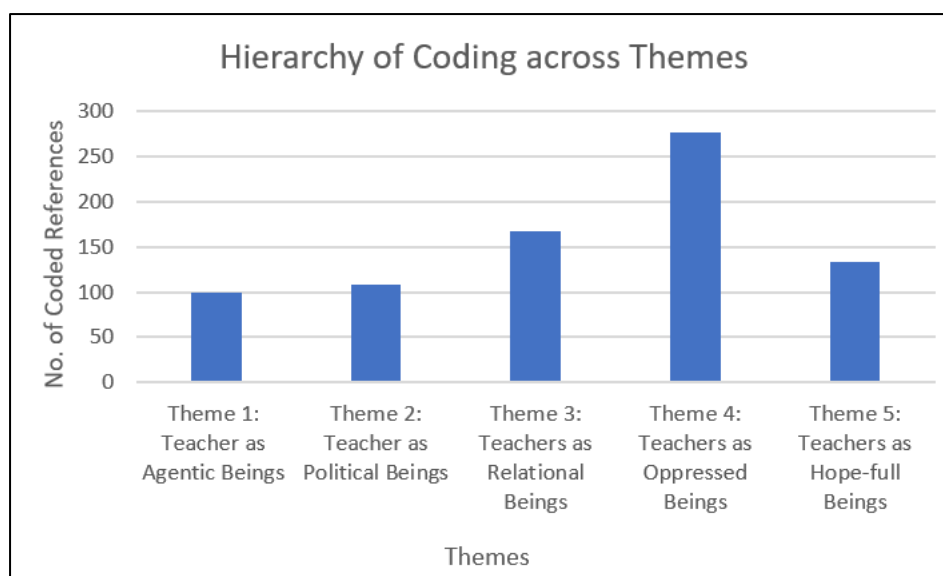


Table 2 Excel Occurrence of data against each theme

Out of the five themes, *Teachers as Oppressed Beings* was the most prolifically coded. This chart excluded data from the poster stimuli, as their focus of *Teacher Identity* and *Threats* would have skewed the data for Theme 1 and Theme 4 disproportionately.

The findings of this thesis are now presented thematically, commencing with *Teachers as Oppressed Beings*.

Teachers as Oppressed Beings

This theme captured the participants' concerns about the threats they faced as beginning teachers. The narrative highlights the pressures that the participants identified as student teachers in schools. A clear focus was on performative measures, but equally school leadership and environment (people and values/ethos) played a key role, as did the tension between what was taught in their ITE programme and expected in practice. These were seen as having the potential to impact on wellbeing. This seems to reflect the current predicament of the teaching profession, where morale, recruitment and retention could be argued to be at crisis proportions, with concerns about teacher agency and professional status (Wilkins, 2011; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). When reflecting on data that accompanies this theme, first the overarching patterns that were apparent were considered, this was aided by plotting the relative coding pattern across the sub-themes, as can be seen in Table 3:

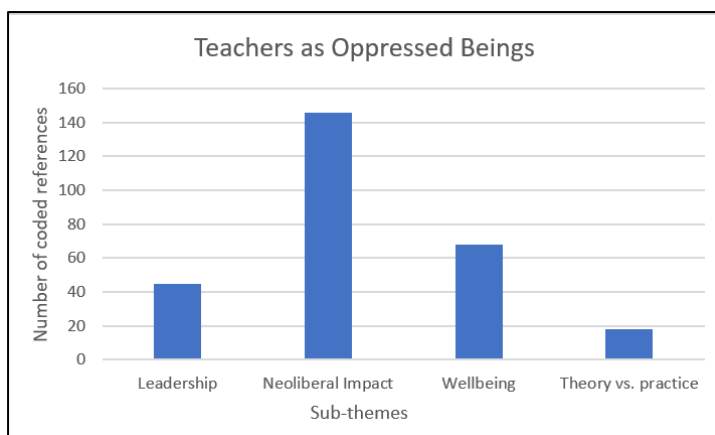


Table 3 Coding spread across *Teachers as Oppressed Beings*

The participants signalled four key areas of concern, which became the sub-themes. Of these, threats implicit in the neoliberal agenda for education was highlighted as most significant. This finding is reflected in literature which warns of the detrimental impact neoliberal policies can have on schools, teachers and pupils (Ball, 2003; McGregor, 2009; Raymond, 2018).

Each sub- theme will now be interrogated to examine and analyse participant contributions. The importance of context will also be considered, as well as relevant group reactions to ensure that individual contributions are still resonant across the data corpus and the group (Rabiee, 2004). Equally any dissenting views on particular issues will be interrogated (Marshall, 1996; Harding, 2018).

Sub-theme Neoliberal Impact

Although the terms neoliberal or performativity were not expressions that the majority of the participants were aware of prior to the data collection, many of the threats highlighted identified with this heading.

Critics of neoliberalism claim that the pressure felt by schools to meet target-orientated measures, can lead to time wasted on producing data of limited educational value (Troman, 2008; Hardy & Lewis, 2017). A product of neoliberalism in education is that speed has become inextricably linked with progress and success (Narayanan, 2007) to the detriment of longer term, more holistic views of education and educational gains (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Hartman & Darab, 2012).

The coded content under the sub-theme of *Neoliberal Impact* fell under 3 key areas, pressure, performance and curriculum impact. The relevance of the issue of pressure in schools/teaching for

the participants was apparent from the start of CoE1, where four out of the six questions created for the enquiry had *pressure* as the central concept:

- Can we always be autonomous under the pressures we face?
- Is inclusivity causing undue pressures in schools?
- Is pressure always a bad thing?
- *If there was not pressure, would we still perform as educators?*
- How important is autonomy as a teacher?
- Do we ever really achieve autonomy as teachers?

Figure 14 Questions created for CoE1 (italic = chosen question)

The concept of pressure was seen as encompassing “*parent pressure, OFSTED pressure, teacher pressure, targets and data pressures and workload pressures*” all of which were seen as limiting them becoming the teachers they wanted to be. The chosen question ‘*If there was not pressure, would we still perform as educators?*’ was interesting as the implication therein was that pressure might be a necessary ingredient for teachers’ performance. This was debated at length by the group and produced some complicated responses:

Well we were discussing that in theory, teachers should be teaching because they want to teach, not because of results or OFSTED, or anything like that, so in theory, if there’s no pressure, results and performativity and standards shouldn’t drop. But I think its very subjective, and ... there are some situations where if people don’t have that pressure, then it won’t get done. So, I think in theory, the answer is we should minimise pressure because then people will be better and standards would be higher, but actually some people might work, whereas if there’s no pressure, it won’t get done and standards drop (CoE1 P9).

The suggestion from P9 initially is that teachers are not driven by accountability measures and therefore performativity pressures should not impact on them, however immediately she amends this point of view, suggesting that actually without pressure some teachers might not be driven to work so hard. The rest of her point swings between these two standpoints, perhaps demonstrating the confusion that she is feeling with regard to this issue. P11 responds to P9 supporting the second point of view around pressure being necessary:

We were talking about how in an outstanding school, the teachers don't have as much pressure because they don't have OFSTED looking over their shoulder. And sometimes the teachers kind of stagnate and then they're not making as much progress and moving forward? Like it's all great, but it's not going anywhere. Whereas in a Requires Improvement school, they have so much pressure, because everyone's looking over their shoulder, OFSTED, the community, whichever headteachers have been pulled in, you know there's always - everyone's got eyes on them. So, they're the ones who are turning to literature and making the most progress in terms of changing things up and making developments, so that could be an example perhaps of where pressure is actually causing people to make more progress (CoE1).

P11 suggests that teachers in schools which are seen as 'successful' by accountability measures might be tempted to "stagnate"; whereas conversely teachers in struggling schools are suggested by her to be the ones who might be turning to research-informed teaching in order to improve. The inference being, that pressure is seen as producing good results. This judgement on how differently graded schools might experience pressure was challenged by P7, who suggested that all schools are under pressure, even those who are rated 'Outstanding.' However, recent literature suggests that schools that are rated poorly by Ofsted do indeed face greater pressure, as well as less autonomy for their teachers as a direct result (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020).

Other participants were cautious of aligning with this viewpoint, suggesting that a balance was necessary, perhaps for those teachers who needed a little 'encouragement':

I think there's a fine balance of pressure, because I know myself, I need some element of pressure to make sure I get the job done, and to focus me, because I'm a natural procrastinator, so it works for me (CoE1 P10)

This idea was further refined by P1, who suggested that maybe this should be seen as "reflective or collaborative pressure" which could be viewed positively, with the aim of being "beneficial to improving our performance holistically." The participants concurred that pressure, "positive or negative" (P9), had become intrinsic to education, and emanated from many directions, including from themselves, reflecting the external and internal neoliberal pressures recounted in literature (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Raymond, 2018).

Although there is uncertainty about potential benefits of pressure, at times the participants were clear about the negative effects of pressure, with a consensus that pressure and wellbeing occupied two ends of a continuum:

If you say there's no pressure, then you might perform higher in terms of wellbeing and children might come out more holistically developed and everything like that, but the education standards might drop. Whereas if, to a certain extent if there's more pressure, then attainment might get higher, but wellbeing drop. So, there's almost – you need to find that balance. But then I guess if there's too much pressure then both will drop. But if there's that certain level of pressure, then you need to figure out which one takes precedence I suppose (CoE1 P9).

Despite the clear connection made between pressure and wellbeing, still the suggestion is that wellbeing of pupils might need to be sacrificed for higher attainment. Even those participants, who clearly believed there is too much pressure on children, advocated the presence of pressure on teachers:

I definitely think we've got too much pressure on children, within their education. But on the flip side, I think we need pressure as educators to ensure that we are meeting the children's expectations and pushing them to their best (CoE1 P4).

The critical level of mental health issues in ever younger children is argued to be one consequence of performative measures in school (Adams, 2013; Clarke *et al.*, 2014). One of Freire's challenges of neoliberalism related to its ethics 'of the marketplace' (1998:114), and advocates of wellbeing are often seen as campaigning for alternative goals of education, founded upon a clear ethical framework that foregrounds humanity (Mor, 2018).

The participants seemed to make a clear correlation between teacher pressure, work ethic and success, as success was deemed to be reserved for those teachers who achieved the desired pupil outcomes. What is concerning about this narrative, is that recent research cites accountability pressures and the performativity culture in education as the deciding factor in teachers leaving in the first five years of employment (Ball, 2003; Perryman & Calvert, 2020).

The idea of performing was central to discussions concerning *Neoliberal Impact*. There was a sense that the participants wanted to reclaim the word, frustrated with its negative connotations. This connects with the idea of 'perform-ability' (Love, 2018a) conceptualised in this thesis, are re-imagining performance as a positive and enabling attribute, rather than the negative portrayal, that diminishes teachers to 'technicians' (Robinson, 2012:231).

This was clearly articulated by P5:

We were talking about how to perform often leads down the path of test results and attainment, but what do you see it as? Could it be performing as attainment but also as in performing to develop the whole child. And then P1 made a good point about seeing how do children see performance, or how do teachers see it, or how does the government see it – it might mean different things to different people, but often the focus is test results and things like that (CoE1).

This point was supported by P3 who responded that perform to her “means I’d want them to come out as a well-rounded child, someone who loves education” however, she emphasises that is not possible: “you cannot get away from the fact that we live in a society where grades count.”

Significantly, being a parent was an influencing factor in her thinking:

As a mum, my child will need certain grades to go onto the next stage ... so as much as I’m all for holistic and the whole child ... unless the whole society changes, performance will always have a certain amount of attainment and grades (CoE1).

P3’s point about society is relevant, as a key factor for CP is the vision that society could be transformed for the better (Freire, 1998; Bronner, 2017). In P3’s case however, the sense of her reply had more of the fatalism that Freire (1998) associated with acquiescence to neoliberalism, rather than advocating for political change.

Disengagement in learning was discussed as a potential impact of pressure on children:

The more pressure there is for them [children] to achieve academically, then the more disengaged they become with learning and school in general ... So, all of this sort of academic and accountability and pressures I sort of see around teaching, it’s this gap that worries me, that it’s getting wider (CoE1 P1).

Disengagement, often manifested as passivity was raised as a key concern by Freire (1996, 2007) as an outcome of neoliberal education (Hardy & Lewis, 2017; Strom & Martin, 2017).

A particular concern raised by the participants was the pressure that accountability measures would put on them individually as teachers:

So, the year 2 teacher is saying ‘yes they are at greater depth, amazing’ and they come in to year 3 and you think, this child cannot even write a sentence correctly, and you have to try to hit that greater depth in year 3 because otherwise that looks like you are a failure teacher (FG P11).

This situation is cited as a real concern in education; firstly, schools may feel pressured to manipulate data to meet government targets (Troman, 2008; Hardy & Lewis, 2017), and secondly the labelling of teachers and children who do not meet set targets as failures (Pells, 2017; Raymond, 2018).

Curriculum was seen as a further victim of neoliberal policies. Participants shared examples from their placements where foundation subjects had been marginalised in favour of Maths and English, with some schools even focusing for entire days on core subjects. It was not just foundation subjects that were undervalued but even science:

I have never had a science target in four years, never assessed science in four years of placements, I have barely even taught science (FG P11).

This they saw as “since they took the SATs away isn’t it?” (FG P3). Literature documents the reductionist neoliberal curriculum, where teachers focus disproportionately on subjects that are data accountable (Hardy & Lewis, 2017; Strom & Martin, 2017). The specific example of science was raised by Amanda Spielman, Chief Inspector of Education, in her speech in January 2020 (Spielman, 2020), claiming that stagnant outcomes in science were directly linked to the removal of subject-level inspection and Key Stage 2 science tests – as HTs reported ‘if it’s not measured, it’s not important’ (Keddie, 2017:1251).

Sub-theme Oppressive Leadership

Participants’ considerations of leadership were coded under several themes. In this sub-theme, particular reflections on experiences of oppressive leadership will be explored.

Power was a concept that was frequently discussed; especially in CoE2, where three of the five questions created for the enquiry featured power as a key concept:

- *Should the leadership’s power always be obvious?*
- Is it more important to be flexible or organised?
- How can you find a balance between core values and flexibility?
- How do you define power within education?
- Is there a place for power in education?

Figure 15 Questions created for CoE2 (italic = chosen question)

P11 commented that power had resonated with the group as a pertinent issue upon their return from placement:

We were much more concerned about teaching pressures such as performativity and pressures like SATs and assessments and those kind of things in December, but then personally, I found that was not as much of an issue when I was on placement as the issues of power dynamics and the things that we ended up discussing afterward (FG).

Many different interpretations of power were discussed, including the presence that a head teacher (HT) might exude, seen as important by the participants. Equally, more complicated manifestations of power, with the inference of potential misuse. These had arisen due to less positive experiences on placement:

Like the head teacher's kind of had a lot more power, and it hasn't necessarily had a positive impact on staff (CoE2 PX).

This dynamic, where prescribed approaches to curriculum were insisted upon, was seen as potentially disempowering for the teacher, who might be prevented from following their own initiatives, and would be a non-negotiable for them:

If they [HT] are like no, this is how we do it, then I would step out, I can't teach, I can't enjoy what I'm doing, so therefore the children aren't going to respond at all (P6).

This connection to engagement from pupils reflects Freire's *Problem Posing* response to neoliberalism, where he argues that the passive learner can be transformed into an active participant in their own learning (Freire, 1996), countering neoliberal emphasis on 'silent, passive obedience' (Breunig, 2016:980).

Following a discussion around the problems of working in schools that had dominating headteachers (HT), there was a commonality amongst the group, the conviction that they would not want to work for controlling leaders, or leaders who did not listen to their staff. Research exploring leadership in education highlights embedding trusting relationships and collaborative working with staff as vital for effective and successful practice (Daniëls *et al.*, 2019; Leithwood *et al.*, 2020).

However, the participants were quick to concede the importance of having someone in a position of power. In particular, they discussed the need for someone to "*make those tricky decisions*" (CoE2 P3). This is seen as crucial for beginning teachers (Flores & Day, 2006; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). However, they also made a connection with retention:

If you didn't have that person with that power, ... all that responsibility, you know – would there be more teachers leaving? (CoE2 P1)

This supports an existing understanding that school culture can be a factor for poor retention of beginning teachers (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012). As was common with the group, a leaning towards a happy medium was advocated. While participants accepted the need for leaders to make, sometimes unpopular, decisions, the feeling was that consultation with staff was advisable. The principal reason given for this view was centred around trust:

It is very, very important that the headteacher doesn't just disregard the teacher's opinion because ultimately if they do that then trust is going to be completely lost between them (CoE2 P7).

Successful and enabling learning environments are argued to be dependent on genuine interpersonal relationships between both teaching staff, leadership and pupils, where values such as 'trust, solidarity, mutual concern and empathic responsiveness' are promoted (Mor, 2018:25).

Sub-theme Wellbeing

Participants' concerns around threats to their wellbeing as teachers were articulated unanimously, but equally threats to the wellbeing of children. Particular concerns were raised over the exam-culture prevalent in schools and the impact on children's wellbeing, and the pressure this placed on children to achieve and 'succeed' in very narrow parameters. Participants queried the need for standardised tests at primary level, citing the concern that children can be labelled successes or failures at such a young age. The fixation of some schools on SATs, to the detriment of a balanced curriculum, was raised by participants:

When I went on placement SATs was something that was engrained, all the way down, and they were thinking at that point of getting rid of foundation subjects for year 4 and year 3 to prepare them for SATs in year 6, so it was far worse than I had thought in some schools, which is just ridiculous, its horrifying (FG P13)

Increasingly HTs and unions are speaking out over excessive testing (Patton, 2010; Weale, 2019b). Participants were aware of the pressure on the children's emotional wellbeing and their responsibility to address these issues with pupils (Alexander & Armstrong, 2010; The Children's Society, 2015). However, this was seen as an added pressure for them to find time to engage with this effectively (Humphrey, 2013).

Pressure on them as teachers was evident in their discussions around their own wellbeing and mental health. Particular concerns articulated related to the challenge of negotiating relationships (Day, 2013). Threats were seen as emanating from contrasting values held by their placement schools (Passy, 2013), as well as a lack of support from other staff in the school. This lack of support experienced by the participants is raised by Breunig (2016) who suggests that many school experiences leave students feeling marginalised, bullied or inadequate, in the very places which should encourage and foster learning and growth. The issue of workload was repeatedly raised by the participants in relation to their wellbeing and mental health. "Time" was identified as a key

threat, as was “tiredness.” For the participants achieving a “lifestyle balance, compared to work balance” (CoE2 PX) was a key goal. Workload remains a key concern in the teaching profession and for beginning teachers particularly (Tapper, 2018; Weale, 2019a). This has led to specific guidance being produced for ITE (DFE, 2018a), however still remains an issue (Spielman, 2020).

Sub-theme Theory versus Practice

The final sub-theme in *Teachers as Oppressed Beings* was related to the tensions and dissonance the participants felt between the content of their ITE programme and the realities faced on practice.

The liminal space that is occupied by beginning teachers as they try to reconcile the ITE culture with the professional school context is challenging to navigate, with issues of congruence and dissonance experienced by many (Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Seymour, 2018). Particular issues highlighted by the participants often centred on conflicting messages concerning pedagogy and ideology, for example regarding behaviour management, values or inclusion.

Experiences of the inflexibility of some teachers in placement schools was commonplace, with the participants sharing that there had been no possibility of compromise:

- *I had a horrendous first experience on placement and it changed me, and I was forced to adopt what someone was telling me to do. But I don't think that change was right for me, and I don't think anyone else would see that as a positive change, and that was so much pressure, that I think that has made me worse as an educator (P13)*
- *We talked about [...] practitioners being resistant to change, so you might have all these wonderful ideas you've gained from uni, but actually you might come across somebody who says we've always done it like this, so this is the way we'll always continue (PX)*
- *My teacher was very set in her ways, she had been there a while, she knew what she wanted, and initially when she would give me feedback it would all be tailored towards what her vision for the lessons would have looked like (P13)*

The challenge of transferring the pedagogy and philosophies of ITE into the workplace is often raised as a threat for beginning teachers (Strom & Martin, 2017; Seymour, 2018); where inquiry approaches to teaching promoted by many ITE programmes are often in conflict with the traditional, didactic methods of teaching that many saw in placements (Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Buchanan, 2015). Participants shared that they felt unable to challenge teachers regarding issues of pedagogy. It is argued that beginning teachers are often cowed by the ‘pervasive discourses of teacher as expert and authoritarian’ (Buchanan, 2015:703), leading them to concede to practice that potentially contradicts that encouraged by their ITE programmes (Strom & Martin, 2017; Seymour, 2018), with

some schools encouraging beginning teachers to assimilate and refrain from interrogating these areas of conflict (Buchanan, 2015).

Contrastingly, one participant recounted how the dominant performative culture at her placement school, had just made her “*be creative in thinking of ways to get other stuff in*” (FG P13), reflecting a determination to do things differently, and challenge authoritative practices (Buchanan, 2015). Such actions resonate with the third type of teacher proposed by Moore and Clarke (2016) where teachers seek to protect their pupils from deleterious practices.

Another tension that was mentioned by some participants related to their assessed lesson observations. The participants discussed how the focus seemed to be very narrow, lesson objective based, to the detriment, they felt, of any consideration of the relational side of their role:

All they’ve seen us do is how we interact with children, but it’s all about your education, your lesson, how you’re performing. And there’s no personal qualities or sides that they’re taking into account (P10)

This observation by the participants is significant. The performative ideology proclaims that accountability and measurement focus will improve standards and the performance of teachers (McGregor, 2009; Kilderry, 2015; Apple, 2017), and that those teachers who manage to meet their prescribed targets for student achievement, will be deemed a success, regardless of their pedagogy, professionalism or relationships with their pupils (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012).

This view was however challenged by other participants:

I just wanted to disagree ... my teacher tutor is definitely concerned with relationships with the children” (CoE 1 P11)

This demonstrated the subjectivity of placement experiences, and the necessity of ITE programmes to ensure students develop resilience for their placements, but also for the reality of classroom practice (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Seymour, 2018).

There was a sense from the participants that they wished that schools would value what they brought to the role as student teachers; in terms of pedagogy, innovative practice and research-informed teaching that they had been exposed to through their ITE programme:

I would like to see ... Teacher Tutors really valuing the reading that we have done, the assignments that we have done and the learning that we have done at uni and how we are applying it in school because I feel so much of our in school assessment is based on what we have done in school on that day, it is not based on why we did that in the classroom that day, and I want more of a connection between why have you chosen to teach your maths this way? Some days it is going to be, because my teacher tutor teaches it that way, and I am trying to explain it to the class, great that is a school experience based learning, some days it is going to be, because I read this really important thing in year 2 ...that's why, and that is university based learning, and I want to talk about that in school, not because I want the validation, but I think that Link Tutors and Teacher Tutors should value that a lot more than they currently do (Focus Gp P11).

Hobson *et al.* (2008) recounted that student teachers were frustrated that they perceived 'a lack of appreciation or support for HEI-based work by school-based partners' (p414). Literature shows this can lead to beginning teachers 'experiencing feelings of self-doubt and confusion as they attempt the complex negotiation of trying to straddle the dual professional contexts of school and university' (Seymour, 2018:43).

In summary, this section addressed the considerations of Research Question 1: '*What are the experiences, concerns and observations of the participants regarding the neoliberal education culture and how this might impact on their teacher identity?*' It highlighted the participants' concerns, as a result of their recent experiences in school, of the impact of neoliberal practices in education and the potential bearing that this would have on their teacher identity. In particular, the impact of performativity was raised by all of the participants, both in terms of expectations on teachers as well as on pupils. The data identified a dichotomy of attainment and wellbeing for pupils that the participants struggled to reconcile. A further neoliberal impact on practice identified was the marginalisation of many curriculum subjects, seen as victims of the dominance of core subjects. The data identified a concern amongst some participants regarding their experience of oppressive leadership styles. In particular issues raised were constraints placed on teacher autonomy, curriculum choices and lack of communication, leading the data suggested to a possibility of disempowerment. This was closely aligned in the participants' discussions with concerns about their own and pupil wellbeing, particularly impacted by the exam-culture in schools they had taught in, and the associated pressure this placed on teachers. A final thread from this theme was the dissonance experienced by some participants regarding contrasting values and pedagogies of ITE and school, leading in some cases to an expectation of assimilation into established school practice.

Teachers as Agentic and Political Beings

At Phase 5 of Braun and Clarke's (2006) process I considered amalgamating Theme 1 and 2 due to the connection inherent in their contents, this connection led to the decision to present them together under *Teachers as Agentic and Political Beings*. The story of *Teachers as Agentic Beings* is the participants' articulations of their understanding of teacher agency and its importance and relevance to them. This was deeply entwined with their conceptualisations of their Teacher Identity, and their capacity to be Teacher-Leaders.

Teachers as Agentic Beings

When reflecting on the findings for *Teachers as Agentic Beings*, I repeated the same process as with *Teachers as Oppressed Beings*; firstly, considering the overarching patterns that were apparent:

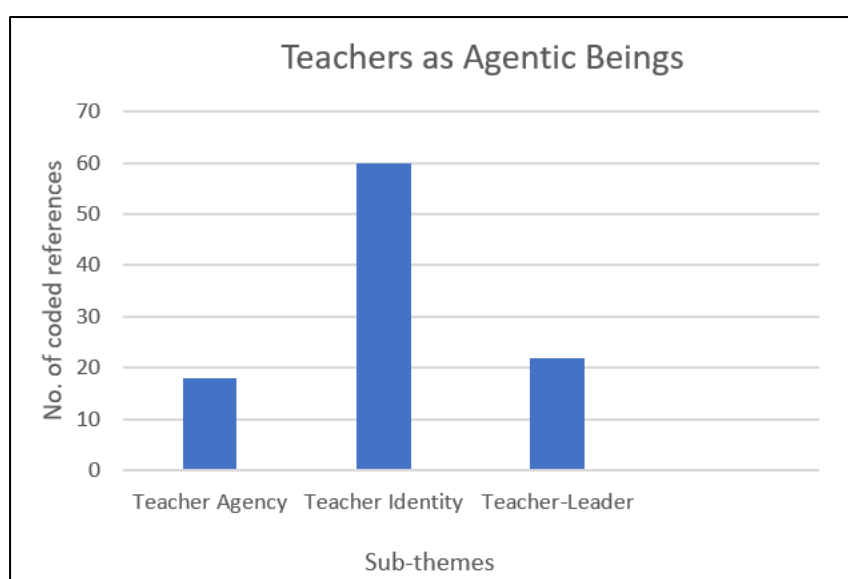


Table 4 Coding spread across *Teachers as Agentic Beings*

There was a distinct resonance among the participants on issues concerning their own teacher identity, values and vision. This was coupled with a clear understanding of their own role in standing up for values that they hold as important, whether that was in regard to curriculum, vision for the school or leadership of the school.

Sub-theme Teacher Agency

In this sub-theme, concepts around power, leadership and values were highlighted by the participants, but equally related issues regarding the pressure that this can put on teachers.

The participants synthesised concerns around leadership and autonomy, and voiced concerns that there could be a tension between what they felt was expected of them, and how they wanted to be as teachers. This is highlighted as a specific concern for beginning teachers (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). Responding to a comment that they should be confident to be the teachers that they wanted to be irrespective of pressure, P5 stated:

... the pressure is about like how we're performing, so I think that we feel the pressure because we're like "Oh we have to - we have to achieve this and that", and I think the pressure would come off if we do it how we want to do it. And if you're in the right school that matches your vision and values then it's a lot easier to kind of be that teacher you want to be. So, I think if you just kind of be confident and strong in who you are, then I think the pressure would start to fall off as you're still performing, but as who you want to be (CoE1).

On the poster stimuli for CoE1 confidence was only recorded by one participant as an attribute of their Teacher Identity, conversely it was noted as a potential threat by participants. However in the amendments for CoE2 six more participants listed it, demonstrating the confidence gained over the placement, as would be expected (Anspal *et al.*, 2012). The role of confidence was returned to on many occasions; however, this was not seen as an over-inflated confidence, more of trusting in what they had learnt in ITE:

Because sometimes you doubt yourself, and we need to remember, no, we have had the training, and even though there's still loads we don't know, there's also a lot we do know" (CoE2 Px).

The group was in agreement with this, however P11 refined this thinking, saying:

... but also I just wanted to throw out the idea that we also need to be willing to change ... and if [the school] see something in what I'm doing that they think is wrong, then I need to be willing to listen, and then decide whether I still hold what I think I'm doing - if I still hold that belief, or if I see their perspective and decide oh actually I want to change something (CoE1)

This reflective element was notable in the group dialogues and will be returned to in the analysis of *Teachers as Hope-full Beings*.

Another connection that was central to discussions around *Teacher Agency*, was with the concepts of leadership and autonomy. The group on multiple occasions discussed the type of leaders they would and would not like to work for (discussed in detail in analysis for *Teachers as Hope-full Beings* and *Teachers as Oppressed Beings* respectively), and saw the role of the leadership of the school as having a direct impact on their teacher agency. In particular they discussed the need for leaders to

give teachers freedom to decide how they approached teaching and learning in their classrooms, “*I think that gives teachers autonomy*” (CoE2 P6) as well as showing teachers that their ideas would be valued.

There was a link here with *Teachers as Political Beings* sub-theme of *Democratic Practice*, as participants clarified that leaders listening to staff related not only to the teachers, but also support staff:

So, when I was a teaching assistant ... teachers and teaching assistants were told that if someone came in, there should be no distinction of who you are. So, I'm thinking that should be applied to the Senior Leadership Team (CoE2 P8).

Supportive colleagues and leadership are seen as crucial for the wellbeing and retention of beginning teachers (Pillen *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b). The group agreed that the leadership style at the interview process would impact on their decision if offered the job:

Our autonomy as teachers comes like during the recruitment process ... your autonomy comes in and sees this power dynamic, this hierarchy isn't right for me as a teacher, therefore this isn't the right environment ... is this the right setting, ethos, values, all of those things – perhaps that's where our autonomy comes from (CoE2 PX).

An interesting discussion was had in the group reflecting on the experiences of the participants who were BEd/MEd students on the four-year route and had visited a Steiner school. Steiner schools are based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner and aim to create well-rounded students through a broad curriculum, including academics, art and music education, physical education, and emotional and social education.

They were particularly struck by the agency of the individual teachers:

Every class was completely different ... the teachers decided pretty much everything that they wanted to do (CoE2 P9).

However, while previously the group were extolling individual teacher agency, this experience challenged these participants:

Now obviously I was only there for a day, and I personally didn't agree with the ... way that the school was run, just in terms of it didn't feel like ... the children were, they were just learning very different things than I was used to in mainstream schools (CoE2 P9)

Although P9 re-emphasised the autonomy of the classroom teachers: “*he was the power, so he had that autonomy,*” the inference given, was that this was problematic. Indeed, P9 clarified:

I feel like you still need someone above you to guide you, they don't need to be, you know, power as "I'm above you I'm higher than you", but just as a power to guide you if you need help making decisions. Whereas the teacher in that classroom was making all the decisions (CoE 2)

This attitude is reflected in literature, where it is argued that beginning teachers are more likely to be comfortable with environments that replicate what they themselves have experienced (Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017).

There was a sense that alternative education was seen as fringe provision, this was echoed when discussing the idea of 'perform-ability' and whether it was possible that teachers could negotiate the dual tensions of performativity and wellbeing, P3 stated:

... in an ideal world, if we could change the world and the society ... it would be lovely to ... and perhaps people passionately believe that, and go and work in a Steiner school, or go and do something completely different (FG)

Sub-theme Teacher Identity

This sub-theme displayed connections with the concepts of values, change, identity and the impact of placements. Additionally, associations were made with taught ITE modules.

Discussions around the vision and values as integral to their teacher identity occurred throughout all three data collection points. These discussions were often related to a school's values and their resonance with the participants:

If you're in the right school that matches your vision and values, then it's a lot easier to kind of be that teacher you want to be (CoE1 P5).

P11 was clear that an alignment in values was non-negotiable:

My values are clear communication and honesty, and if [they] don't have those things, then I am out, because ... I am not the right fit for your school (FG).

These concerns are reflected in literature (Passy, 2013), with suggestions that collegiality is one of the first victims of the performative culture (Ball, 2003; McGregor, 2009). The participants repeatedly indicated the importance they placed on their core values, and integrity was highlighted in the stimuli posters. This emphasis on vision and values is often seen as a motivating reason for joining the teaching profession (Korthagen, 2004) and is fundamental to a belief in the relational aspect of education (McGregor, 2009; Mor, 2018), which is explored in *Teachers as Relational Beings*.

The participants articulated an understanding of the fluid nature of identity formation, as developed and refined through life experiences:

I think our values will be constantly changing, due to external pressures, pressures at home etc. (FG P3).

This conceptualisation of identity as a dynamic process, that adapts over time, in response to external and internal influences is well-documented (Buchanan, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2017). P3 often reflected on her age: “*Because I am older, I have a very strong sense of who I am.*” As a mature student with young children, on a number of occasions P3 reflected on how she was seeing issues from a dual perspective, firstly as a student teacher, but additionally, and often contrastingly as a parent. The consideration of a generational angle on these discussions is highlighted in literature (Keddie, 2017), however, while most literature suggests that older or more experienced teachers are more likely to resist performativity (Troman, 2008; Kilderry, 2015), in P3’s case, having children led her to submit to performative measures:

As a mum as well, I want my children to be happy in school, but ultimately they want to come out with a certain thing at the end, to be able to do what they want to do next, and that boils down to a teacher ‘performing’ (FG).

Placements, and in particular challenging placements, were discussed for their role in identity development:

Having a series of bad placements, things have surfaced, where I was forced to think about [teacher identity] ... these placements have caused me to question things (FG P13).

This view was developed by P8 who had a positive placement, where she was supported and encouraged:

They were open to my ideas and the way I taught and the way I am, so I did not have to challenge anyone (FG).

This however, had left her feeling less prepared in terms of her teacher identity:

I did not have a chance to find out my values like you did because I did not have to change how I taught or how I wanted to be (FG P8).

This reflects Kagan’s (1992) proposal that a primary developmental task for student teachers is to ‘experience cognitive dissonance and question the appropriateness of personal images and beliefs’ (p150) through placements.

A final key point under the sub-theme of *Teacher Identity* was the concept of change. Change or flexibility was mentioned multiple times on the stimulus posters as being important for teacher identity and was often connected with ideas of reflective practice. The majority of these notations were added for CoE2, suggesting that this understanding had developed while on placement. P11 stated the importance of being willing to be open-minded, to listen and to “*accept different perspectives and change in accordance with those*” (CoE1). These characteristics reflect one of the fundamental premises of P4C; the ability to be reasonable and to be reasoned with (Lipman *et al.*, 1980, 2010; Kizel, 2016). Additionally, this willingness to change can be related to humility, which is an underpinning concept for Freire’s (1994, 1996) visions of education.

Sub-theme Teacher-Leader

When exploring this final sub-theme of *Teachers as Agentic Beings*, obvious connections were made such as leader, leadership and children, but also considerations of perspectives, creativity and the role of experience, often linked to confidence.

The participants had clear ideas of the types of leaders they would like to be. They made connections with being creative leaders, which P5 defined as:

Being a problem solver, I think someone who’s probably openminded, willing to listen, a team player, collaborative, all those things (CoE1).

The role of creativity in leadership and as an approach to challenge performativity is well documented (Joep, 2018; Raymond, 2018), but was also linked by the participants to the idea of social transformation. This group discussed wanting to be “*magic leaders*” (CoE1), which they explained as wanting to make things exciting and positive, but also as an approach for transformation:

We’ve been at uni for however long we’ve been here, we’ve been passed on this magic, to actually empower the children’ (CoE P6).

This is discussed further under *Teachers as Political Beings*.

How the participants saw themselves as leaders was often modelled on their experiences of leadership through their placements:

- *I went to a school and walked around, and the first question the Head Teacher asked me was 'so how can you help us?', and it was really, really nice, because immediately they wanted my ideas, and weren't just like, right this is the way we do it. That type of leader is the type that I'd like to work for, and potentially be (CoE2 P6)*
- *So, in the last placement there was a teacher who I felt was extremely approachable, she had this positive energy around her, so I could go to her for anything, good or bad, and she'd always be there helping me find a solution ... that's the kind of leader I would want to be (CoE2 P12)*

The importance of supportive mentors and leaders in schools is fundamental for beginning teachers to develop their teacher identity (Pillen *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b), both in terms of professional discourse and collegiate collaboration (Gee, 2000).

The participants were keen to clarify that although they might be classroom teachers, they also identified themselves as leaders, and role models for their class:

You can just be a teacher, but also be a leader for your children. And in kind of sharing those leadership skills with them, to show them that one day they can be a leader too (CoE2 P9).

This view of themselves as both teachers as well as teacher-leaders is significant, as research shows that confidence in their teacher identity, role and purpose can help with agency (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The participants discussed the responsibility that the role of teacher-leaders demands, stating that it was scary to see themselves as the “*adult in the room*” (CoE2 P9). There was humility in how they saw themselves as teacher-leaders, in terms of their roles, their learning and their experience:

I think in terms of leadership, that's something that's really important ... seeking out other perspectives, who's actually got the expertise here, or what do you think about this situation? Just making sure that both as a leader, and as someone within that leadership structure, I'm always looking for multiple perspectives on any given situation (CoE2 P11).

This quality, as discussed with regard to *Teacher Agency* is critical for beginning teachers in embracing the desire to reflect, adapt and grow as teachers (Freire, 1998; Kohan, 2019).

Importance was placed on the role of confidence and experience as Teacher-Leaders. The participants wanted to encourage each other about the knowledge, experience and the learning that they had received to be confident in their classrooms in all the roles they might take:

I think based on what we said about good leadership, I think we should all be trying to implement that into our own classrooms, and not putting ourselves down for not being as experienced, but actually trying to be a leader on a small scale for now (CoE2 P7).

This was reinforced by P11, who, while discussing times when in school she had felt disempowered as a leader in her classroom, stressed that:

If you're the teacher ... whether you're an NQT or experienced, you know your children more than anyone in that school does at that moment in time (CoE2).

As discussed earlier, the emphasis here again is placed on the relational element of being a teacher (Biesta *et al.*, 2015; Mor, 2018).

In summary, this section addressed the main aim of this thesis, which was '*To examine student teachers' experiences of teacher identity, agency and education in a neoliberal climate.*' The participants identified agency or autonomy as a fundamental element of their teacher identity and valued approachable school leaders who encouraged this quality in their staff. The data identified that clear vision and values for themselves as teachers, but also for the school leadership was rated highly by the participants and concerns were raised that there might be tensions here between the teacher they would like to be (in terms of agency, curriculum approaches, values etc.), and performative expectations of school leadership.

Teachers as Political Beings

Teachers as Political Beings concerns *Conscientização* or Critical Consciousness, as conceptualised by Freire (1996), which speaks of educators who refuse the possibility that education is neutral. The story for this theme is about the willingness of the participants to challenge the status quo, to refuse to be 'neutral' and to enact democratic principles in their classrooms to empower themselves and their pupils.

The overarching patterns for *Teachers as Political Beings* showed a prevalence around the sub-theme of the Teacher-Agent:

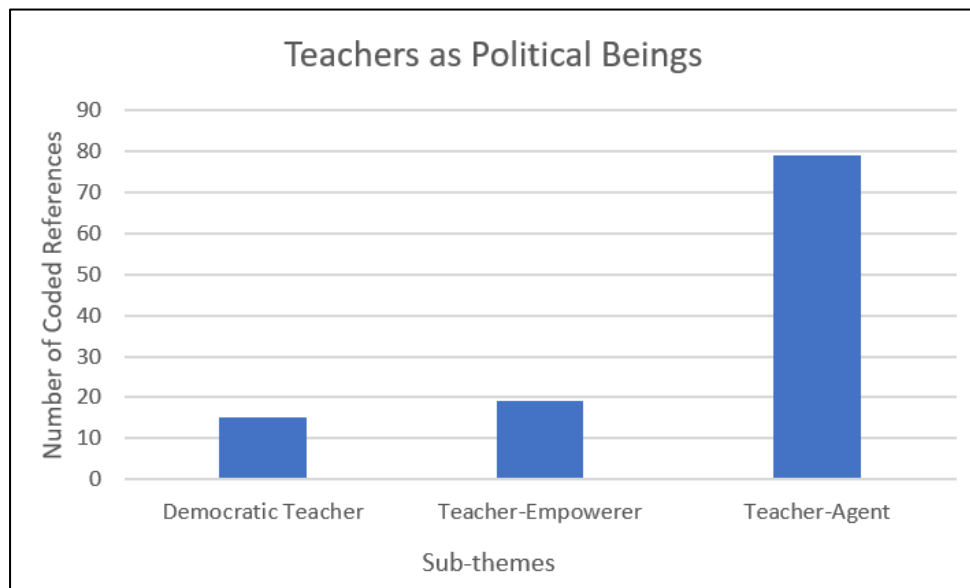


Table 5 Coding spread across Teachers as Political Beings

Sub-theme Teacher-Agent

This sub-theme demonstrates the focus of the dialogue around issues of performance, as well as the recurring concepts of change and values.

Considerations of the *Teacher-Agent* had resonances under several themes. While there are links to the idea of *Teacher Agency* discussed earlier in this analysis, this particular conceptualisation of the *Teacher-Agent* goes further than questions of agency, to consider a more pro-active rather than reactive role in education, seeking to resist or challenge issues or situations that seem unjust or oppressive (Love, 2019). This pro-active approach towards educational issues has links with Freire's (1996, 1998) challenge to educators to refrain from positions of neutrality and education as the potential for affecting change (Freire, 1998; Giroux, 2010). Equally there are resonances with Critical P4C (discussed in Chapter 3), where 'members of philosophical communities of inquiry in effect serve as agents of change within a democratic participative culture' (Kizel, 2016:512).

This idea of resisting practices that you disagree with as a teacher was discussed with the participants. When discussing teacher identity and core values, P13 described an incident that had happened to her on her teaching placement. She described how her class teacher was initially very

resistant to any changes that P13 wanted to enact in the class and tried to persuade P13 to change her practice. P13 described how she had had a gradual epiphany:

It took me a long time to realise that if I was going to be happy in this placement, I was actually going to have to challenge what she was telling me and to have the courage to put across my core values, over her own (FG).

P13 was articulating a clear connection between confidence in herself as a teacher, her values and pedagogy, to enable both agency and the idea of a *Teacher-Agent*, equally the realisation that to instigate change, challenge had to happen. The conviction that P13 showed here challenges literature that suggests there is a potential tendency for beginning teachers to compromise their ideological views in order to survive when faced with conflict (Moore *et al.*, 2002; Troman, 2008; Wilkins, 2011), becoming disempowered and acquiescent to dominant narratives (Freire, 1998). Passy's (2013) research explored questions of neoliberalism with student teachers graded Outstanding. One of them stated, 'there's always ways of... just doing enough to meet their government targets, but also being like a guerrilla teacher' (p1071), suggesting this gave them space to retain integrity with their professional values. There is, I suggest, a connection here with the idea of the 'Perform-able' *Teacher-Agent*.

The agentic attitude articulated by P13 is resonant with CP's directive of empowering a sense of responsibility for themselves and others and striving for a more just and democratic society (Freire, 1994; Giroux, 2010). P13 talked about the courage needed to challenge dominant discourses; Freire (1998) emphasises the civic courage that is needed if we make 'a choice for a humanized world' (p94). The idea of striving for social transformation was echoed by the participants when discussing the tension between wanting to teach with a more holistic focus and the expectations that the results-agenda imposes. However, they articulated a sense of pragmatism, and acceptance of the way things were, suggesting that a balance would need to be found:

Ultimately, if ... those children academically don't make any progress, we've failed. No one is going to pat you on the back and say P8 you have 30 lovely children, all very happy and very safe, they are very content, but academically they are not performing, so it is, how do you achieve that balance? (FG P3).

Research shows that beginning teachers can quickly become driven by more pragmatic aspirations as they experience the reality of school practice (Seymour, 2018).

The participants from the four-year programme had completed a module that looked at neoliberal influences on education; P11 discussed how taking the time to explore both sides of the argument

had given her “the opportunity to find my own middle ground” (FG). Interestingly, she suggested this had given her the confidence to accept a job at a school that was extremely “SATs driven” admitting:

Because as much as that could be a damaging environment for these kids, it is a way for me to try and see it from their perspective, while bringing my own perspective (FG).

She accepted that this might be a challenging position to be in:

But I am not like that, so it will be interesting to compare, if I am not like that, how will I fit in that system – [but] it does not put me off (FG).

It is possible that P11 was underestimating the tension that this might place on her values, yet she was adamant that this was not a compromise. In P11’s discussions of this approach that she sees herself taking, there are resonances with the three types of teacher facing neoliberalism as proposed by Moore and Clarke (2016). Their contention was that this educational climate results in teachers broadly adhering to one of three identities: Firstly those who are ‘broadly supportive of the current policy’, secondly those who ‘reject key aspects and seek out opportunities where they can practise alternative pedagogies’ or thirdly those who ‘although resistant to the policy, remain within the system in order to try to alleviate the negative impact on children (Moore and Clarke, 2016:667). In P11’s reflections she is not aligning with identity 1 but seems to be taking a line straddling identity 2 and 3. This has resonance with my conceptualisation of the ‘perform-able’ teacher. This view was supported by P5, also from the four-year route, who discussed the idea of being both “a rebel and still conform[ing]”; this was all centred around the idea of risk-taking and having confidence that the ends might justify the means:

So, it’s about taking risks and being that person, that teacher that you want to be, and as long as you get the results, then does it matter how you’ve achieved them as such? (CoE1)

As discussed in *Teachers as Agentic Beings*, risk-taking is seen as a powerful weapon against performative mindsets (Wilkins, 2011; Raymond, 2018). In this discussion, P5 also built on P11’s idea of being open-minded about different approaches, and not assuming that all performative measures are wrong:

I think we tend to be quite negative sometimes because of what we have experienced or read or is said to us, so I think it’s about changing our mindset and being more positive and just kind of taking those risks (CoE1).

This is supported in literature, emphasising the beneficial side of performativity, which has created opportunity to engage in dialogue with schools about what might constitute good education (Biesta, 2009). The concern is, that these measures have gone too far, resulting in over-controlled schools,

teachers and teacher educators, to the detriment of the pupils, the teachers and the schools (Biesta, 2009; Keddie, 2017).

Sub-theme Democratic Practice

The participants placed importance on democratic practices. Principles of equality, inclusion and mutual respect were listed on the majority of the posters as non-negotiables for their Teacher Identity. This was clearly articulated by the group:

We had inclusive ... it's still absolutely fundamental to how we should be as teachers (CoE2).

However, literature suggests that the current generation of students are not cognisant of other, more democratic and emancipatory approaches to education (Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017). ITE could be a key opportunity to encourage student teachers to 'critically examine the ideological nature of teaching and the nature of teachers' work' (Hill, 2007:215).

Under this sub-theme, concepts such as power and leadership emerge behind the expected school, classroom, teacher etc.

Discussion around *Democratic Practice* centred around questions of hierarchy and power in classrooms and schools. Pupils having a voice in matters that concerned them was raised by participants as an example of good practice, with P4C suggested by P12 as an enabling pedagogy. P4C is known for encouraging democratic approaches to classroom practice (Murriss *et al.*, 2009; Anderson, 2016), and while this is seen to be challenging for teachers used to more traditional power dynamics (Haynes & Murriss, 2011b; Haynes, 2014), it is often argued to be empowering for both teachers and pupils (Splitter, 2014; Love, 2016).

Some of the participants had visited a Steiner school. The observations that those participants made around questions of power in such a school setting was muddled. On the one hand they initially seemed to suggest that there was a more distributed authority, with the children playing a role in the power dynamics in the classroom:

The rules, the management, everything was kind of, its own hub in the one classroom, in the one year group (CoE2 P9).

But then this was amended, and the suggestion was that in fact it was the teacher that held not only the autonomy, but all of the power:

The teachers decided pretty much everything that they wanted to do ... the teacher in that classroom was making all the decisions (CoE2 P9).

Although Steiner schools are not specifically known as democratic schools, the likelihood is that the limited time that the participants spent at the school did not necessarily give them a clear understanding of the classroom or power dynamics. P9 did in fact concede this point: “... I mean obviously I was only there for a day...”

Dialogue concerning power also focused on hierarchies that the participants had experienced on placements. Where it related to the classroom, this was generally linked with respectful attitudes:

I think if you asked the child, their opinions of hierarchy in the classroom, they'd see everyone the same. Like especially when I went in as a student teacher, after a week, they're going up to you as if they would their teacher, so I think - and the same with TAs, they've the same sort of relationship and trust with everyone, so I think their relationships with hierarchy, they're completely oblivious to it – in a good way (CoE 2 P9).

These respectful attitudes were seen to be the embodiment of secure and respectful relationships of both adults and children and supports Freire's (2007) description of the democratic educator.

Hierarchy was also mentioned related to school leadership. Participants felt that some idea of power or authority was necessary to enable the leadership to make decisions for the school:

The power should be known by all, when we're regarding what the head and leadership can do for the school, the power should be known, I think that's really important (CoE2 P6).

This contrasted with previous comments on leaders needing to be collaborative and listen to the views of staff. There was, however, a strong sense amongst the group that this should not become a dominant hierarchy, which could impact on teachers:

I think yeah, we should know who the figures are that we can turn to, but I don't think there should be a distinction between 'oh that's the Head Teacher and that's just an NQT' (CoE2 P11).

Although their messages were contradictory at times, overall the participants seemed to aspire towards a less hierarchical and more equitable workplace.

Sub-theme Teacher Empowerer

The final sub-theme of *Teachers as Political Beings* related to the participants empowering and enabling their pupils. This was highly recorded on the stimulus posters. The data for this sub-theme demonstrates concerns about enabling children to achieve, alongside issues related to academic performance and pressure.

The participants made a connection with the importance and necessity of creating safe environments for children to achieve, but also to thrive. Following a discussion about their values as teachers, P3 added:

I think for most teachers that is the most important thing; a safe space that nurtures the child to achieve the very best they can (FG).

The group was unanimous in their agreement of this, P11 emphasising:

You said that you wanted to create an environment where children can achieve their best, which I think just shows that you kind of need both, so you are creating that safe environment because that helps them to achieve, ... you do want them to be happy, and you are doing it for that reason ... so I think that you need that safe environment, you need those foundations before anyone is going to achieve anything (FG).

This belief in the importance of creating safe classroom environments is supported in literature, connected with developing genuine relationships (Biesta *et al.*, 2015). It also links with CP and Freirean thinking, where the safe and trust-filled space in the classroom, was seen as enabling genuine dialogue and embracing the possibility of disrupting hierarchies and empowering student voices (Freire, 1996; Breunig, 2016). Equally it is a fundamental condition for establishing an effective CoE in P4C (D'Olimpio, 2015). P3 did however add a disclaimer, stating that it would not be acceptable, in her opinion, to prioritise happiness or security over academic achievement. She was alone in feeling so strongly about this, and as discussed earlier, put this down to her being a parent and thus feeling challenged over the importance of qualifications.

The participants concurred about wanting to empower children. For the participants, empowering was conceptualised as believing in the children, encouraging them, inspiring them, being on their side, and encouraging them to achieve and thrive, not just in the academic sense, but more holistically:

What about the children that aren't able to perform academically, ... we still have a duty to them as teachers ... A huge part of the role is sort of scooping up these children ... to ensure that they have everything that they need to go into future life (CoE1 P1)

Here the participants saw a connection with facilitating a love for learning in their classes:

If we can empower a love for learning, and instil a love for learning - the pressures will be taken off the children because they want to learn, they love to learn, so they're going to exceed themselves, which then takes the pressure off ourselves?(CoE1 P6)

This supports Freire's (1996, 2007) contention that problem posing education would awaken in students a genuine interest in their learning, leading to them taking active roles in their own education. The empowering element that the participants saw as part of their roles as teachers resonates with CP's vision for transformative and socially just forms of education (Giroux, 2010; Breunig, 2016), as well as the contention that P4C should bring about change and transformation for the community of enquirers (Lipman *et al.*, 1980). It is also directly connected with the teacher activist-identity as proposed by Sachs (2001), and the second model of teacher proposed by Moore and Clarke (2016), who deliberately reflect on and reject current policy and seek out opportunities to practise alternative pedagogies.

In summary, this section reflects the focus of the research sub aims that sought to provide opportunities for the participants to critically engage with the neoliberal discourse, as well as consider the concept of perform-ability in relation to neoliberal practices, reflecting on their recent experiences on placement. The participants highlighted their commitment to resisting neoliberal practices that they saw as diminishing creative and holistic approaches to education, and affirmed their confidence in having the capacity to embed their values and empower change for their pupils, despite results-agenda expectations. This links with my conceptualisation of Perform-ability and the Perform-able teacher who is able to thrive despite the current performative narrative. Additionally, the data identified a passion amongst the participants for democratic practice in schools, forefronting equality, inclusion and most importantly respectful relationships - both for teachers:pupils as well as from leadership:school community. For the participants this teaching environment would empower them to create safe classrooms where their pupils would thrive.

Teachers as Relational and Hope-full Beings

This final part of Chapter Five explores the last two themes, *Teachers as Relational Beings* and *Teachers as Hope-full Beings*. The decision to connect these two themes was due to the underlying thread of promoting and prioritising relationships, hope and emotions. In addition, this section will discuss some Golden Threads drawn from Chapter Five as a whole and concludes with the Chapter Summary.

Teachers as Relational Beings

Echoing the importance Freire (1996) places on the relational aspect of education, the narrative of this theme explores the importance that the participants placed on the role of relationships and emotions in their practice, but also importantly in the practice of school leaders. Inclusion and inclusive practice were connected in their thinking in this area. The relational aspect of the participants' role as educators was immediately apparent from the coding:

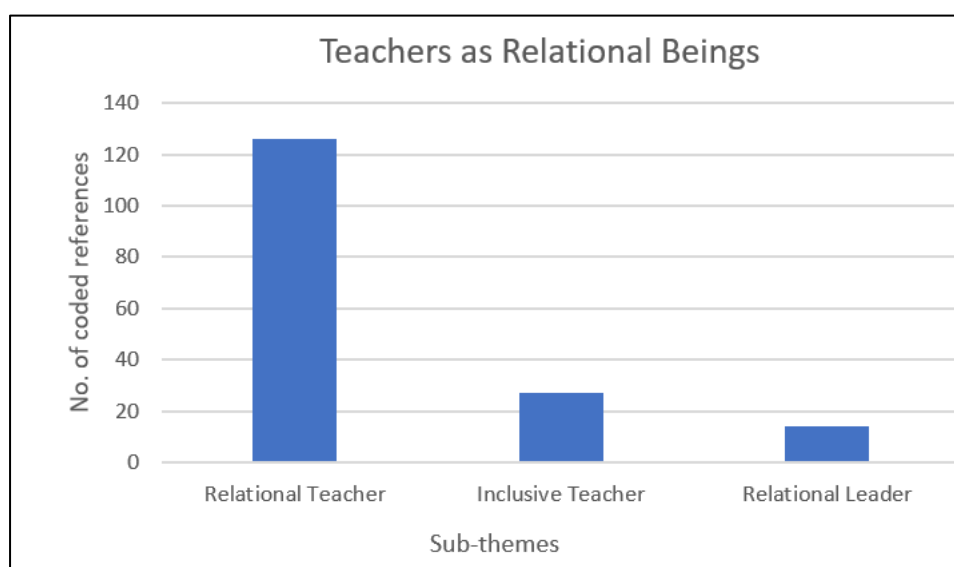


Table 6 Coding spread across Teachers as Relational Beings

Relationships are argued to be a key factor in teaching and learning (Roffey, 2011; Jope, 2018) and research suggests that denying teachers the opportunity to engage authentically with colleagues and pupils on an emotional level, might lead to increased retention issues (Buchanan, 2015).

Sub-theme Relational Teacher

When considering this sub-theme, relevant annotations on the poster stimuli were significant. The characteristics listed were those that might have been expected to have been noted by participants who clearly placed relationships at the heart of their teacher identity, but particularly noteworthy was how participants' thinking had changed as a result of their placement.

The data related to relationships doubled from the first Poster stimulus to the second, emphasising their growing understanding of the role of relationships. Literature reports relationships as fundamental to the teacher's role and the motivation behind decision-making (Mor, 2018). It should be noted that this was not only with reference to their relationships with pupils, but also with other adults:

On placement there were a few times where I had to be kind of wise in how I was dealing with situations? Especially involving other people. So that kind of was a good experience, of just practising how to speak wisely, and when to speak, and when to not (CoE2 P7)

This sub-theme highlighted the dominance of concepts such as kindness, caring, compassion and inclusivity, but also the importance of time for genuine relationship building.

In CoE1 participants discussed in small groups the qualities they saw as non-negotiable for them as teachers. Characteristics noted included:

Kind and caring, inclusive, valuing each other, dedicated, honesty, love, compassion, trusting, respect, open-minded, consistent, fun (CoE).

Discussions that related to themselves as relational teachers often centred around caring for every child, which had been noticed by the children in their classes:

[In this picture] I've got a scale, with my heart and my brain – a little boy drew this for me at the end of my placement because he said I'm really smart, but I care a lot more than my brain (CoE2 P2).

This care that the participants articulated resonates with the ethics of care proposed by Mor (2018), particularly in terms of having responsibility for the children's care and wellbeing (Noddings, 2002; Mor, 2018), and an appreciation and acknowledgement of each child's worth (Kennedy, 2010; F. Haynes, 2018). This responsibility was seen as both exciting and daunting by the participants:

I as a teacher, have the power to positively and negatively impact the children around me, and that's a great thing, but it's also a really scary thing (PX).

The participants highlighted the importance of genuine interpersonal relationships between the teacher and class and the impact this could have on pupils' wellbeing (Freire & Freire, 2006; McGregor, 2009). This echoes Freire's (1998) vision for educators, who he saw as caring both for the wellbeing of the pupils they taught, as well as for the learning they would facilitate. Relationships are seen as the principal factor in wellbeing in education (Roffey, 2011; Seligman, 2012) and integral to individual flourishing (Eaude, 2009; Mor, 2018).

Sub-theme Inclusive Teacher

This sub-theme was dominated by ideas of inclusive, positive approaches to classroom practice and behaviour.

The coded data related to this sub-theme was not extensive, but was strongly felt by the participants. Braun and Clarke (2018) caution equating prevalence with significance, advising that findings can be important even if only mentioned sparingly, if there is strength of opinion behind it.

Discussions related to inclusion and inclusive practice dominated dialogue in the early stages of CoE1; often concerning examples of non-inclusive practice that they had witnessed on placement. In particular, the practice of some schools of excluding children from the classroom, or sending them to senior members of staff, for perceived misbehaviour. The students were unhappy with this practice, seeing it as not only non-inclusive in practice, but also disempowering them as the student teacher, implying that they could not 'manage' such behaviour:

I had one child in particular who has behaviour difficulties ... but every time they started to sort of kick off, the immediate advice was 'Oh just send them to the Head Teacher'. And I actually found that quite difficult, because it meant that when I was trying to manage their behaviour, it's like 'Oh just send them out' – but is that saying that I'm not you know, capable of managing their behaviour myself? And I actually found that quite difficult ... like what if I actually want to try and keep them in my room, and sort of keep them learning? (CoE2 P11)

The literature suggests that the majority of teachers do not support removal of children with behavioural issues, although the practice is still commonplace (Rhodes *et al.*, 2019). P11 conceded that external intervention might on occasion be needed. Concerns around behaviour management were highlighted as threats on the participants' posters and are seen as one of three key concerns of beginning teachers, alongside workload and lack of support (Chaplain, 2008).

Further conversations regarding inclusive practice centred around the importance of being open-minded and accepting of all children. However, this was also reflected as a concern by some

participants, around issues of their own gender identity or sexuality, and how this might be accepted by schools. While there has been progress towards LGBT+ inclusion for teachers, there is still felt to be little opportunity to be honest about their identity in schools, leading to a tension between personal and professional identities which often culminates in low self-worth, depression and anxiety (Henderson, 2019; Lee, 2019b, 2019a).

Sub-theme Relational Leader

The majority of comments with regard to the participants' experiences of leadership were actually sharing challenging practice that they had experienced, as discussed under *Teachers as Oppressed Beings*. There were many potential cross overs between this sub-theme of the *Relational Leader* and the sub-theme of *Hope-full Leaders* discussed in *Teachers as Hope-full Beings*. The particular distinction being that under this sub-theme the participants were in the main recounting their own experiences of working for leaders who prioritised relationships. In contrast, in *Hope-full Leaders*, the participants were focusing on the types of leaders they would aspire to work for, and potentially be, one day.

The content for *Relational Leader* focussed on three main concepts: communication, collaboration and approachability. Communication was seen by the participants as critical for effective leadership. Participants discussed the need for leaders to be open-minded and willing to listen to their team – critically seen by the participants to encompass both teaching and non-teaching staff, connecting to ideas of democratic leadership:

So there shouldn't be a distinction between an SLT's idea, and an NQT, or any other teacher, or a TA, whoever, all those ideas should be valued and taken on board, whether acted on... but at least to be listened to and considered (CoE2 P7).

Communication was fundamentally seen as a dialogical process, and encompassed listening to, as well as sharing ideas with:

- *I think part of being a good leader is making sure they're listening to the feedback they're given as well (CoE2 P11)*
- *I went to a school and walked around, and the first question the Head Teacher asked me was 'so how can you help us?', and it was really, really nice, because immediately they wanted my ideas, and weren't just like, right this is the way we do it (CoE2 P6)*

Listening to others and respecting and valuing their opinions was not only seen as the mark of a good leader, but also crucial for enabling change in a school:

We just kept coming back to the idea of valuing other people's opinions as a leader, unless you want nothing to change. And that probably means ... you should be listening to other people's ideas. There might be an NQT who comes in, who you might think, that they aren't experienced, but actually, because of the experiences that they have had, whether that's in other placements, or just in life, they are likely to have something worth hearing (CoE2 P7).

Communication is frequently cited as being one of the most important characteristics of school leaders (Daniëls *et al.*, 2019; Yeigh *et al.*, 2019). For Freire, it was a fundamental aspect of education: 'Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education' (1996:73-74).

Closely connected to the idea of communication, is collaboration. Collaborative leaders were highlighted by the participants as crucial for an effective working environment and seen as intrinsically connected to considerations about trust. Being able to trust your leader and to be trusted by them was a key factor in the participants' discussions. The participants articulated a desire to be treated like professionals and respected by their school leaders. Daniëls *et al.* (2019) found that trust and collaboration throughout the school was a significant characteristic in effective school leadership. Significantly, collaboration and collegiality are argued to be victims of the neoliberal education agenda (Jeffrey, 2002), likewise a diminishing of the view of teachers as professionals (McGregor, 2009). If schools are to be able to model democratic practice, trust and respect this has to start with the school leadership (Sachs, 2001).

The final aspect of relational leaders that the participants highlighted was their approachable demeanours. P9 recounted her experience when she went on two school visits prior to interview, and the impact that the HT's manner had on her. One HT seemed to exude a formality and power that visibly affected people she passed. The participant was put off by the hierarchy implicit in this attitude, and instead was drawn to the other HT:

As soon as I met him you could completely tell the difference. He was really lovely – just came across really kind, really lovely, he'd walk around the school and all the children would be like 'oh hi Mr. whatever!' and they'd go up to him, and he'd walk into classrooms and have sort of mini conversations with all the teachers ... and felt like he was more on the teachers' level? (CoE2).

While the participant clarified that she had no way of knowing which HT would be the better leader she was drawn to the second HT as it "felt like he had that relationship, and actually felt like he knew the kids."

The role of relationships with regard to leadership was contested across the participants. While the above extract appeared to extoll the importance of leaders who had positive and friendly relationships with their staff and pupils, a point supported by literature (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020); in the same enquiry, contrasting views were raised. P13 discussed how she had been on placement at a school where the HT had “*moved her way up through all the ranks (CoE2).*” P13 proposed that this could be problematic as she felt that as a consequence the other staff saw the HT as an equal:

It was just a strange dynamic going in as a student, because it was very obvious to us that she was the head, but for everyone else, it was just another one of their friends working at the school.

There are echoes here of the tension discussed earlier in *Teachers as Agentic Beings*, where some participants initially professed to prefer schools without formal power hierarchies, then struggled in an informal setting. Research reports a tendency for beginning teachers to be more comfortable in the traditional settings that they would have experienced themselves growing up (Troman, 2008; Kilderry, 2015; Keddle, 2017).

Not all the participants agreed with P13’s view. P9 immediately countered with her own experience, where:

There was a real hierarchy divide between the SLT team and leadership team, and the teachers, and obviously the students underneath (CoE2).

While P9 conceded that you needed to know who was in charge, she felt uncomfortable with the obvious power dynamics and felt that this could deter less experienced teachers from sharing their opinions.

In summary, this section reflects Research Question 4: *What strategies are the participants developing to enable them to flourish despite the performative climate?* The participants highlighted the role of relationships and emotions as fundamental aspects of their teacher identity, both in terms of teachers:pupils as well as leaders:teachers. The data identified how the importance of this aspect of being a teacher was re-evaluated and raised when the participants returned from practice for the CoE2. The focus on the relational was seen by the participants as fundamental in achieving inclusive practice, positive relationships and behaviour in their classrooms and integral to their teacher identity, values and vision. Equally the participants looked for this quality in school leaders, aspiring to work for leaders who prioritised genuine relationships and practised democratic leadership that valued dialogue and communication.

Teachers as Hope-full Beings

This final theme explored the vision the participants had for their future as teachers: the type of teachers they wanted to be, the curriculum they wanted to teach, and the sort of leaders they wanted to be led by and become. They discussed the role the ITE programme had, and could have, to enable this.

The naming of this theme and sub-themes as '*Hope-full*' rather than '*Hopeful*' was deliberate, as for me the abstract noun represented a stronger alliance with Freire's thinking than the tentativeness of the adjective. The coded data extracts tell a story of beginning teachers who are approaching their new careers with optimism and resilience; they are not cowed or depressed by the challenges teachers face, nor are they in denial, rather they are determined to embrace the profession, to hold on to their values. This resonates with my conceptualisation of the 'perform-able' teacher (Love, 2018a, 2019).

In the overall coded data for *Teachers as Hope-full Beings*, there is a dominance of the sub-theme *Hope-full Teachers*:

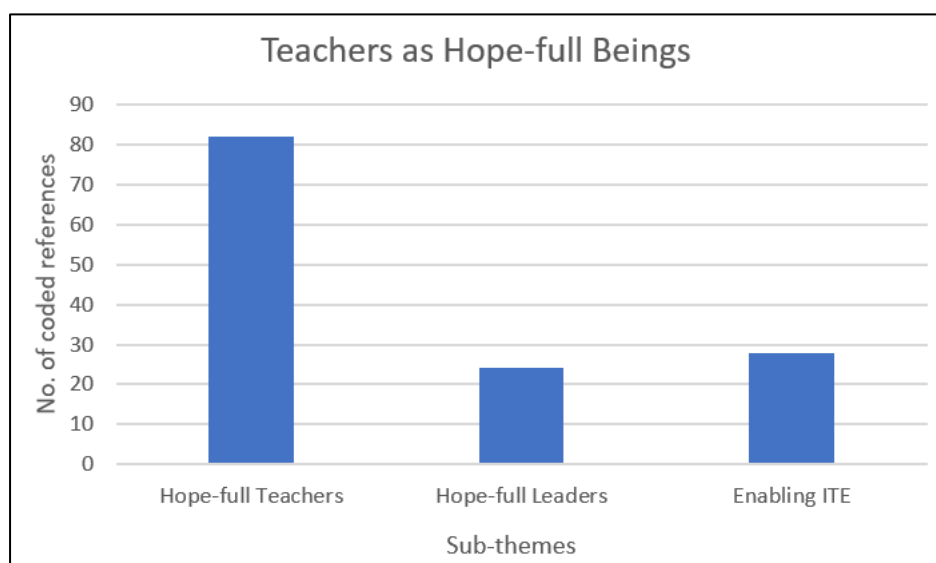


Table 7 Coding spread across Teachers as Hope-full Beings

Sub-theme Hope-full Teachers

Much of coded content linked to this sub-theme has already been discussed where it also related to issues under the other themes, therefore only extracts not already mentioned will be explored here.

Hope is seen by many educators as a fundamental mainstay of education (Freire, 1994, 1996; Bullough, 2011; Day, 2013), and a key element of teacher resilience, wellbeing and retention (Day, 2013; Perryman & Calvert, 2020). The data shows the participants' understanding of the pressures that children and teachers are under, but also their determination to find balance and propose a different, "*magic*" learning.

In the annotations on the poster stimuli for CoE2, confidence was noted by multiple participants as an attribute of their teacher identity for the first time, rather than as a perceived threat. Likewise, reflectiveness, leadership, flexibility and relationships grew in significance.

The two key areas that stood out in the discussions about how the participants perceived their role as *Hope-full Teachers*, were reimagining the curriculum and a commitment to on-going learning.

The participants articulated a sense of hope for the new direction signalled by Ofsted (Spielman, 2020); the movement away from the dominance of data, to a re-vitalised vision for curriculum. Specifically, they hoped this would see a re-emerging and re-valuing of wider curriculum subjects:

I think this might change with Ofsted and the focus on curriculum - all of those schools who are just teaching Maths and English all day, who suddenly think, hold on, we have not taught Geography. And they are going to have to justify the curriculum choices they have made (FG P3).

Spielman's new vision for Ofsted signalled a desire to see a well-balanced primary curriculum rather than prioritising 'literacy and maths, to the detriment of other subjects' (2020:online). The participants felt that this narrowing of the curriculum penalised those children whose strengths might be in other areas:

It might be that the child is amazing at art and music, but not necessarily particularly strong in maths or writing (CoE1 P12).

This desire for a more rounded curriculum offer for pupils is resonant with advocates of wellbeing (Payne & Wattchow, 2009; Hartman & Darab, 2012).

A desire to engage in on-going learning as beginning teachers was evident in the qualities listed on the poster stimuli as essential for their teacher identity.

The participants placed an emphasis on the importance of research-informed teaching and continually updating one's subject and professional knowledge. In fact, P11 even referred me to a colleague's research, that she thought was pertinent to our discussion. All of the participants'

posters emphasised the importance they placed in being “*lifelong or continual learners*” and of understanding *why* they did something, not just *how* to do it.

The importance of knowing *why* they chose a particular pedagogical approach was seen by the participants as important:

Something that’s really changed, or been solidified in my experience of this placement is the idea of always digging deeper. So, someone suggested something great, it’s not going to work, what can we do instead ... or a child has reacted in a certain way in the classroom, and I reacted in this way to that, okay but why did they do that? (CoE2 P11).

The participants were not content to do things without understanding the theory behind that decision, signalling the importance of sound pedagogical knowledge. Day (2013) argues that the promotion of what he calls apprenticeship models of *training* (*Teach First* etc.) as opposed to initial teacher *education*, has led to a dominance of the ‘learning the craft of teaching but not necessarily developing their thinking, capacities for reflection, and their emotional understandings’ (p8) – all of which, he argues are vital for effective teaching. Significantly, investing in CPD of staff is seen as a key role of a successful school leader (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020) and is seen as contributing significantly to a teacher’s wellbeing, job satisfaction and retention (Cowburn & Blow, 2017; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). However, worryingly this is an area that teachers report having minimal autonomy over (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020).

Sub-theme Hope-full Leaders

The participants’ deliberations on leadership have already been discussed under *Relational Leaders* and *Oppressive Leadership*. Under this sub-theme, contributions from the participants that related to their hopes for leadership are discussed. CoE2, convened directly upon the participants’ return from final teaching placement, was dominated by questions of leadership, power and hierarchy. Participants acknowledged the impact that leadership had on them as classroom teachers, which had largely been unexpected:

I think my identity has definitely been changed mostly by leadership, over this placement. It was the first thing that I put on my sheet when I came back from placement. It was something that was on there originally, but now I’ve kind of developed a lot of intricacies, and I really do understand how a lot of tiny things that might happen in relation to leadership effect everything you do as a class teacher. So that’s definitely something that’s more in the forefront of my mind than it was when I went on placement (P13)

The discussions around their hopes for the leaders they would like to work for, or become, centred around one area: distributed leadership. Effective and consistent delegation was seen to be an important quality for an effective leader:

It depends on a school's leadership, if they want to keep that power to themselves, or if they're willing to share that with those who might be seen as kind of lower down (CoE2 P7).

Leadership is highlighted as playing a significant role in beginning teacher identity formation and retention (Flores & Day, 2006; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). In particular, distributed leadership is a mark of a successful leader (Daniëls *et al.*, 2019; Leithwood *et al.*, 2020). A key aspect of the participants' thinking was that this was not only evidence of democratic practice but was also about developing teachers to be the next generation of leaders. P13 shared an example to illustrate this, where NQTs were given responsibility in her placement school of particular events such as World Book Day, "*as kind of their first leadership experience.*"

In addition to promoting the importance of leaders investing in their staff, the necessity of humility in leaders was raised:

- *a good leader should know how to help others, and be willing to help others, but then also be willing to learn from others (CoE2 P7)*
- *headteachers need to have that power, but they also need to learn to compromise, and listen to what the teachers want (CoE2 P13)*
- *I think in terms of leadership, that's something that's really important as well, to seek out ... other perspectives (CoE2 P11)*

Humility is seen by Freire as integral to genuine dialogue and collaboration, and fundamental for 'progressive pedagogical practice' (1998:108). This extract also emphasises the point about being willing to learn from others, which is supported in literature, where it is claimed that the most successful school leaders are open-minded and ready to learn from others (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020).

However, P7 is also highlighting the expectation that a leader should be invested in helping their staff to progress. This links to a point raised by P11, who stated that:

I was thinking about the leadership teams that I've worked with over the four years, and some of the best leadership experiences I've had ... is when they've managed to turn off their 'capital L' leadership, and been just teaching and interacting with the children ... and just being a teacher in the teaching community. That's when I've had the most opportunities to really learn from them (CoE2).

This view that leaders should be invested in the professional development of their staff is cited by Leithwood *et al.* (2020) as one of the marks of good leadership, where leaders prioritised building

relationships and developing the professional capacities of all staff. But equally, as raised by P11, where leaders are role models for their staff.

At times, the participants were clear about what sort of a leader they would want to work for. In addition to the attributes previously mentioned, a vision for the school was seen as important, one that aligned with their own values. Clear values and beliefs articulated as a vision for a school is understood to be an essential feature of effective leadership (Yeigh *et al.*, 2019; Leithwood *et al.*, 2020), alongside the ability to enable this to become a shared vision of all staff and stakeholders (Daniëls *et al.*, 2019).

Sub-theme Enabling ITE

The data generated for this sub-theme clearly demonstrated the role specific taught modules had played in the participants' development, alongside considerations of values, the experience of placements and the impact of educational theory.

Discussions in this sub-theme covered three distinct areas; explicit teaching focussed on teacher identity, questions around performativity, and how enabled the participants felt to thrive as teachers.

A recurring discussion was the role that ITE played in identity formation. The participants discussed the importance for them of being reflective practitioners; this characteristic was listed on the majority of stimulus posters and was discussed in all three data collection opportunities. An example of this reflective practice was demonstrated in the FG, when P11 shared how she had been reflecting on discussions from the CoE1:

In December, in the discussion, I said that I believed I should be willing to change and adapt my views because I have very strong values and vision of leadership, that was the point I was making, but I had to be willing to listen to feedback and change and adapt, and reflecting on that this morning when I was reading the transcript, I feel that I really did do that and it was something that I was able to embody in [placement], being willing to listen to the feedback from teacher tutors.

The role of critical reflection is seen as fundamental in developing teacher identity (Sachs, 2001; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), particularly for student teachers as they negotiate their professional and personal identity and how they relate to others (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Buchanan, 2015).

The importance of being confident and creative thinkers was also the subject of discussion. This was often linked to risk taking: *“So it’s about taking risks and being that person that teacher that you want to be”* (P5), but equally was seen as connected to being knowledgeable and the previous sub-theme of *Teacher Agency*. Indeed, one concern that was listed on the posters was the worry about team planning and the possibility that this would threaten creativity. Creativity is inherent in Freire’s (1996) vision for problem posing education, alongside reflection and action. Creativity, autonomy and risk-taking are often seen as compromised as a result of current neoliberal policies and ideologies (Wilkins, 2011; Childs & Mender, 2013), yet can be seen as the prime weapon against performativity, particularly when engaged with in ITE (Raymond, 2018).

In response to the FG question *“Do you think that ITE should teach more explicitly about Teacher Identity?”* participants’ opinions varied. While one participant from the three-year route seemed to feel less than confident about her teacher identity and how it had been covered in the programme:

We did a bit of it in year 1 ... we were told to think about our values and what schools we would like to be in and for me, I still don’t know, what my values are, it’s just surface type things, so I don’t know what my inner values are (P8)

Others disagreed stating:

I think it is quite an organic thing, not something that can be taught, I think the input we had was good enough to make us think what is important to you ... What could they do, other than making me think more about who I am? (P3)

P11 suggested that she had benefitted as the four-year programme had an entire module exploring teacher identity:

If that leadership module was on the three-year route I think everyone would have a much stronger understanding of what their teacher identity is.

Yet this was swiftly rebutted by two of the participants from the three-year programme:

- *I would like to come back, and say, that although I said about Teacher Identity growing organically, I have a very strong teacher identity, and I don’t think that would have changed as a result of doing that additional module (P3)*
- *I don’t think it needs to be taught as explicitly as another module (P13)*

There seemed to be a clear loyalty to their particular programme surfacing from the three-year route participants, as was evident by the reply by P11, who clarified:

I don’t know that I explained the module very well, what I think the module gave me most was the opportunity to reflect on school experiences ... so I am not trying to undervalue the [3 year route], but I just think for me personally having that directed focus on that placement there, really drew together those experiences and allowed me to find my values.

The point P11 is making is echoed in literature, which suggests that ITE programmes traditionally focus more on knowledge, skills and competencies, to the detriment of areas such as identity formation (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b). However, this point was again challenged by the other participants, who felt that ITE had indeed prepared them well in terms of their Teacher Identity, discussing all the different modules that had contributed. The idea of choice in education was important to Freire (1996), who decried the passivity of the 'Banking System', which is seen, at both school and university-level, as an impact of performative banking education (Al-Saadi, 2011; Mazenod *et al.*, 2019).

The question of whether ITE should more explicitly engage with questions around neoliberalism and performativity met with a mixed response. While discounting the need for particular coverage with neoliberalism as a subject, there was a strong sense from the participants that they felt underprepared for the outcomes of neoliberalism, specifically regarding assessment and accountability:

Assessment, we touch on it, but it is very general, and that is what we are going to, performativity, be judged on (FG P3).

Confidence issues around assessment is common in beginning teachers (Tran *et al.*, 2000; Ogan-Bekiroglu, 2009), both linked to their own confidence in their subject knowledge and assessment skills, as well as their understanding of particular school policy (Ogan-Bekiroglu, 2009). Although most ITE courses include significant content on assessment, frequently beginning teachers report feeling underprepared (Hobson *et al.*, 2006).

The final area covered in this sub-theme related to the conceptualisation of the 'Perform-able' teacher. When asked in the FG how the ITE programme had prepared them to flourish in the neoliberal climate, the reaction was mixed. One participant, as discussed earlier, placed great importance on the emphasis on being reflective practitioners and felt that developing this characteristic had enabled her to be resilient and adaptive in her practice (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Buchanan, 2015). Equally, the ability to personalise their programme was highlighted by participants:

In year 3 you got to choose your own option modules, so I did P4C, you had that option, to almost tailor towards your values, people that had a real passion for pupil voice, that is what I am passionate about, could pick P4C, things like that, I think the bits where you could tailor it to who you were as a teacher, for me, where probably the bits that I found most valuable (FG P3).

The participants were in agreement that the relationships with lecturers on the ITE programme were pivotal in helping them to feel that they were prepared and able to thrive. Relationships are argued to play a central role in determining the success of ITE programmes by students, alongside the relevance of the course provision and support in developing their teacher identities (Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2020).

In summary, this section related specifically to Research Question 2: *What are the participants' reactions to the concept of 'perform-ability'?* and Research Question 3: *What elements of Initial Teacher Education have shaped the participants' teacher identity?* The participants highlighted the importance of having confidence in their values and vision for themselves as teachers and prioritising a balanced, rich curriculum. This, they felt, would be achieved by continuing their professional development through CPD and engaging in research-informed teaching. The data identified the connections the participants made with the flexibility of their degree route, which allowed them to choose modules that aligned with their interests and developed their teacher identity. Above all, the participants placed importance on their grounding as reflective practitioners and suggested that this had given them a resilience and optimism for their future as teachers, and the ability to thrive as practitioners despite challenges that they were aware they would face. The participants reflected on their possible future roles as school leaders, with a focus on values-led, distributed leadership, that prioritised delegation, democracy and humility and a genuine investment in their staff.

Golden Threads

Two golden threads have emerged from consideration of the thesis' findings and related analysis: *Confusion and Contradiction* and *Clarity and Conviction*.

Confusion and Contradiction

There were several discussions that immediately raised contrasting or inconsistent views from the participants; alternatively, opinions that were subsequently contradicted. This was to be expected of data generated from a group dynamic, where individuals are influenced by each other, opinions change and new meanings emerge (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Harding, 2018). Areas where the participants appeared to be confused or where contradictions appeared were particularly around

the power dynamic that is intrinsically involved in leadership, also around questions of wellbeing and performativity.

The participants on the one hand extolled democratic practices in education, advocating for teacher agency and resisting the idea of dominant leadership practice, arguing that collaborative and delegated practice was their aim. However, when some participants visited a setting embodying teacher and pupil agency and distributed leadership, their reactions were confused, and the efficacy of such an approach was questioned. The impression was that, although theoretically drawn to democratic, collaborative practice, in reality, they felt that some manifestation of power or authority was necessary.

This confusion was compounded regarding the characteristics of the leaders they preferred. There seemed to be a consensus that they preferred an approachable HT, who would listen to staff, and amend their decisions if appropriate. Yet this initial view was challenged by experiences of informal head teachers: these participants were unsure of this seemingly understated authority, wanting clear structures and distance not friendship. Literature suggests beginning teachers are more comfortable in the traditional settings that they experienced growing up (Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017).

The performative focus in primary education again illuminated some confused thinking. While the participants were unanimous in criticizing the current over-examination of primary-aged children, their thinking began to be conflated into almost a binary choice; either wellbeing or academic achievement. Even though they accepted that a reduction of pressure would benefit children's wellbeing, for the participants this needed to be balanced with ensuring academic progress, with the inference that academic progress took precedence. Examples of compromise from the participants were seen on several occasions, when they seemed to be advocating the necessity for a pragmatic view towards educational issues (Seymour, 2018).

A final area that suggested some confusion was seen in the participants' discussions about their future careers. Although they professed understanding of the challenges facing the teaching profession, at times there was a sense of naivety in their discussions, with an idyllic conceptualisation of the role of the teacher. Literature suggests that although beginning teachers claimed to be aware of the challenges before entering teaching, the reality of practice had been more overwhelming than they had predicted (Perryman & Calvert, 2020).

Clarity and Conviction

Although on many occasions the participants demonstrated a commonality of thinking and purpose, caution should be maintained about assuming a group consensus, as not all participants will have explicitly commented on every issue (Morgan, 2010; Harding, 2018). However, the opportunities to respectfully challenge, refine or rebut each other's' thinking, meant that when no dissent was voiced whenever an issue was raised, this suggested a strength of agreement (Morgan, 2010; Harding, 2018). Two particular areas of clarity and conviction stood out. The first related to the participants' advocacy of inherent values associated with teaching; the second related to their prioritisation of relationships.

When reviewing the coded data for *Teachers as Hope-full Leaders*, there was a tone of positivity and optimism. This hope for the future is proposed by Freire as fundamental in challenging oppression:

Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it. The dehumanization resulting from an unjust order is not a cause for despair but for hope, leading to the incessant pursuit of the humanity denied by injustice (1996:72)

This was noticeable in the participants' responses and is supported by literature, which refutes the nihilistic narrative of teacher retention, proclaiming that the majority of teachers do maintain their commitment to teach despite, sometimes challenging, circumstances (Bullough, 2011; Day, 2013). Fundamental to teacher resilience is argued to be the presence of happiness, hope, and hopefulness (Bullough, 2011; Day, 2013). The participants articulated a conviction that their values were integral to their teacher identity, that they were loath to compromise. While at times the participants seemed to assimilate the generational acceptance of neoliberalism, this focus on values challenges the neoliberal narrative, which is argued to devalue such ideals (Troman, 2008; Clandinin *et al.*, 2009).

A focus on values links with the second area of *Clarity and Conviction*, which is the prioritisation by the participants of the relational. The participants continually emphasised the role of relationships and the relational in teaching. This was particularly noted by the participants upon their return from their placements, suggesting that this extended period of time in school had highlighted this aspect for them. Critically, the participants saw the role of mutual respect as being key to successful relationships, both teacher:pupil and adult:adult, and is argued by Freire (1998, 2007) to be crucial in education. It is argued that the role of emotions should be emphasised in ITE (Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010; Jope, 2018), as literature suggests that engaging with emotions is key in identity formation of beginning teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Jope, 2018).

Chapter Summary

The first part of this chapter introduced the decision behind the separation of the Findings and Discussion into three parts. The rationale for this choice was given and the overview of the Findings and the five themes were presented. The findings from *Teachers as Oppressed Beings* with sub-themes of *Neoliberal Impact*, *Oppressive Leadership*, *Wellbeing* and *Theory versus Practice* were then presented.

The second part of this chapter *Teachers as Agentic and Political Beings* explored the findings of the two related themes *Teachers as Agentic Beings* and its sub-themes of *Teacher Agency*, *Teacher Identity* and *Teacher-Leader*, alongside *Teachers as Political Beings* and its sub-themes of *Teacher-Agent*, *Democratic Practice* and *Teacher Empowerer*.

The final part of this chapter, *Teachers as Relational and Hope-full Beings*, presented the findings from *Teachers as Relational Beings* and its sub-themes of *Relational Teacher*, *Inclusive Teacher* and *Relational Leader*, followed by *Teachers as Hope-full Beings* and its sub-themes of *Hope-full Teachers*, *Hope-full Leaders* and *Enabling ITE*. Additionally, the golden threads of *Confusion and Contradiction*, and *Clarity and Conviction* were explored to reflect upon insights from the thesis' findings, with regard to the experiences of beginning teachers at the start of their careers. Under *Confusion and Contradiction*, issues around the participants' conflicting perceptions of leadership and power were examined, as well as their experiences and attitudes towards the prevalent performative educational policies and the potential dichotomy with wellbeing. Reflections under *Clarity and Conviction* seemed to challenge the neoliberal disregard for values, foregrounding humanist approaches, centred on integrity, individuals and relationships in their conceptualisations of teaching and teacher identity.

Chapter Six: Conclusion: Dreaming of Utopia

Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine the aims of the research and specifically the findings against each of the research questions, alongside the contributions to knowledge, recommendations for practice and directives for future research, before a final chapter summary and postscript.

Conclusions from research

The main aim of this thesis was to examine student teachers' experiences of teacher identity, agency and education in a neoliberal climate. To facilitate this, answers to four research questions were sought:

Research Question 1: What are the experiences, concerns and observations of the participants regarding the neoliberal education culture and how this might impact on their teacher identity?

The experiences and observations the participants discussed, regarding the neoliberal education culture, primarily revolved around three areas: pressure, performance and curriculum impact. The issue of pressure that schools, teachers and pupils were under and the ensuing accountability and performativity, was cited as a key concern as it was seen as impacting directly upon their teacher identity and the type of teacher they wanted to be. While the participants suggested that pressure could, on occasion, ensure teachers continued to progress, and pupil achievement was prioritised, there was an overwhelming sense that too much pressure was debilitating and impacted on wellbeing of teachers and pupils. This was seen as a key concern of neoliberal culture and a challenge to try to find an appropriate balance. The participants also shared observations from practice where the performative focus had resulted in a diminished curriculum. The participants raised this as a concern and from their perspective felt that an 'accountability' drive had resulted in a hierarchy of subjects that prioritised core subjects over a broader balanced education.

A further concern raised by the participants related to the potential dissonance between the vision, values and philosophies encouraged by ITE and that of their placement schools. The findings clearly demonstrated the subjective nature of placement experiences. Most of the participants reported positive, affirming placements, where schools nurtured, supported and encouraged them. For some however, this was not the case. The emotion presented, when participants discussed challenging

placements from previous years, was striking. Examples were shared of unsupportive members of staff, who were dismissive of the participants' learning and expertise and/or resistant to change. The frustration that participants felt was palpable. While it is clear that ITE providers need to develop resilient beginning teachers (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Seymour, 2018), participant discussions indicated that ITE was potentially remiss in not engaging specifically with this issue.

Although not specifically connected to the neoliberal agenda, three participants noted on their posters their concerns about their Teacher Identity and being accepted in schools due to their sexuality or gender (Henderson, 2019; Lee, 2019b, 2019a). Although affecting only a minority of ITE students, with only 2.2% of the population aged 16 and over identifying as LGBT+ (ONS, 2020), this study has highlighted that concern over sexuality and gender identity was prevalent, as a contemporary issue, even within a small sample. The statistics on homophobic incidents involving LGBT+ teachers are significant; with 40% of LGBT+ teachers reporting facing discrimination and/or prejudice (Wakefield, 2020). Equally, the statistic of 2.2% could very easily be under-representative, as fears of discrimination might prevent honest declaration of status.

Research Question 2: What are the participants' reactions to the concept of 'perform-ability'?

The conceptualisation of perform-ability was not discussed until specifically introduced in the Focus Group. However, neoliberal challenges in school were often alluded to by the participants, within the context of their classroom practice, in a way that aligned with my conceptualisation of perform-ability. The participants spoke of how they resisted pedagogies or restrictive curricula that they felt were in conflict with their ideologies. Such agency came from having confidence in them as teachers, in the strength of their values and through an assurance and understanding of creative pedagogies. The attitudes that these participants were articulating demonstrated a growing sense of agency as well as a sense of responsibility for themselves and others and a corresponding role in striving for a more just and democratic education (Freire, 1994, 1996, 1998; Giroux, 2010). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) propose that when teachers have confidence in their identity, role and purpose, this leads to agency and empowerment. The views shared by the participants echoed the research by Passy (2013) and rebuts the proposal that beginning teachers often submit to more dominant narratives, leading them to compromise their ideological views (Troman, 2008; Wilkins, 2011).

There was not, however, a consistent message about agency. At times, the participants felt that they were not always clear about their role in school (Seymour, 2018). One participant mentioned how their placement school had endeavoured to support beginning teachers by giving them particular

roles, to build their confidence, sense of identity and purpose. Traditionally schools do not give teachers responsibility until their second year of practice, but literature shows that a clear sense of purpose and direction can help build teacher identity and confidence (Anspal *et al.*, 2012), which in turn is seen as integral in teacher retention (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). If ITE programmes could enable student teachers to approach placements and their first posts with a confident sense of teacher identity and purpose, perhaps this might support them to be both *Teacher-Agents* (Love, 2019) and *Perform-able Teachers* (Love, 2018a, 2019).

Research Question 3: What elements of Initial Teacher Education have shaped the participants' teacher identity?

The participants highlighted the flexibility of route and specialism at the University and in particular the ability to personalise their programme, choosing elective modules that aligned with their values and vision for education. For Freire (1996) choice is a fundamental question of teacher authenticity, and freedom to act autonomously is pivotal for both teacher integrity and identity.

The importance of being confident and creative thinkers was also highlighted as a key aspect from their ITE programme, which is heartening as literature describes how creativity is often compromised as a result of current neoliberal policies and ideologies (Wilkins, 2011; Childs & Mender, 2013).

While the findings demonstrated that the majority of participants could articulate the non-negotiables of their teacher identity, and their values and vision for themselves as teachers, there were mixed messages concerning the role of ITE to specifically develop teacher identity. A difference of opinion emerged between the third-year and fourth-year participants with regard to how much specific teaching on teacher identity they felt was necessary. While the third-years felt that the content they had received had been sufficient, confident that they would develop this further in practice, the fourth-year participants disagreed. They maintained that their specific module had significantly helped to clarify and form their teacher identity; directly influencing their ability to identify suitable schools that would support their vision and values. This is reminiscent of the point about ignorance made by Freire (1996) - perhaps this is a case of unwitting ignorance, you cannot imagine the impact of something until you have it, the fourth-years were able to speak with experience, but for the third-years it was conjecture.

Research Question 4: What strategies are the participants developing to enable them to flourish despite the performative climate?

There was significant overlap between the conclusions for Research Questions 2, 3 and 4. In addition to the points already made for the former questions, three further areas were highlighted by participants.

Firstly, an emphasis on the importance of critical reflection. In particular, the participants discussed the importance ITE had placed on them being reflective practitioners and how this was a fundamental part of their teacher identity. This characteristic is seen as crucial in developing teacher identity, particularly for student teachers negotiating their professional and personal identity and their relationships with others (Anspal *et al.*, 2012). The participants felt this enabled them to question, challenge and reflect on pedagogies and approaches in schools, ensuring that they prioritised teaching and learning approaches that were based on research and sound pedagogy, rather than established practice. Developing as reflective practitioners they felt would enable them to be resilient and adaptive in their practice (Buchanan, 2015).

Secondly the participants articulated a conviction that their values were integral to their teacher identity, that they were loath to compromise. There was a sense of confidence in their personal integrity as teachers and above all a sense of hope and optimism when they considered the future. This was encouraging to see as literature suggests that the presence of happiness, hope, and hopefulness is fundamental to teacher resilience (Bullough, 2011; Day, 2013) and an antidote to the nihilism of neoliberalism.

The final point that the participants felt had prepared them to flourish in a performative climate, concerned relationships. All of the participants placed relationships at the heart of their teacher identity, highlighting not only their relationships with the pupils in their classes, but also with colleagues in school. Significant factors mentioned were communication, approachability and collegiality. This is significant as a loss of collegiality is reputed to be a direct result of the performative culture (Sachs, 2001; Ball, 2003; Holloway & Brass, 2018) and discussions around teacher retention cite supportive colleagues as a contributing factor to teacher wellbeing and retention (Pillen *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b). Relationships were argued to play a central role in determining the success of ITE programmes by students, alongside the relevance of the course provision and support in developing their teacher identities (Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2020). The students discussed how the importance of relationships had been modelled to

them throughout their ITE journey and had a direct correlation in their view with their wellbeing as student teachers.

Contribution to Knowledge and Recommendations for Practice

This study claims contributions to knowledge under three particular areas; Initial Teacher Education, Research Methods and Beginning Teacher Wellbeing and Retention. Each will be discussed alongside related recommendations for practice.

Initial Teacher Education

In Chapter One I stated that this thesis would seek to explore how CP and in particular the writings of Freire (1994; 2006; 2007), might offer possibilities for inclusion in ITE programmes. These considerations relate to Research Objective 2: *To offer recommendations for how Initial Teacher Education might manage discourse around neoliberal education agenda in their taught programmes.* Although student teachers are drawn from a mixed age demographic, all of the participants for this study were in their early or mid-twenties. The views of the participants aligned in the main with literature that suggests that younger teachers not only are less cognisant of the intricacies of neoliberal discourse, but also are less likely to resist performative agendas, preferring instead to opt for the familiar narrative that they themselves were educated under (Kilderry, 2015; Keddie, 2017). This reinforces the vital role that ITE has to play to successfully provide genuine opportunities for debate around this prevalent discourse. Freire's (1996) rejection of neutral education is pivotal in my thinking for ITE and strengthened my conviction that ITE providers are doing their student teachers a disservice if they do not adequately expose them to alternative narratives, to ensure that they were making reasoned, well-informed decisions.

Therefore, influenced by Sachs' (2001) activist identity, my contribution to thinking in this area, is that I propose that ITE could, and indeed should, encourage a new form of teacher, the 'performable teacher-agent' (Love, 2019). I suggest that this model of a teacher is both aware of, and empowered to resist, the pressures and dictates of the neoliberal educational culture and its ensuing performative discourse, in favour of an alternative view of education. This could, I suggest, include pedagogical approaches such as P4C, which may provide a more balanced understanding and deeper experience of education for both teachers and pupils (Love, 2016, 2018b). This also links with Research Objective 3: *To offer a written contribution to the literature on how pedagogies such as*

Philosophy for Children can be used as strategies to engage with the neoliberal education agenda. In addition, I suggest, that ITE could use these considerations to work towards an agenda of wellbeing for teachers; potentially helping beginning teachers to resist the impact of the performative discourse, thus improving their wellbeing and ability to retain their integrity and agency as professionals. Although I would not want to dictate how student teachers view the current performative climate, I believe it is important that they are aware of it, and the potential impact it might have on education. Arguably, the seeming compliance of younger teachers may be due to lack of confidence and life experience, perhaps as they develop in confidence and experience, they might feel the assurance to challenge the status quo and potentially pursue other, less prescriptive approaches to education.

Freire (1996) proposed that neoliberal education promotes and maintains a culture of silence, which perpetuates a lethargy and ignorance on the part of the oppressed (in this case beginning teachers), resulting in a lack of critical engagement or challenge. Significantly the data corpus had shown limited engagement from the participants on issues relating to the political dimension of education. However, this might be more reflective of the focus of ITE programmes, rather than the participants themselves. For the new generation of student teachers, the current education system and neoliberal influences is normalised. It would be wrong, however, to suggest that students are not politically aware or concerned. Popular media and politicians are quick to disparage or deride the actions of young people (Giroux, 2006), however recent campaigns such as #MeToo, Extinction Rebellion and Black Lives Matter (Oppenheim, 2018; Murray, 2019; Mohdin, 2020) demonstrate that although young people might be disillusioned with mainstream political debate (Pontes *et al.*, 2018), this does not mean they are apolitical. It is my contention that the lack of political awareness demonstrated by the participants concerning the politicisation of education, is due to an absence of opportunities to become aware of and engaged in such discussions. This seeming passivity of the participants, resonates with Freire's (1996) concerns about banking education:

The more completely they [students] accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them ... The educated individual is the adapted person, because she or he is better "fit" for the world (pp54- 57).

Freire proposed that this passivity served the purposes of the oppressors (in this case advocates of performativity). This renewed my conviction that ITE needs to engage more with CP to enable a more active, less passive/neutral view of education. If ITE is to encourage an education that is a 'subversive force' (Freire, 1996:11), that champions the disadvantaged and seeks to liberate and emancipate, it must challenge people to critically examine the world that the current education system inhabits. Considering this, my suggestion for ITE is to engage more explicitly with the political

landscape of education. For example, exploring the origins of the neoliberal agenda, critically examining the arguments for and against this movement. This would ensure that beginning teachers are fully informed of all sides of the educational debate, so that they can choose their path with confidence and understanding of the relevant issues.

Schools and universities have recently been criticised for becoming involved in political debate (Rayner, 2017; Busby, 2019; Murray, 2020). However once again I am mindful of Freire's (1998) exhortation for educators to resist pressure for them to take a neutral stance, claiming that discussions of *conscientização* are fundamental considerations for education. Equally, university education is explicitly about adult education. While we may be cautious of how we introduce political opinions with children, wary of imposing the educator's 'own beliefs or political positions on them' (Freire, 2007:36), which would contravene the 1996 Education Act, arguably it is expected that universities should engage their students with critical thinking on the matters that pertain to their degrees. As previously mentioned, Freire (1996) would maintain that it is the responsibility of ITE to engage with political issues and social injustice with student teachers. I am reminded of one participant's comments about the courage it had taken for her to respectfully challenge her placement teacher (Ch. 5 Sub-theme Teacher Agent), and wonder if ITE must also demonstrate the civic courage advocated by Freire (1998) or Raymond's (2018:139) call for 'fearless speech.'

A further contribution of this thesis regarding ITE is the contrasting or conflicting dissonance between the aims, purposes and philosophies of ITE and that of school practice. While not wanting to be negative about potential placements, it would appear beneficial if ITE explored the potential dissonance that the beginning teachers might experience both in placements and in their first posts. This is particularly relevant for student teachers who are in HEI ITE, rather than practice-based routes such as *Schools Direct*. Traditionally practice-based routes are considered less theory-oriented, focusing on the *how* more than the *why*. This emphasis on theory was prioritised by the participants, seeing the *how* as secondary; for them the *why* was clearly critical. This is where the participants articulated their greatest frustration, feeling that schools did not value the knowledge and experience the participants were bringing from ITE, being even at times dismissive of it (Buchanan, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2017). Therefore, from this thesis I present the recommendation that ITE explicitly engages as part of placement preparation sessions with student teachers about this likely tension, thus enabling them to be prepared and potentially ready to challenge views that are in opposition with their values (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Seymour, 2018).

The final contribution I wish to offer ITE relates to the ongoing debate about the place of teacher identity in ITE programmes. While contrasting views are held regarding the importance of an explicit

focus on teacher identity compared to, for example, a skills focus (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013b), less attention is placed on other identity issues that beginning teachers might have. This could cover many different areas such as LGBT+ or gender questions that were raised as a concern by the participants. Universities are generally progressive institutions where diversity of all kinds is championed, however this is not always replicated in schools. In my opinion, this should therefore be addressed explicitly in ITE to prepare student teachers to consider if and how they might discuss questions of gender and sexuality with staff, parents and pupils. The anxiety raised by participants of potential hostility or exclusion due to their sexuality or gender feels significant and my suggestion for practice is that ITE must explicitly address such issues in order to empower student teachers to feel confident in their ability to express who they are, if they so choose. Equally discussions of identity could cover other minority areas such as men in primary or the specific concerns of student teachers from BAME backgrounds.

Research Methods

This thesis contributes a detailed exploration of using a Community of Enquiry (CoE) as an emerging area of study in the context of research methods, building on a limited existing literature base (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017). This reflected the Research Objective 4: *To offer a written contribution to the literature on using Philosophy for Children's Community of Enquiry as a research method.*

I would strongly recommend the Community of Enquiry (CoE) as a research method. It is my contention, that the CoE has much to recommend to the qualitative researcher, whose aim is to explore 'the beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and values of respondents' (Munro-Morris, 2017:219). Specifically, a key strength of using the CoE as a research method is that it offers the opportunity to adopt a research method that enables an equitable space for the researcher to collaboratively generate data with participants, simultaneously disrupting the traditional researcher/researched binary (Golding, 2015; Munro-Morris, 2017). When guided by the skilled researcher-facilitator, this equitable space enables the participants' voices to be prioritised, and potentially dominant thinking to be distributed (Golding, 2015).

However, it must be acknowledged that there are some challenges with using this method. Firstly, in relation to the previous point, for the researcher to effectively use a CoE as a research method, prior experience in facilitating enquiries is to be strongly recommended to ensure validity. In the same way that advocates of focus groups advise that detailed planning is needed if the group is to run

smoothly and effectively (Rabiee, 2004; Packer-Muti, 2010), observers watching a skilled facilitator lead a CoE might be mistaken in thinking that facilitating a CoE seems straightforward and intuitive. Training courses in Philosophy for Children are readily available and would provide insight and understanding for the researcher of the multi-layered process that makes up the role of the facilitator. The same considerations are not necessary for the participants. Although Golding (2015) suggests that participants' prior experience of being part of a CoE can be advantageous, it is not essential as long as clear guidance about the process is clarified with the participants prior to the CoE commencing. Specifically, this method requires the researcher to have significant trust in the participants, and confidence in their thinking and reasoning ability, as well as confidence and experience themselves in the method.

Possibly the greatest consideration for the researcher must be how to mitigate the challenges that could arise from using a genuinely participant-led method. The potential 'messy' nature of using the CoE as a research method (Golding, 2015:211) is due to the fact that there can be a tension for the researcher due to the necessity of focusing both on collecting the data, while also facilitating a rigorous enquiry without leading or manipulating towards a particular goal. The possibility that the participants might lead the dialogue in a direction that is not specifically relevant to the research questions is a genuine concern and needs to be addressed. For my research this was done by following the two CoEs with a Focus Group. This enabled me to not only gain insight from the participants of their reflections of the data generated in the CoEs, but more importantly provided me with an opportunity to ask specific questions, or interrogate further points raised in the CoE to support the generation of deeper understanding on the topics of interest (Munro-Morris, 2017). My recommendation for any researcher considering using the CoE as a research method, would be to consider the use of a supplementary method for this reason.

Finally, from a very practical standpoint, researchers should be aware of the implications concerning the time taken to transcribe a CoE. In total there were ninety-five minutes of audio recording for each CoE, taking over twenty hours to transcribe (Derry, 2007; Yin, 2016).

Beginning Teacher Wellbeing and Retention

This thesis explored in detail the perceived impact on teacher identity in a neoliberal performative culture, alongside the tension faced by beginning teachers of contrasting priorities from ITE and schools. The participants suggested that it was only when they were certain about their identity and purpose that they felt able to resist practices that were in conflict with their values (Beauchamp &

Thomas, 2009). The suggestion of this possible conflict is the final contribution to knowledge I wish to present; to explore the conceptualisation of 'Perform-ability' with beginning teachers, and to consider how this could impact on retention and wellbeing of beginning teachers, if engaged with in ITE. This linked to Research Objective 1: *To offer participants a voice to engage in discussions around performativity, 'perform-ability' and teacher identity.*

I propose that this conceptualisation of the perform-able teacher seeks to reconceptualise the neoliberal teacher identities proposed by Moore and Clarke (2016). I would suggest that a fourth identity could be added to their model:

- 1) broadly supportive of the current policy
- 2) reject key aspects and seek out opportunities where they can practise alternative pedagogies
- 3) although resistant to the policy, remain within the system in order to try to alleviate the negative impact on children (Moore and Clarke, 2016:667)
- 4) *demonstrate 'perform-ability' - the ability to not only survive, but flourish, in the performative climate, through a sense of agency, purpose and hope.***

My recommendation for ITE practice would be to explore the conceptualisation of this fourth type of teacher, who would confidently manage the performative narrative, whilst resisting the debilitating outcomes often ensuing, such as restrictive curricula and competition over collaboration. This resistance would come through the recognition and prioritising of relationships as the principal factor in wellbeing in education (Roffey, 2011; Seligman, 2012) and the key to individual flourishing and self-fulfilment (Eaude, 2009; Mor, 2018), as well as by engaging in pedagogies such as P4C, which encourages critical thinking, collaboration and caring dispositions (Lipman, 2003; Pardales & Girod, 2006; Fisher, 2013). Equally, such democratic pedagogies embody a call to action, a challenge to oppose dominant forces and an expectation and hope that a more democratic, just and egalitarian world is possible (Lipman *et al.*, 1980; Freire, 1994, 1996; Kizel, 2016, 2017).

Limitations of study

Although this study was approached with an open, critical and reflexive mindset (Cousin, 2010; O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015), it must be acknowledged that some limitations were present. In particular, limitations that relate to the sample. The sample size was limited to 13 participants in total, all female and all white. The age demographic varied slightly, but all were within the age bracket of early to late 20s. Whilst acknowledging these parameters, these criteria are typically representative of primary education cohorts (DfE, 2020b).

Therefore, caution should be exercised in claiming any generalisability (Harding, 2018). Yin (2016) suggests that the particularistic nature of qualitative findings means that the ability to generalise beyond the immediate study is often limited.

Even considering these limitations, I would suggest that the research method chosen allowed the data to be generated collaboratively and collectively. I feel confident that the participants' voices were heard, even when this could be argued to be at the detriment of my research – for example, if interviews had been the chosen method, this would have enabled specific questions to be posed and answered, resulting in greater ease of analysis, and used to address the research questions. Furthermore, the thorough, iterative analysis approach meant that the data was laboriously analysed, checked and re-analysed, returning to original scripts frequently, to ensure that the participants' voices were represented as accurately as possible. This was central to my research approach and linked with Research Objective 1: *To offer participants a voice to engage in discussions around performativity, 'perform-ability' and teacher identity.*

As discussed in Chapter Four, I am also aware of how my reflexivity will have impacted on this thesis, necessitating that I approach these findings mindful of the impact of my theoretical stance and positioning (Punch & Oancea, 2014; Harding, 2018), but equally aware of my decision to adopt the approach proposed by Cousin (2010) and O'Reilly and Kiyimba (2015); and see my subjectivity as enriching and informing my study.

Implications for future research

The first implication for future research is connected to considerations of critical consciousness or political engagement in student teachers. While research has explored the impact of politics on teacher education (see Menter *et al.*, 2017) there has been no consensus over the importance of political engagement for those who are being educated for this profession. Current, ongoing research with a colleague '*The trajectory and impact of ITE students' political literacy on their professional lives*' seeks to redress this balance and aims to ascertain student teachers' current response to politics, their political literacy and engagement. It also seeks to uncover their understanding of the relationship between politics and education and the impact politics will have on their professional lives and that of their pupils.

The second implication for future research is related to Teacher Identity. This thesis explored a general consideration of the impact on Teacher Identity of current education policies, it is my intention in future research to focus more closely on sub-types of identity for example into LGBT+

experiences of beginning teachers and how ITE might better support them. This particular focus arose due to the concerns raised by participants, and supported in literature, over the possibility that schools might not welcome them due to their sexuality (Henderson, 2019; Lee, 2019b, 2019a).

The third area of future research concerns the potential dissonance experienced by student teachers of contrasting priorities or messages between ITE and school practice (Hobson *et al.*, 2008; Seymour, 2018). While we might accept that cognitive dissonance plays a central role in education (Haynes & Murris, 2011b), if there is no opportunity to engage with this critically and supportively it can be unhelpful and disempowering for a beginning teacher. Every year student teachers withdraw from ITE programmes, often during school placements, while the prevalent retention issues with beginning teachers demonstrates the need to meaningfully engage with these issues further (Wilkins *et al.*, 2012; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Joint research with a colleague is planned in this area.

The completion of this study has impacted me in a number of ways. From a researcher perspective, new confidence in using thematic analysis as conceptualised by Braun and Clarke (2006) will not only provide foundations for future research, but also directly benefit my own teaching and supporting of students in their research projects. This is also reflected in my experience of using NVivo as a tool for managing qualitative data. Finally, my use of CoEs and FGs as research methods has strengthened my advocacy for them as collaborative, inclusive and enabling methods of generating data.

Chapter Summary

This thesis has been the culmination of over four years of developing as a researcher as well as refining my thinking with regard to my research focus. Chapter One introduced the rationale behind my research focus, which was linked to three particular quotes by Freire. The first quote spoke of the impossibility of neutrality in education, which caused me to reflect on the engagement of ITE with political agendas in education. In particular, I wondered if ITE was failing in its duty if it did not engage student teachers in dialogue about potential oppression caused by neoliberalism. Equally, to ensure an 'unveiling [of] that reality' (Freire, 1996:51) for student teachers to consider, as they start to form their teacher identities. This then became the rationale for the study, to explore how student teachers might effectively engage with questions of neoliberal performativity and the potential impact on their emerging teacher identity.

All four research questions have been considered and relevant findings and recommendations made. Specifically, one key recommendation is for ITE to engage more explicitly with the political dimension of education. In the current climate, where universities, amongst other organisations, are involved in critical self-examination to ensure they are standing up for rights of all people, be that the #BlackLivesMatter movement, LGBT+ equality etc. it could be argued that now is the time for ITE to more explicitly champion beginning teachers as advocates of social justice and transformation of the oppressed. If ITE does not give student teachers the opportunities to dialogue on such issues, how can we ensure they are fully cognisant? How can they advocate for justice, unless they are able to identify injustice? Only once they are aware, might they be able to challenge the insidious acceptance of the way things are. Equally, it is my contention that more explicit engagement in ITE with teacher identity, agency and purpose might help beginning teachers to navigate the tension between ITE placements and practice, with the benefit of retaining their values, integrity and creative pedagogies.

This thesis' significance and contributions to knowledge have been discussed: with three key areas highlighted; ITE, Research Methods and considerations for beginning teacher Wellbeing and Retention. Finally, the limitations of the study were explored and implications for future research were proposed.

Postscript

The last ten months of writing up my thesis were set to a backdrop of the Corona virus pandemic. What was interesting from an educational perspective, was that one of the first impacts of Covid-19 was a re-evaluation and re-examination of the purpose of education. One of the first educational consequences in England was a cancellation of all examinations, from primary SATs tests, through to A' level examinations (DFE, 2020a). Discussions began on social media debating the role and purpose of education, particularly as school closures for the majority of pupils stretched into weeks and months. Questions began surfacing regarding the point of examinations – with Nick Gibb, Minister of State for Schools, even stating that KS2 SATs were primarily about school data, not about children (Coughlan & Sellgren, 2020). Considerations of socialisation, safety and even access to food began to take priority in discussions, combined with a growing sense of inequality of provision for those trying to learn at home, regarding access to technology and internet. The cancellation of formal examinations meant that the DFE were relying on Teacher Assessment, something that had been downgraded and largely dismissed in recent years. There was a sense that there could be a reclaiming of professional integrity, authority and even respect for the teaching profession. Some

discussions went even further, suggesting that there should not be a return to 'school as normal' but saw this as an opportunity to overhaul education provision, to create a more holistic provision for children and young people (Jenkins, 2020). Of primary concern for many educationalists, was children's wellbeing on return to school after months, for some, of relative social isolation (UNICEF, 2020). Advocates of P4C reported that this was a suitable approach for schools to take when pupils returned, to give children a safe space to dialogue about their lockdown experiences – which for some, might have been traumatic, including the loss of loved ones (@SAPER_P4C, 2020).

Significantly however, by late June a return to former performative agendas was seen, with suggestions that schools should prioritise English and Maths upon their return in September to ensure that standards did not drop (Turner, 2020). Ongoing discussions around examinations at KS2, GCSE and A' level for Summer 2021 have fuelled debate, criticism and confusion, for teachers, parents and pupils, particularly as contrasting decisions were made for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (Whittaker, 2020).

In Chapter One I presented three quotes by Freire, which I described as summing up the rationale behind my research focus. To conclude this final chapter, I have chosen to present three quotes from Freire's *Pedagogy of Freedom*. These three quotes sum up my position with relation to my research topic, as I approach the end my doctoral journey.

Firstly:

I cannot avoid a permanently critical attitude toward what I consider to be the scourge of neoliberalism, with its cynical fatalism and its inflexible negation of the right to dream differently, to dream of utopia (Freire, 1998:22)

The title of this chapter is derived from this quote. Fundamentally my vision of education is driven by hope, optimism and a belief in dreaming differently, and striving for utopia. To retain integrity in my role in ITE, I refuse to allow neoliberal narratives or performative agendas to dominate my vision of education.

Secondly, I remain convinced, at the end of this journey, that there is no such thing, nor should there be such a thing as a neutral educational process:

I cannot be a teacher if I do not perceive with ever greater clarity that my practice demands of me a definition about where I stand. A break with what is not right ethically. I must choose between one thing and another thing. I cannot be a teacher and be in favor of everyone and everything. I cannot be in favor merely of people, humanity, vague phrases far from the concrete nature of educative practice (Freire, 1998:93).

This quote by Freire removes the possibility for me of remaining neutral. Part of the role of the teacher, as discussed by the participants, is to be a role model, this I feel requires me to actively engage with issues of inequality and oppression however I can.

One of my mantras when I meet new student teachers, is to emphasise and re-emphasise the role and significance of relationships in every area of teaching. This third quote by Freire inspired me, as I felt it aligned with the conviction that the participants unanimously offered, of the importance of the relational in teaching. For me, this premise offered by Freire, of joy having a privileged place or role in the classroom, resonates with my foregrounding of wellbeing:

But I have never ceased to try to create a pedagogical space in which joy has its privileged role (Freire, 1998:69).

If teaching is a calling to be more than a disseminator of information, then ITE must decide how that can be achieved in contrast to the narrative that has been dominating statutory education for the past 25 years. Exiting the global pandemic, no aspect of our culture is expected to remain unchanged (Holcombe, 2020), arguably creating an opportunity to re-evaluate current practices. Movements such as #Metoo, Black Lives Matter, climate change awareness, and LGBT+ rights indicate the rising trend of grass-roots social justice and political advocacy, the impact of which will undoubtedly be witnessed by student teachers. Such a radical movement against the tides of this dominating force will need to be courageous and assured, I posit that it is the role of ITE to nurture courageous and assured practitioners and this thesis has demonstrated how and why this could be attained.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Ethics form with Participant Information and Consent Form



RKE ETHICS PROFORMA – FULL REVIEW APPLICATIONS

Staff and Students

GUIDELINES

Before completing this proforma, please refer to the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Policy which provides further information and also clarifies the terms used.

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University's Policy on the ethical conduct of research and knowledge exchange and any relevant academic or professional codes of practice and guidelines pertaining to your study. This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. The checklists will identify whether ethics approval is required and at what level.

This Ethics Proforma should be completed for each research, study or knowledge exchange project involving human participants or data derived from directly identifiable individuals. This should be done before any potential participant is approached to take part in the research/study.

The questions in this proforma are intended to guide your reflection on the ethical implication of your research. Explanatory notes can be found at the end of this proforma. Additional notes can be seen by hovering over the asterisks (*).

If any aspect of the project changes during the course of the research, you must notify the Faculty RKE Committee or the University RKE Ethics Committee, whichever is relevant, by completing Section 6 of this proforma.

SECTION 1: DETERMINING WHETHER YOU REQUIRE ETHICAL APPROVAL

Hover the mouse over the asterisks (*) for guidance on how to proceed with this triage questionnaire.

1. Is the proposed activity classified as Research or Audit/Service Evaluation?

☒

Research *

☐

Audit/Service Evaluation *

If the proposed activity is considered research, continue with question 2. If it is an Audit or a Service Evaluation, you do not need to seek ethical approval.

2. Does the research involve living human participants, samples or data derived from identifiable individuals?

☒ Yes *

☐ No *

3. Does your research require external ethics approval (e.g. NHS or another institution)? (See note 1)

☐ Yes *

☒ No *

4. Does the research involve the use of animals?

☐ Yes *

☒ No *

5. Does the research involve the use of documentary material not in the public domain?

☐ Yes *

☒ No *

6. Does the research involve environmental interventions?

☐ Yes *

☒ No *

SECTION 2: DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF ETHICAL SCRUTINY

Please mark with an "X" as appropriate	YES	NO
Does the research involve individuals who are vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? (e.g. vulnerable children, over-researched groups, people with learning difficulties, people with mental health problems, young offenders, people in care facilities, including prisons)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the research involve individuals in unequal relationships e.g. your own students? (students recruited via SONA are not considered your own students)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g. covert observation of people in public places, deception)? (see note 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? For example (but not limited to): sexual activity, illegal behaviour, experience of violence or abuse, drug use, etc.). (Please refer to the Research Ethics Policy).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is there a risk that the highly sensitive nature of the research topic might lead to disclosures from the participant concerning their own involvement in illegal activities or other activities that represent a threat to themselves or others (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, or professional misconduct)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the anonymity of the participant be compromised at any time during or after the study?		

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the study likely to induce severe physical harm or psychological distress?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does your research involve tissue samples covered by the Human Tissue Act?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question (e.g. research in high risk locations or among high risk groups)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the research involve creating, downloading, storing or transmitting material that may be considered to be unlawful, indecent, offensive, defamatory, threatening, discriminatory or extremist?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered “yes” to any of these questions, CONTINUE WITH THIS FORM. and submit it to the University RKE Ethics Committee (staff) or to the Departmental Ethics Committee (students).

If you have answered “yes” to the last question, in addition to ethical approval by the relevant ethics committee, you must also contact the Director of IT Services, who must provide approval for the use of such data.

If you have answered no to all of these questions THIS FORM IS NOT FOR YOU. Please complete the Low Risk Application Form and submit it to the Faculty Head of RKE (staff) or to your supervisor (students)

SECTION 3: YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

1.1. Your name: Rhiannon Love

1.2. Your Department: Institute of Education

1.3. Your status:

- ☐ Undergraduate Student
- ☐ Taught Master
- ☒ Research Degree student
- ☒ Staff (Academic)
- ☐ Staff (Professional Services)
- ☐ Other (please specify):

1.4. Your Email address: Rhiannon.love@winchester.ac.uk

1.5. Your Telephone number: 01962 827407

For students only:

1.6. Your degree programme: Ed D

1.7. Your supervisor’s name: Dr Alasdair Richardson

1.8. Your supervisor’s department: Institute of Education

SECTION 4: YOUR RESEARCH

- 2.1. Project title:** An exploration of emerging Teacher Identity
- 2.2. Expected start date:** Sept 2018
- 2.3. Expected completion date:** Sept 2019 – Pilot Study and Sept 2021 final thesis
- 2.4. Expected location:** ? University
- 2.6. If outside the UK, state country:** ?
- 2.7. Has ethical approval been obtained at the host country? *** ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2.8. If not, why not?**
- 2.9 If the research is taking place outside the UK, is it covered by the University's insurance, or has the researcher obtained an appropriate insurance (e.g. travel insurance)?** ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2.10. Does the research include risks or other factors that might cause it to be excluded from coverage by the University insurers? (see note 5)** ☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2.11 Has funding been sought for this research?** ☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2.12. If so, where have you applied for funding?**
- 2.13. Has the funding been granted?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐
- 2.14. Other collaborators ***

SECTION 5- QUESTIONNAIRE

If you have answered YES TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN SECTION 3 or have been referred by the Faculty Head of RKE (or Head of Department in the case of students) you should complete this questionnaire, where you can describe more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your research.

1- RESEARCH AIMS AND SIGNIFICANCE
<p><i>Please provide a brief (no more than 500 words) details in non-technical language of the research aims, the scientific background of the research, the methods that will be used and why it is important to carry out this research. This summary should contain sufficient information to acquaint the Committee with the principal features of the proposal. A copy of the full proposal may be requested if further information is deemed necessary.</i></p> <p><i>Leave blank if you have answered this question in section 4.</i></p> <p>The aim of my Pilot study is to practise, reflect on and subsequently refine my research methods in preparation for my final thesis. This small-scale qualitative research project will use one principal method of data collection; a Community of Enquiry (CoE) (Golding, 2015; Pardales & Girod, 2006). Part of my focus for the Pilot Study is to see how this method generates data for my final thesis and how I will respond to and handle that data. The intention being, that I might decide to follow up the CoE with semi-structured</p>

interviews to provide greater detail (Drever, 1995) for my final thesis. Whilst it could be argued that reliance on solely one data-collection method could lead to researcher bias (Morrow, 2008), for the final thesis I intend to use the CoE three ways; firstly, analysing the scripts from the inquiries (Golding, 2015), secondly, the visual insights from the video recordings (on non-verbal aspects etc.) (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015) and potentially the participants' own reflections on the scripts (Golding, 2015).

My aim is that this data collected will potentially form part of the data for my final thesis, as I intend to ask the participants to return at the end of their academic year (post SE), to revisit the CoE and to explore how/if their thinking has changed.

The intended participants will be final year BEd students, who have opted for the Philosophy for Children Option module, as Golding (2015) suggests that in order for the CoE to be effective as a research method, the participants need to be experienced in the process.

Main Aim:

- To explore issues around performativity and teacher identity, and theorise about the concept of 'perform-ability' (to be clarified) with year 3 BEd finalists P4C Option students

Sub Aims:

- To explore the lived experiences, concerns and observations of the students regarding the performative culture and how this might impact on their teacher identity
- To explore the concept of 'perform-ability' and their reactions to this
- To explore the impact P4C might have had on their teacher identity

2- RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Mark with an X as appropriate		YES	NO	Not certain
a	How will participants be identified and approached? The participants will be students in the Option Modules in Philosophy for Children and will be invited by email invitation			
b	Do you intend to recruit children under the age of 16?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Do you intend to recruit participant who may be deemed vulnerable in any way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have answered YES to the above, please justify why their participation in the research is necessary and provide further details on how you intend to protect these participants.				

d	Is it possible that a current or past relationship with potential participants could give rise to a perceived pressure to participate because are you in a position of authority or influence over them (e.g. they are your students, colleagues, family, etc.)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>If so, what steps will you take to mitigate this issue?</p> <p>The participants I will be working with are students in modules that I am teaching and therefore there is an uneven power relationship.</p> <p>I will ensure that it is made clear at all times the voluntary, independent nature of this research task, and repeatedly remind the participants that their participation is able to be withdrawn at any point, with no risk of negative consequences. In order to make it clear that my marking would not be affected by anything that emerged in the course of the data collection, my colleague, who team teaches the module. will first mark all assignments completed by the participants.</p> <p>In addition, if any of the participants have any concerns at any point in the research, they may contact a third party, namely Dr Alasdair Richardson, who is my supervisor for this Pilot Study.</p>				
e	Do you intend to collect tissue samples (blood, saliva, hair, or any other body part, including human skeletal remains)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please indicate the procedures in place for safeguarding the sensitive materials, including storage and whether further use beyond this research is envisaged. If so, has adequate consent been obtained?</p>				
<p>Human tissues/ remains: If the work involves obtaining a licence under the provisions of the Human Tissue Act (2008), please indicate who the named holder of the relevant licence is.</p> <p>The named holder of the licence is Licence number</p>				
3- INFORMED CONSENT				
Mark with an X as appropriate		YES	NO	Not Certain
a	Will potential participants be asked to give informed consent in writing and will they be asked to confirm that they have received and read the information about the study? <i>Please attach a draft information sheet and/or consent form, if this is necessary.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If not or not certain, please provide more information				
b	Has information (written or oral) about the study been prepared in an appropriate form and language for potential participants?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If not or not certain, please justify. At what point in the study will information about the research be offered?				
c	How do you intend to discuss the study with potential participants or those who may represent their views?			

	An initial email invitation will be followed up by an informal meeting to share more information about the research with the potential participants. At this stage the Project Information Sheets would be handed out and any questions answered. I would also remind the participants of my contact details and encourage them to make contact at any point if they had further questions or were unsure about any point of the research.			
d	Will potential participants be informed of any adverse consequences of a decision not to participate? Or of a decision to withdraw during the course of the study?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide any further information that may be relevant				
Potential participants would be reassured that there would be no adverse consequences of any decision not to participate, likewise for early withdrawal from the research.				
e	Will participants be told that they can withdraw at any time, ask for their interview tape to be destroyed and/or their data removed from the project until it is no longer practical to do so (e.g. when you have written up your report).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide further information if necessary.				
What provision has been made to respond to queries and problems raised by participants during the course of the study?				
As previously mentioned, all participants will have my email contact details as well as my office details and will be encouraged to contact me at any point with any query. Equally as mentioned above, they may also direct any concerns to Dr Alasdair Richardson.				
4- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY				
a	Where relevant, how does the research methodology justify the use of deception? Can the information be obtained by other means?			
	The research methodology used will not justify the use of deception.			
b	How will data be collected and analysed during the project?			
	Data will be collected by a Community of Enquiry (CoE). The students will be asked to come to the session with an image that they have drawn symbolising themselves, their teacher identity, the pressures on them, and their non-negotiables/vision of themselves as a teacher. These images will provide the stimulus for the enquiry but will also be used as a source of data in themselves. For the second data collection point (Summer 2019), I will ask the students to reflect on and amend if appropriate these images, which again will then be used both for the stimulus for the enquiry, but also as a source of data.			
	The intention is that this data will be used for my final thesis, therefore I will not be reporting on the analysis for the purpose of this Pilot Study, as the purpose of this research is to practise the methods in readiness for my final thesis, rather than on the data collected. I will however undertake some initial data analysis to enable me to critically evaluate the usefulness of the methods used, and			

	subsequently make an informed decision as to any developments or refinements necessary for my final thesis. For example, I may decide that I would like to follow-up the process of the CoE with interviews.
c	<p>How have the ethical and legal dimensions of the process of collecting, analysing and storing the data been addressed?</p> <p>In accordance with BERA (2018), informed consent will be collected from all participants. All data will be kept in a password secured file, and will be destroyed six months after the award of the Ed D is confirmed. Likewise, video recordings will be deleted after six months.</p>
5- PRIVACY	
a	<p>What arrangements have been made to preserve confidentiality for the participants or those potentially affected, and compliance with data protection law?</p> <p>To ensure compliance with data protection laws (GDPR) all data that is collected will be securely stored, either via a password-controlled file or, in case of the drawings, in a locked drawer (Denscombe, 2014). From the start of the research, participants will be anonymised/synonyms allocated. In accordance with data-protection principles, the data collected will only be used for the purposes originally specified and will be collected in a fair and lawful manner, equally, only that data that is needed will be analysed and securely stored (Denscombe, 2014).</p> <p>The use of video recordings necessitates additional ethical checks and considerations. The fact that individual participants might be recognised by others requires special care is taken over privacy and confidentiality (Derry et al., 2010). The video recordings will be securely stored in password-controlled files, and will be deleted as soon as the Ed D has been awarded (Denscombe, 2014). Equally the recordings themselves will have restricted access, and will only be watched by myself in order to collect the data, the recordings will not be shared with any other individuals or at any related event ie conference (Derry et al., 2010). Derry et al. (2010) suggest that the heightened ethical considerations mean that it is good practice to specify that the participants will be video-recorded in the consent form, to ensure that they are fully aware and thus give informed consent – therefore I have amended my consent form to reflect this advice.</p>
b	<p>Will the research data be used for any other purpose? If you intend to re-use this data then please state this clearly on the Information Sheet & Consent Form, and state below what potential uses you may envisage.</p> <p>This research data will be used to form part of the final thesis for the Ed D. It is possible that the data might also be used to present at relevant conferences and for a journal article.</p>
6- FINANCIAL INCENTIVES	

a	Please specify any incentives being offered to participants and a justification for their use. None.
b	Please specify any payments to researcher or participants and state whether they may have an impact on the objectivity of the research None
7- RISKS	
a	What are the specific risks to research participants or third parties? None
b	If the research involves pain, stress, physical or emotional risk, please detail the steps taken to minimize such effects. N/A
c	Are there any potential risks to the researcher/s? No

SECTION 6: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please use this section to append consent forms, information sheets, questionnaires or any other documentation that may be relevant to your application. Please do this by copying and pasting from your original document.

You may also use this section to address any issues not covered in the previous sections.



Project Information Sheet & Consent Form

Who I am and what is my research:

My name is Rhiannon Love and I am currently working as the Route Leader for the Secondary RE PGCE as well as a Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Education at the University of Winchester, with responsibility for Primary Religious Education (RE).

I am carrying out research into student teachers' perceptions of Teacher Identity, as the pilot study for my Doctorate in Education

The Research aims to:

Explore student teachers' perceptions of Teacher Identity.

This pilot study will enable me to explore the appropriateness of the use of a Community of Enquiry to gather data for my final doctoral research thesis.

Participation within the project:

As part of my project I will be facilitating Communities of Enquiry with BEd finalists, who have taken the Option Module in Philosophy for Children, about their thoughts around Teacher Identity. You have been given this information sheet because I would like to invite you to take part in my research. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you can withdraw from the study at any time, up to the analysis stage, at which point the data will have been anonymised. If you are happy to be involved, your participation will consist of taking part in a Community of Enquiry, lastly approximately an hour.

It is hoped that the enquiry will take the form of a professional dialogue that will allow us to reflect on and discuss your thoughts regarding Teacher Identity. As such, it is hoped they will be beneficial to you and the other students involved, as well as to myself as a researcher.

The enquiry will be video recorded so that I can create an accurate transcription of the discussion. These recordings will be kept securely in a password-controlled file, and, six months after the Ed D has been awarded, the recordings will be deleted. The data will be treated as anonymous with all names changed or removed to ensure that you and the other students cannot be identified, and I will be the only one to view the data.

Most importantly it must be stressed that there will be no consequences if you choose not to participate or withdraw at any stage of the proceedings – all participants who agree to take part in this research will have their Option assignments first marked by Emma Goto (the second option tutor) to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

If you choose to withdraw before the analysis stage of this research, you will have the right to request that all of your previous data shall be discounted.

Results of the study:

Participants will not be able to be identified should any part of the work be published or presented to a wider audience. If at any time you wish to see data collected and my findings I will be happy to show and discuss these with you.

This research data will be used to form part of the final thesis for the Ed D. It is possible that the data might also be used to present at relevant conferences and for a journal article.

Additional Information:

My project will be approved by the Faculty of Education, Health and Social Care at the University of Winchester.

If you have any concerns or would like to discuss this study please contact either myself at the e-mail address below or Institute of Education, University of Winchester, Sparkford Road, Winchester, SO22 4NR.

If you require further information or wish to discuss any part of the project please contact me:

rhiannon.love@winchester.ac.uk

If you have any concerns at any point in the research you can contact my supervisor, Dr Alasdair Richardson on Alasdair.richardson@winchester.ac.uk or David Farley, as the Data Protection Officer on David.Farley@winchester.ac.uk

I consent to participating in the CoE	Yes/No
I consent to being video-recorded	Yes/No
I consent to my words and images being used for the research	Yes/No
I consent to my anonymised data being used in future publications	Yes/No
I consent for my data to be securely stored for six months after the Ed D is awarded	Yes/No

I have read and understood the information provided. I agree to take part in the research under the conditions described and understand I can withdraw from this study at any time.

Signed:

Date:

I, Rhiannon Love, the researcher, will countersign this consent form to demonstrate that I commit to upload my side of the agreement.

Countersigned:

Date:

Ethics Declaration

☐ I confirm that if a Risk Assessment is required I will complete it and have it co-signed by my Supervisor or Head of Department before data collection takes place.

☐ I confirm that, if DBS clearance is required for my project, then I will seek it before commencement of my project.

☐ I confirm that my research does not include risks that might cause it to be excluded from coverage by the University's insurers or

☐ I confirm that I have appropriate insurance for this research

I have read and understood the University of Winchester Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Policy and confirm that adequate safeguards in relation to the ethical issues raised by this research can and will be put in place. I am aware of and understand University procedures on ethics in Research and Knowledge Exchange and Health and Safety. I understand that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the RKE Ethics Committee.



Researcher's signature:

Date: 10/07/18

Supervisor's name and signature (for research students only):

Date:

References

Denscombe, M. (2014). The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects: McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Derry, S. J., Pea, R. D., Barron, B., Engle, R. A., Erickson, F., Goldman, R., Sherin, M. G. (2010). Conducting video research in the learning sciences: Guidance on selection, analysis, technology, and ethics. The Journal of the Learning Sciences, 19(1), 3-53.

Drever, E. (1995). Using Semi-Structured Interviews in Small-Scale Research. A Teacher's Guide: ERIC.

Golding, C. (2015). The Community of Inquiry: Blending philosophical and empirical research. Studies in Philosophy and Education, 34(2), 205-216.

Morrow, V. (2008). Ethical dilemmas in research with children and young people about their social environments. Children's Geographies, 6(1), 49-61.

O'Reilly, M., & Kiyimba, N. (2015). Advanced qualitative research: A guide to using theory. London: Sage.

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The image contains four human-shaped diagrams, each representing a different aspect of a teacher's life. The first diagram, titled 'Personal life', lists attributes like Motivation, Health, Knowledgeable, patient, Ambitious, Love, high expectations, Resilience, Kind, positive, organisation, Fun, Enthusiasm, Environment, Un-happiness, Mark load, and No self-beli. The second diagram, titled 'Professional life', lists attributes like My (lack of) Religion, Parents / Local Residents attitudes, Other teacher's attitudes, Money + School Funding, The National Curriculum, My Gender, Inductive, Flexible, Innovative, Organised, Humouring, Fun!, Creative, My Confidence, My Age + 'lack of experience', Other people's judgements, My Sexuality, and My Goals. The third diagram, titled 'Barriers', lists challenges like poor professional development, pupils not having enough teacher attention and time, no support, school interfering, responsible for testing, class behaviour, lack of subject knowledge, working conditions, concerns over children's behaviour, Government initiatives, financial pressures, confidence, class sizes, staff shortages, and time. The fourth diagram, titled 'My Teacher Identity', lists qualities like My Teacher Identity, clear communication, resilience, celebrate all achievements, develop intercultural understanding, class - connect teaching breaking down barriers, life-long learner, looking after myself, and limited resources.

COE1

193

P11: Yeah um, I think busy sounds like quite a negative word in the first instance, but actually I really like being busy, I don't like having nothing to do.

F: Yeah.

P11: So I'll be on placement, but I also teach at the weekends as well so we're doing that and I run a Rainbows unit. So it's going to be a lot going on.

F: Yeah.

P11: So it just means that I also have to be super organised.

F: Yeah.

P11: So I've been doing lots of planning in advance, and stuff like that. So yeah, I feel like I'm going to be super busy but also I'm not necessarily dreading that.

F: No, so that almost feels like your comfort thing, being busy is where you feel- yeah.

P11: It's good.

F: Thank you very much. As always, you can always change your mind if (**UNINTELLIGABLE**). P2, Little Miss Scatterbrain!

P2: Yeah I chose this one because I feel a bit all over the place at the moment. My first two school experiences I was in Reception and Year One, and the one I got is Year Five, and that's what I wanted but I'm just worried about stuff getting all over me, and just trying to catch up on that, and I just feel a bit all over the place.

F: Just a little bit, sort of – So really good for you, isn't it, to have that breadth of experience, but it's that sort of 'erghh' moment. Thank you. Shall we hear, we've got four Little Miss Luckys here, anyone want to say what about Little Miss Lucky.

P3: I just felt like I've been given a completely different school to what I'd had before, and it's kind of the area I'd like to go into. It's Key Stage One, it's this tiny little village school, one-form entry, so I'm just really excited, and I feel quite lucky. It's near home, it kind of ticks all the boxes.

F: So you're feeling good today?

P3: Yes.

F: Is that similar for the rest of you?

P12: Yeah.

F: Anyone want to say a little bit more about –

P12: Mine's close to home, in terms of all the schools I've been into, it's in an area quite similar to the ones I've enjoyed the most. And it's a year group that I haven't yet had a chance to teach. But one that'd I would, wanted to have a go anyway.

P8: Mine is I'm building on from my previous years, my first year I was in Year 2, Year 3 last year, and now I'm in Year 4. So I'm seeing that progression, and I feel really lucky that I'm getting to see that rather than hopping from one year group to another.

F: Yeah, nice.

P13: I'm in year five, so that means all of my placements have been in Key Stage 2, which is exactly what I wanted.

F: - But that's what you wanted, yeah you particularly - you've always been Key Stage 2, rather than saying, you're in Year R this time! Okay so we've got some Little Miss Curious, four, Curious, please tell us more.

P10: I'm going to an independent school so it has a Christian centred curriculum, so I'm really interested in how they teach, and how different the curriculum is, and how different (**UNINTELLIGABLE**), so I'm very curious about it. And I'm in Year 6, so that'll be quite interesting as well to see- and it's an all through school as well, so it's from Year R to Year 11.

F: So quite a lot of new things outside of your experience-

P10: Yeah! I'm very excited but very curious as well.

F: And it'll be interesting to see what is similar to your previous experiences in state schools, but also maybe there might be more freedom, or who knows? We'll look forward to hearing in the summer! – Hearing from all of you and your experiences! Maybe we'll do exactly the same? Little Miss Exhausted! I'm going to create a Little Miss Exhausted for the Summer! Anyone else want to say why curious?

P4: I'm just curious about what the future's going to hold. And just get some more experience, and yeah, quite excited, very curious.

F: Thank you.

P5: Similar, excited but curious. And also I'm in a school that I've never taught in that setting?

F: Right, so where are you?

P5: It's in a really big academy school and I've always done little village schools so it's different.

F: Okay? So it's completely the opposite!

P5: (**UNINTELLIGABLE**)

F: And it's funny because sometimes you think I am this sort of person, this sort of school. And then you see something different and think, oh actually you know –

F: P7, anything you want to add to that?

P7: I'm going into Year One, and I've never taught Year One before, but I've been doing some tutoring for a Year One girl so I've had that experience, but not a whole class, so I'm curious about what- how thirty of them will be like.

F: Lots of tissues! Thank you very much! Last but not least, Little Miss Magic, three Miss Magics here! Anyone want to start us off on that one?

P9: I just got drawn to the word magic, the whole idea of being a magic leader (**UNINTELLIGABLE**). Exciting as well - to maybe sparkle with a bit of magic, make things a bit more positive.

P6: I'm more with the excitement side, and also having - we've been at uni for however long we've been here, we've been passed on this magic, to actually empower the children? And I think that's why- that's why Little Miss Magic.

P1: Every classroom should have a little bit of magic, and I'm back in Key Stage 1 which I think - that was definitely lacking from the Key Stage 2 classroom I was in last time, so I'm looking forward to having that...

F: Access to plenty of magic, and glitter, and (**UNINTELLIGABLE**) – thank you very much! Do sit down I'm just going to pick these up and move them out of your way. Okay, so what we're going to do now is, before we begin I just want to remind you about concepts, so big ideas, big themes, I think

everybody- however much or little P4C they've done, probably did them at least in Ed Theory, where maybe we used light bulbs to scaffold thinking, with the idea that you would share a stimulus, and then you're looking for big themes, concepts, big ideas, whatever you want to call them, that are at the heart of what you're looking at, what you are sharing with the children. So I just brought those just to remind you of them. What we're going to do now is I would like you in a moment to get out your drawings, and I'm going to put you into groups of three, so a three here, and a three here, and a three here, and a four, rather than pairs I think. And what I would like you to do is share- we've got plenty of time- so share your drawings one by one in your three or your four, and then I'd like you to discuss them. You've all got whiteboards- not everyone needs to write but it might be that it fills more than one white board. As you're discussing, maybe one of you could be a scribe, and jot down as you're talking, sort of key concepts that you think are coming up from your shared pictures. It doesn't have to be that that idea has to be on all of them, but they're concepts that you're discussing as you share your pictures. Does that make sense? Thank you very much!

GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN BACKGROUND FROM 13:23 – 20: 30

F: Fab. If you want to just pop your drawings- your drawings can go back under your seat. And what I'm going to do is go around the groups, and just ask if someone's happy to read out. If you've separated it that's fine, do it that way, if you haven't, that's fine as well. Just so that we can hear everybody's. As you're listening to them all – in a moment you're going to go back into your groups, and you're going to pick one concept to write down that particularly draws you, that you hear at the moment. So shall we start with this group? Does one of you want - you've split them – does one want to do positives and one want threats.

P7: Sure. So the positives we had were: kind and caring, risk taking, inclusive, and valuing each other, dedicated, honesty, creative, sharing ideas, and being a team player, reflective, resilient, and being an empowerer.

F: Thank you very much. And our threats?

P5: We have the school, and maybe lack of support from the school, or flexibility that we lack, behaviour of the children, confidence, but also pride, either not being confident to do something, or pride in the sense that we don't want to ask for help, time, stress and pressure, class sizes, energy and tiredness, differing vision and values from the school, and other staff and the environment.

F: Thank you very much, do you want to pop them back down? And the next group, that's you?

P10: Our positives were, inclusive, fun, passionate, kind and caring, innovative, having awareness, organised, love, and flexible.

F: Thank you.

P9: And our threats we had a group under the theme of pressures, so we had parent pressure, OFSTED pressure, teacher pressure, and workload pressure. And then, with relationships, we said maybe with other TAs, or with other staff members, challenging pupils, and relationships with them, and almost relationship within yourself, so with self-confidence (?). And then another theme with environment, so maybe lack of resources, funding, or like the school environment as a whole.

F: Thank you very much. **(UNINTELLIGABLE)**

P3: So we kind of grouped ours together rather than listing them all out, so we kind of grouped them into three main groups like creative and experimental, so that kind of linked all the things to do with that, care and compassion, trusting, love, those kind of elements we kind of grouped together, and inclusivity. And the threats, were kind of like relationships with parents, wasn't it, could be negative? And sort of other relationships, and kind of like the targets, and data pressures and those sort of workload pressures we grouped together.

F: Lovely, thank you. Last but not least.

P11: Whoops, sorry I'll pick that up. Our positive ones, or identity ones, were inclusion, respect and trust we kind of put together but we're not really sure, lifelong learner, open minded, caring, fun, optimistic, honesty and communication, consistency, flexibility. And then in terms of threats, we thought of lack of confidence, limited resources and funding, time, we said diversity, but not in terms of having a diverse classroom, or that you might not have encountered specific groups of children, of course you might have a new additional need that you might not have had to provide for before, things like that, so it's more about lack of experience, your own stresses on mental health, and also class sizes, so like if you've got a really large class and you've never had that before.

F: Lovely, thank you. Pop that down. So what I would like you to do is just to go back into your three or four and I'm just going to throw some extras into the mix here, but please do not be persuaded, clearly I'm not saying "oh pick these". What I want you to do is to reflect on what everyone's done, throwing these ones down as well, they might sum up with some of them. And I want you to see if you can pick a concept that you think particularly relates as the moment, that maybe is something you discussed, that maybe is something that has come up with another group, or maybe even similar, that is linking between the two. So the ones that I'm going to throw down are: values, autonomy, identity, and power. And yeah, so go back into your groups, and then when you've identified one, come and write one down on the piece of paper at the moment, and I'll put some more pens **(UNINTELLIGABLE)**

GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN BACKGROUND FROM 22:24– 26:29

F: Okay, shall we just go round, quickly round the group and say why you picked the one you did. Shall we start this way?

P6: Yeah, we were talking about performativity, but then we were saying that that's quite narrow actually, and although that can be a pressure, there's also other pressures which can limit us, and which can become a barrier.

P8: So we magpie'd your idea.

F: We like magpie-ing indeed **(?)**. Thank you. **(UNINTELLIGABLE)**

P4: We done inclusion because we believe its positive or negative, so obviously there's a lot of positives of being inclusive, obviously including everyone in the classroom, but actually I think it was what you said? About how actually there might be additional needs that you've not come across so there might be a barrier or something that you're concerned about.

F: Yeah, thank you.

P9: We said pressure is something that came up a lot, but it's something you can't ignore. So whether it's a positive or a negative – we were saying sometimes we work better under pressure, so it can be a positive – but there's so many different things. Pressure from yourself, pressure from the school and the children, that actually plays a big part in everything.

F: Thank you.

P1: We went for autonomy, because we felt it was our final placement, the time we need to develop our own teacher identities, and that some of the pressures we had were based around different school ethos' and things like that, and sort of **(?)** pressures and things, but actually it's developing how we are going to manage those pressures as well.

F: Thank you, lovely. So return to your groups, you can use any of those concepts that we've just shared now, and I'm going to get a bit of bigger paper, and come and create a beautiful question, or two if you particularly have two, so one or two questions on any of these concepts you've got here.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN BACKGROUND FROM 29:14– 32:27

F: Okay, really interesting. You know when we do P4C and we say, “I always value the questions”, (UNINTELLIGABLE), these are such fabulous questions we could be here for six hours talking about all of these here. So we’ve got: Can we always be autonomous under the pressures we face? Is inclusivity causing undue pressures in schools? Will society/education ever be truly inclusive? Is pressure always a bad thing? If there was no pressure, would we still perform as well as educators? How important is autonomy as a teacher? Do we ever really achieve autonomy as teachers? Wow. Okay – just some light topics. You have three cubes, now normally I say “You cannot put them on your own”, or I would with children – I don’t mean none of them on your own, you can’t put all three on your own. However, I think we are at a stage where we are critical thinkers, I’m hoping, so you may distribute your cubes however you wish – if you want to put all three on yours, you can put all three on yours, so just whichever one – we’re looking for a ‘discussible question’, which is going to take us forward for the next sort of forty minutes. Vote away!

BACKGROUND MOVEMENT FROM 33:49-34:48

F: Okay, so the question we’re going to be looking at is: **If there was no pressure, would we still perform as well as educators?** I would like you just to turn to your partners – two here, two here, two here, two here, two here, and we’ve got a three here. First thoughts on the question: If there was no pressure, would we still perform as well as educators? Off you go, couple of minutes sharing.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN BACKGROUND FROM 35:13-36:56

F: Okay, so, you should all have a red and green card, we’re going to use these for indicating how – if you want to speak, just to remind you, if you don’t want to speak just have it on red, as always in P4C there’s absolutely no obligation for people to talk in the circle unless they want to, if you want to speak turn it onto green, and whoever starts then picks the next person. I’d encourage you, if possible, to use people’s names, as we try to do, to try and link ideas, build on each other’s ideas, give examples wherever possible. So I’m going to – often we try to return to the people that – to the group that wrote the question to start us off, with the thinking that they have probably had the most thinking around this question. So it was the three of you was it? Anyone from the three of you want to start us off, either with how you came up with this question, or your own first thoughts? Anyone in that group want to kick us off?

P9: Well we were discussing that in theory, teachers should be teaching because they want to teach, not because of results or OFSTED, or anything like that, so in theory, if there’s no pressure, results and performativity and standards shouldn’t drop. But I think its very subjective, and I can imagine for everyone around the room it wouldn’t drop, but then there are some situations where if people don’t have that pressure, then it won’t get done. So, I think in theory, the answer is well we should minimise pressure because then people will be better and standards would be higher, but actually some people might work, whereas if there’s no pressure, it won’t get done and standards drop. But I think it’s very subjective, it depends on how you work as a person, and how we’ve been trained to be proactive and reflective, whereas maybe some education teachers don’t think that way.

F: Do you want to give it to whomever?

P9: P11.

P11: So we were talking about an example about perhaps when – in one of our modules we were talking about how in an outstanding school, the teachers don’t have as much pressure because they don’t have OFSTED looking over their shoulder. And sometimes the teachers kind of stagnate and then they’re not making as much progression and moving forward? Like it’s all great, but it’s not going anywhere. Whereas in a Requires Improvement school, they have so much pressure, because everyone’s looking over their shoulder, OFSTED, the community, whichever headteachers have been

pulled in, you know there's always - everyone's got eyes on them. So they're the ones who are turning to literature and making the most progress in terms of changing things up and making developments, so that could be an example perhaps of where pressure is actually causing people to make more progress.

P7: Building on P11's point I think about an outstanding school – although they are already achieving high standards so there's less pressure, they also need to maintain that, so that might add an extra element of pressure. Whereas the Requires Improvement schools - they also have the pressure to improve, but then the good or outstanding schools have a different kind of pressure to maintain at that level. P13.

P13: I think if instead of looking at school level, if you move that down to subject level, so if we go down to RE, it has no national curriculum. So if there was no pressure put on teachers to teach anything in RE, because there is no national curriculum, then I think it would just turn to the teacher leading their own agenda to the class. There would be absolute – all schools would be teaching something different and I just think it would go horrendously wrong, despite how good of an RE teacher you are, if there is no pressure or guidance for you to teach it, especially with subjects like RE, it would go wrong somewhere. P9.

P9: So does that – going back to your point does that mean that we can change the word from pressure to structure? If you're saying about national curriculum and – so if there's no structure like the national curriculum or a syllabus, would we underperform or overperform? Because I think there is a difference between the pressures of knowing what to teach and how to teach it, or the guidance and the structure. Because I think if you had guidance and structure – or going back to this question of what if there was no guidance or structure, then I'm not sure we would perform as well, we wouldn't know where we're going or where we come from. But if there was no pressure, then I think that would be a different story.

F: So I think you're making a distinction there between pressure could be different things, so it could be as P13 was saying, to do with organisational things that might cause us individually pressure, but that also might be different than other sorts of pressures.

P9: P12

P12: Going on from what you were saying about actually the pressures of SATS if you're only focussing on two areas especially if you took that away you'd maybe have the creativity and time to develop children in other areas, that they may be stronger in. Because it might be that the child is amazing at art and music, but not necessarily particularly strong in maths or writing.

P10: Yeah, going on from that point I also do think now in this day and age there is a lot of pressure on the children's emotional wellbeing and mental health. I think there's now added pressure to that especially in the media now. So I think if we had more time to focus on that, maybe - I know what I'm trying to say, but I'm struggling to word it.

F: Are you linking that to the creativity idea? So making a link between focussing on the two subjects, ie SATS, versus creativity and mental health.

P10: Because I think its an added pressure, when I was at primary school I can't remember doing anything about wellbeing, or how I thought about myself. But now we do have that pressure to ensure that children are having an emotional toolkit to help prepare them later in life. P6.

P6: I was just going to draw on P9's first point about teachers wanting to be educators, and wanting to teach, and P12's creative and wanting to be creative. And I was saying with the group over here that I'm picking up on the word 'perform'. And I think that pressure to me relates to performing, whereas if we want to teach, we want to instil a love for learning as educators. So, if we have no

pressures, I think that we could still instil a love for learning, but if there are pressures, we're inclined to perform as educators.

F: Can I pause us right there for a sec, and we will come back to this. I think that's a really interesting point, so can you turn to your partner that you started – or your three, and I would like you to discuss what do we mean then when we say perform as well? So what are we talking about and it might be we're meaning different – meaning multiple things there, so just to unpick a little bit about, not only we've talked about how the pressure might be multiple layers if you like, but also in our heads, when we're saying "perform as well", what might we be talking about there? Have a chat about it.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN BACKGROUND FROM 44:47-46:34

F: It's back to P6 to pick, it's really important – really encourage you to make sure you look around the circle, if anyone's on green who hasn't spoken yet then please pick them. So this is back to this point that I think P6 was kicking off here, this idea about performing and specifically what might we mean when we say performing well, or perform as well in a question. P6 would you like to pick?

P6: P5

P5: We were talking about how to perform often leads down the path of test results and attainment, but it's what do *you* see it as, could it be performing as attainment, but also as in performing to develop the whole child. And then P1 you made a good point about seeing how do children see performance, or how do teachers see it, or how does the government see it – it might mean different things to different people, but often the focus is test results and things like that. P3.

P3: I was just following on a similar sort of conversation, that perform can – to me means I'd want them to come out as a well-rounded child, someone who loves education, but you cannot get away from the fact that we live in a society where grades count. You know, if as a mum, my child will need certain grades to go onto the next stage and certain grades to go onto the next stage, so as much as I'm all for holistic and the whole child, we do live in – unless the whole society changes, performance will always have a certain amount of attainment and grades. P10.

P10: Going on from your point P3, I completely agree, we were talking about when I, we, perform at schools, especially as a student teacher, our performance is always – we always get observed during a performance, they don't observe our personal qualities. They don't observe our – you know all they've seen us do is how we interact with children, but it's all about your education, your lesson, how you're performing. And there's no personal qualities or sides that they're taking into account on how we can influence. P9.

P9: Yeah we kind of went off what everyone made points on later we said, you might have to help me out. So we said, that the focus on the words pressure and perform together form a bit of a continuum, so if you say there's no pressure, then you might perform higher in terms of well-being and children might come out more holistically developed and everything like that, but the education standards might drop. Whereas if, to a certain extent if there's more pressure, then attainment might get higher, but well-being drop. So there's almost – you need to find that balance. But then I guess if there's too much pressure then both will drop. But if there's that certain level of pressure, then you need to figure out which one takes precedence I suppose, is the ultimate answer there. P1.

P1: So building on sort of it all together really, is that rather as a teacher, then sort of performing, and the questions that we put, and sort of building on P3's ideas is if it is about sort of the academic performance, then what about the children that aren't able to perform academically, and what happens then with the kids – we still have a duty to them as teachers. And the more pressure there is for them to achieve academically, then the more disengaged they become with learning and school in general. Actually, you know for me, a huge part of the role is sort of scooping up these children that we have to perform as teachers to ensure that they have everything that they need to go into future

life. So, all of this sort of academic and accountability and pressures I sort of see around teaching, it's this gap that worries me, that it's getting wider. P11.

P11: I want to go back to P10's point for a moment, and please correct me if I've interpreted your point wrong, but I just wanted to disagree a little bit and say that when I've been on my practice, not necessarily my link tutor – the link tutor always tends to focus on how I've performed in that one lesson – but my teacher tutor telling me is definitely concerned with relationships with the children, and how I present myself as an individual, as well as how I'm presenting myself in that one performance of a lesson. So, I think that it depends on again those relationships, but I think that my performance for me isn't just about that one lesson – in that one lesson it feels all about that one lesson! But I've definitely had teachers come back and say "I've noticed as well that not just in this lesson, but in other lessons you've taught, you've demonstrated that you have a really good relationship with the children, or this particular group of children or however it is. So, I do think that, well I'd like to hope that, the people who I work with, who are supporting me, are caring about my performance, not just in terms of what the children achieve academically, but also how I relate with them. P6.

P6: I just want to draw back to what P5 was saying, about pressure being highly focused on academics and testing. Back to my point that I made about the word perform – if we can empower a love for learning, and instil a love for learning, surely the children- the pressures will be taken off the children because they want to learn, they love to learn, so they're going to exceed themselves, which then takes the pressure off ourselves, because actually we've instilled that love for learning?

F: Which sort of links back to was it P9's original point about teachers wanting to teach doesn't it? Almost like passing that wanting on. Can I just pause us a sec again, and I'm just wanting to get you individually to reflect for a moment about your three years, or your four years depending on what route you are on, and if there are particular moments – that could be on practice or it could be on the course – that things happened, or maybe you were exposed to something that you think helps in these ways particularly. It might help with this whole idea about performing as well, however we're meaning that whether we're meaning that purely about the academic or the more holistic education side, or a balance, as P9 talked about trying to get that balance. Or also maybe there's something that helped you try and think about this idea about this pressure. I'll give you a moment to think about that yourself, then maybe just chat briefly with your partner about that. So, sort of reflecting on the whole programme, but I don't mean just what goes on here, also might be self-directed things might impact you as well. Just have a moment to think, then chat.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN BACKGROUND FROM 54:09-57:10

F: Anyone like to share their thoughts as a pair, or their individual thoughts about that whole idea about what over the last three or four years has maybe helped to prepare you, for both these two potential, or those two big concepts actually aren't there. I know this question is about pressure, but also about that performing notion. P11.

P11: So we were, we sort of got a bit stuck for a minute, but then we started to think about, or I started to think about my two placements. So second year I was in a half form entry rural Hampshire primary with pretty much all white kids, and then last year, in my third year I was in a two form entry primary in Southampton, where I think three out of twenty nine were white, and I was saying about how my performance in those two situations, one was year two/three, one was year five – there's a completely different context and my performance is completely different anyway. So I was starting to think about for me I think its quite difficult for me to determine whether if there was no pressure if I would perform as well, because in every context I've been in, there's been different pressures so my performance has been completely different. It's like if I was doing – so I've come from a theatre background – so say I wanted to put on a tap-dance routine, then my performance is going to be completely different there compared to if I was performing with a choir. So you know that's kind of like my two school

experiences that have made me think like performance in each scenario was so wildly different, that it's sort of hard to tell – so yeah my performance would be different, but it's as well as the phrase there that is kind of getting me stuck in terms of that. Sorry if that made sense? P5.

P5: We did a leadership module, some of the fourth years, and we spoke a lot about performativity, and we discussed creative performativity – Barry said can you be a rebel and still conform? So it's about taking risks and being that person that teacher that you want to be, and as long as you get the results then does it matter how you've achieved them as such? So I think that I would say like with my vision and values, and myself as a teacher I think like have the responsibility to myself to really stick to them and carry them forward. And I think it is difficult with pressure and stress and things, but I think if you go in with that confidence, and go in thinking like this is how I believe it should be done, if the children are responding and learning what they're supposed to then what's the issue with that? I think it's about changing our mindset – I think we tend to be quite negative sometimes because of what we have experienced or read or is said to us, so I think it's about changing our mindset and being more positive and just kind of taking those risks. P10

P10: I may be slightly misinterpreting what you're saying, so please correct me if I'm wrong, but are you saying that if there was no pressure could we still be educators? Because you're saying that it doesn't matter how we get there, but there always still will be pressures?

P5: I do like, the pressure is about like how we're performing, so I think that we feel the pressure because we're like "Oh we have to- we have to achieve this and that", and I think the pressure would come off if we do it how we want to do it. And if you're in the right school that matches your vision and values then it's a lot easier to kind of be that teacher you want to be. I think that with outstanding schools, they get left alone a lot by OFSTED, because they do it in their own way, but they're achieving the results, so I think the pressure comes off. So I think if you just kind of be confident and strong in who you are, then I think the pressure would start to fall off as you're still performing, but as who you want to be.

F: Almost on your own terms?

P5: Yeah. Own terms. P11.

P11: I just wanted to build on what you were saying really, Yeah so I went and it was really interesting [...] that every – there was one, and go in on our own terms, and make sure we're delivering what we want to deliver but also I just wanted to throw out the idea that we also need to be willing to change. So I definitely think it's super important to find a school that you fit in, you definitely need to have a shared vision and values, and you need to be confident in what you believe in, or you're not going to get anywhere, but equally I need to be able to communicate with the other people, and if they've got something I really like, I can change it, and if they see something in what I'm doing that they think is wrong, then I need to be willing to listen, and then decide whether I still hold what I think I'm doing- if I still hold that belief, or if I see their perspective and decide oh actually I want to change something. So I think yeah, you need to be delivering your vision and your values, but also in an openminded way with a willingness to accept different perspectives, and change in accordance with those.

P5: If you look at the concepts of creativity, rather than like the definition, which is like just make something, it talks about being a problem solver, I think someone who's probably openminded, willing to listen, a team player, collaborative, all those things. So I think I made that link between being a leader with like being a leader of yourself, like who you want to be. So I think that with creativity, it's not just about making amazing, wonderful lessons, it's about your approach to things, with being creative and taking those risks you can be a listener, you can collaborate, and it's about how you approach those situations to kind of be flexible and mould them around who you want to be.

F: I'm going to pause us there time has run out as always happens. But we're still going to do last thoughts as we always do, so if you've got a last thought, hold onto it. I am really aware that, you

know how long I'm being for you, I know I said we were going to try and finish by twelve, I know you've got lots and lots of things to do. So just oh my goodness, really, really interesting, we've gone from a lot of – we've covered a lot of ground, I'll just try and pick out a few things just to summarise, and for any last thoughts. We started off by talking about this idea that I think P9 kicked us off with this idea about teachers who want to teach, and encompassing everyone here that you know, we want to teach, and actually we're not doing it because of results, we're doing it because we want to be educators, we want to teach. And we moved on to talking a little bit about subject level, about in RE if there's no curriculum it could potentially go wrong, and then we made the distinction between different sorts of pressures, that maybe there were pressures that were structural pressures, ie curriculum structure, but then there were other pressures as well, so some might be like about SATS, about other sorts of performing as well in there. We talked a little bit about that SATS idea of the two subject focus which then takes away potentially about creativity and those other areas there, we talked also about the flipside, that if the flipside – we were talking about performing well at this point, about test results, if there's this idea of the holistic child but also a tension between you do need to get those results in order to progress in life. We also talked about this idea about the added pressure with the mental health aspect, that we know has really really come into focus now, and with that link to creativity and emotional toolkits that we need to help provide our children. We also talked about, we talked about this duty of care that we have to children who are maybe aren't ever going to achieve-perform academically, but we still have this duty of care to pick them up, and help them, and maybe that's this creativity area where they might really shine. We also talked a little bit about empowering this love for learning, and them wanting to learn, which was then linked back to that point of Alice's about wanting to teach. We also talked about this whole question, when we were thinking then of things across your whole program, with different context, different pressures, and this idea of outstanding schools, potential they might stagnate, but also then the flipside, P5 brought in the idea about maybe because the pressure is off them, because they're doing well it gives them a bit of freedom to perhaps do things a slightly different way, and that then linked in to this leadership module from year four where you looked about performativity – but this idea about can you be a rebel and conforming, and this responsibility to yourself to stick to your values, and do it on, potentially on your own terms. I hope I've captured most of what was going on here, but I'd really like to just – we're going to go around and just a couple of things - either a last thought that you didn't have a chance to do, and that can be from any point in our whole enquiry, equally if you have, if anyone's said anything that really resonated with you, made you change your mind or reflect on things in a slightly different way, share, please do share, or any last reflections on the question- if there was no pressure would we still perform as educators? So last thoughts on anything at all – has anyone made you change your mind or taken you on a slightly different track, or yeah, just your last reflections of that. Brilliant. If you go on green if you'd like to share.

P10: I totally agree with what P9 said, I think there's a fine balance of pressure, because I know myself, I need some element of pressure to make sure I get the job done, and to focus me, because I'm a natural procrastinator, so it works for me. P8.

P8: I think it's how you deal with the pressure, and if that makes you perform well – it's not the pressure, it's how you're dealing with it.

P3: I think it's important to have an element of pressure, again about the balance, and I think it's important to remember that not all teachers think like us, if they didn't have pressure, it might be sorry state.

P12: Yeah, okay, no I agree that there needs to be some form of pressure, but also the fact that – I don't know whether the pressure of having tests in just two subjects is necessarily the best way, and actually if we do want to teach, and want to follow the structure of the national curriculum, like P9 said, without that we probably wouldn't know where to start to be honest. We still kind of need that,

but actually do we need the standardised tests, and to - not like a label, but for some children that might be kind of 'that's all I can achieve'.

P2: I really agree with what P3 said, and the fact that we need to be aware that children aren't all going to be able to achieve age-related expectations, they all learn differently, at different paces, and as teachers we need to be able to benefit them, and make sure they can do what they can.

P4: Going back to P3's point, I definitely think we've got too much pressure on children, within their education. But on the flip side, I think we need pressure as educators to ensure that we are meeting the children's expectations, and pushing them to their best.

P13: I want to add to what P11's said, the few points about changing and adapting. I had a horrendous first experience on placement and it changed me, and I was forced to adopt what someone was telling me to do. But I don't think that change was right for me, and I don't think anyone else would see that as a positive change, and that was so much pressure, that I think that has made me worse as an educator, so I don't always think change is always actually a good thing.

P1: We kind of mentioned first off when we saw the question about sort of being reflective, so I kind of thought that maybe we do need some kind of pressure, whether kind of more of reflective pressure, kind of collaborative reflection, that kind of thing can actually be a bit more productive. So that we can personalise it, we can take into account all of the different aspects that are involved in teaching, and sort of make it really individualised, but beneficial to improving our performance holistically really.

F: Thank you all very much.

COE2

Facilitator (F): Shall we go round the circle? Or do we want to..? I'm going to get Participant 7 (P7) to go first since she's sitting right opposite me. Okay, what've you picked, and why?

P7: I chose Little Miss Wise, not saying that I'm always really wise, but on placement there were a few times where I had to be kind of wise in how I was dealing with situations? Especially involving other people. So that kind of was a good experience, of just practicing how to speak wisely, and when to speak, and when to not.

F: Yes. When to just bite your lip and hold it inside.

P7: Yeah.

F: Thank you very much. Shall we go round the circle?

Px: I chose Little Miss Lucky. I feel like I just had a lot of - a series of very good events that happened on placement. A lot of... yeah just things came up that weren't necessarily going to happen, but then did happen, and it's all come together, to put me in a job so...

F: Fantastic!

Px: Yay!

Px: Erm, I think I could probably pick quite a lot of things to be honest?

F: Yeah?

P4: I went with Little Miss Busy, because like I literally just didn't stop.

P3: I... I say I drew it, my daughter drew it under my strict instructions, erm I drew a picture of the mirror image of my brain. So this was kind of how my brain felt at the end of placement. So it felt strong, but it also felt teary and tired and emotional and exhausted. And then the flip side is how I'm going to feel next week after I've done my presentation, and I've got my job, and I've finished, well it's five years because we did an access course before this, so it's five years.

F: Okay, my goodness.

P3: So that's how I'm going to feel next Thursday.

F: A week today! Wow, fantastic, excellent.

Px: I've got a scale, with my heart and my brain. This is actually – a little boy drew this for me at the end of my placement because he said I'm really smart, but I care a lot more than my brain.

F: Did you cry?

Px: I did cry! So I have the real picture, but I didn't bring it with me because it's actually framed. So yeah, that's why I brought that.

Px: I put Little Miss Curious because I'm quite concerned – I've applied for quite a few jobs but all of their deadlines are like end of May, so obviously I have to wait, so I'm just curious as to what's going to happen. And I'm actually getting jobs in London, so I'm also curious about that, because I've only been in schools around here.

F: Okay, and is that moving away from home? Is home around here as well?

Px: Yeah.

F: So it's – what will the future hold? Thank you.

Px: So my very arty faces... it's a mix of emotions. The moon one is shocked that I'm finished, that placement is over. I really loved placement, [UNINTELLIGABLE]. I'm really happy that I've finished placement, but I'm also a little bit nervous about the future, but I am looking forward to it as well.

F: It's a maelstrom of emotions isn't it? And you're maybe splitting up from friends and stuff that you – you know you'll see again, but it's been very intense hasn't it, the university experience together. Thank you. P11.

P11: I brought - you can't really see it very well, but this is my year four final assignment. We had to represent our university journey through metaphor, which was exciting. So I drew a rainbow, and it's made up of words that describe my feelings from each year, and then I've got gold at the end with how I'm feeling now. So just kind of summing up my journey – I think I'm feeling really reflective at the moment about everything that's happened, like personally, professionally, academically throughout the whole time. And then where I'm at now I put, 'a professional who's ready to teach'. So you know, excited to start.

F: Thank you. P9?

P9: So I brought a cartoon that pretty much sums it up. So it says "that horrifying moment when you're looking for an adult, but then you realise you are the adult. So you look for an older adult, somewhat successfully adulting – an adultier adult". And I really had that feeling when I was on placement, when they were looking for a teacher, and then looking at me, and I was like oh, yeah okay [UNINTELLIGABLE].

F: Can I let you into a secret, and you might back me up here, that doesn't change – even when you have children. I remember when we brought our first daughter home, I remember thinking I'm not an adult enough to have this child, you know? So it carries on going for quite some time! Thank you very much. Right that was fantastic. I'm going to grab those, grab another chocolate if you want one, and could you please get out your amended pictures – I'm just going to check that that thing is recording properly. Thank you. So what I'm going to do is – hopefully everyone has had time to reflect on their original picture, and where they are now. And we're just going to get into pairs and we're going to just talk about – well whatever you really want to talk about from that, maybe things that are the same, or things that have changed, maybe things that have surprised you that have changed, that you didn't think would change? Or just anything significant that you think sort of leaps out at you, either in reflecting back to what you thought before, and what you think now, or maybe just new things that have come up. So if I put [UNINTELLIGABLE] and P9 together, and the two of you together, and we'll have a three – do you want to just switch places there? And I'll just give you a few minutes to chat about that, and I'm going to get some paper and pens out so we can start to... [UNINTELLIGABLE]

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 6:47-9:20]

F: I'm just going to – and I know you've got three there so you're going to take a little bit longer, don't worry about it, but if you've finished discussing it the rest of you, have a chat now about say maybe two concepts that leap out, or two of these ideas that leap out from your discussions together, and then write them down on a piece of paper. But do carry on chatting, I don't want to cut you short.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 9:42-11:03]

F: Lovely. So can we just go round briefly, and just say – oh sorry you've got another one haven't you?

Px: Would you like us to have another one?

F: You don't have to – if that's the one that leapt out at you, that's absolutely fine.

Px: Yeah.

F: Super. We're just going to go around and just say a little bit about why you picked the one's that you've done. Shall we start with the three? Does anyone want to say why – so you've got power and compassion.

Px: So compassion was one that I kind of mentioned, in the sense that that's something that I wrote before, but I still feel like that now. I feel that when children are displaying challenging behaviour when I'm on my placement, at the time when a child would run out of the room and hide, or something like that – some people would let that get to them and then react in a bad way. But I just learnt that you need to have compassion for them, and that they're trying to tell you something by doing that. So it doesn't matter about stopping their learning for five minutes if it means you can get to the end of it. So that's why I chose compassion.

Px: And then power about – both the power dynamic in terms of having other teachers, or having senior management around, in terms of your placement, getting the children's respect in that way. And then we also talked about having children that just say no, refuse, and then what do you do next? So it's just sort of working out a combination of really like how relationships affect the power dynamics within a school (?)

F: Thank you very much.

Px: We talked a lot about leadership in lots of senses – talking about how we had to be a leader for the children, but also about other adults in the classroom, so support staff, things that we hadn't had – we hadn't had experience of, but actually to take responsibility.

F: And that can be challenging can't it actually? With the, with some of the LSAs and TSAs have –

Px: They've been there for twenty years!

F: Yes! And know everything about everything and you're like ah!

Px: Yes – and then having a level of confidence to lead, because sometimes you doubt yourself, and we need to remember, no we have had the training, and even though there's still loads we don't know, there's also a lot we do know, so it's remembering that confidence, and building yourself, and being able to lead.

F: Sort of trusting yourself, yeah.

Px: So we said flexible. We spoke quite a lot about change, whether its like, in [UNINTELLIGABLE] school with the curriculum and things like that, or whether it's being flexible when a teacher's gone off sick and you have to completely scrap your whole day, and go into another class. There's always a lot of changes going on in schools [UNINTELLIGABLE].

Px: We had inclusive, and it was one that we both had written down before, but it's still absolutely fundamental to how we should be as teachers.

F: Thank you very much. And last but not least.

Px: We talked about change as in something that emerges – about practitioners being resistant to change, so you might have all these wonderful ideas you've gained from uni, but actually you might come across somebody who says we've always done it like this, so this is the way we'll always continue. And also changes in our own, sort of home lives, changes in how we see ourselves as teachers, I think change is quite – I don't know.

Px: Yeah, and then balance is quite similar. A lifestyle balance, compared to work balance, as well as balance within the classroom, are you holding all the children at one level (?) at one time – are you holding all of their attention? And also linking to the power dynamic, with leadership can change the balance of specialism especially in one school, are we on the same [UNINTELLIGABLE], are we all viewed in the same way? Are [UNINTELLIGABLE].

F: Lovely, thank you very much. I'm going to invite you to just go back to your partner or your three, and just discuss with each other all of these concepts, and I would love you to come up with a juicy philosophical question for us to have some lovely dialogue for the next half an hour or so.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 15:28-20:38]

F: Thank you very much. So we have: Should the leadership's power always be obvious? Is it more important to be flexible or organised? How can you find a balance between core values and flexibility? How do you define power within education? Is there a place for power in education? I'm just going to give you a moment to think about that. In fact, before we do – has anyone got any questions about - anything that they want to clarify about the questions, any questions that they think link together, or? Any comments that you want to make?

Px: Core values as in my own core values? Or the school-

Px: Yeah.

Px: My own core values.

Px: Is the leadership's power – do you mean like the senior leadership team?

Px: Yeah so we kind of were talking about the fact that we've been in schools where like maybe like the headteacher's kind of had a lot more power, and it hasn't necessarily had a positive impact on staff, but also the balance of a member of staff building up to then becoming head teacher, but they're also friends with the staff. So it's kind of a bit like... –

F: That dynamic, yeah. It's an interesting one. Any other questions or? Okay, you've got three things, vote away as many as you want to, on whichever one you want.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 22:09-23:07]

F: Okay. Our question for today is 'Should the leadership's power always be obvious?'. I'd like you to just turn to your partner and have a quick one minute chat about the conversation around leadership's power, and whether it should always be obvious, off we go.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 23:26-24:45]

F: Okay. Erm, shall we start with, either P13 or P8 setting us off with a little bit of their thinking that led to this question, and then we're just going to go normal – everyone should have a green and a red card, if you haven't shout out. P13 has yours peeled away, shall I give you a –

P13: They were just card anyway, it's alright!

F: It's alright? And if we can, if you can say the person's name before you end, just for ease of transcription that would be amazing. Don't panic – you know it doesn't, oh I'm sorry! – but you know if you remember, if people say the names of the next person that would be fab. So P13 or P8?

P13: So I was in a school where the head had moved her way up through all the ranks and she'd been friends with a lot of the members of staff for absolutely years while she'd been working there, so a lot of people saw her as their equal really. And it was just a strange dynamic going in as a student, because it was very obvious to us that she was the head, but for everyone else, it was just another one of their friends working at the school. And it was also very strange because where she'd been friends with them, there were things that we didn't necessarily think was appropriate for her to be doing as a head, but as another one of the teachers it would've been absolutely fine. But because she was such good friends with them, she got great results out of the teachers, they all felt they could approach her and ask about anything, but yeah it was just really really strange being there as a student, because we felt slightly on edge when we weren't friends with everyone else. Uh, P9.

P9: I was in a school that was very opposite. There was a real hierarchy divide between the SLT team and leadership team, and the teachers, and obviously the students underneath. So you could tell the hierarchy, and I think we were talking about how I think it's okay if there is, like sometimes it needs to be obvious who is in power, because then you know who to go to if you've got a problem, or who's in charge, but we were saying as long as that doesn't affect those further down the hierarchy, like an NQT or student teacher having the confidence to share their opinion if they think they're lower down the hierarchy, because then there really is an issue between who has power, and who doesn't have the power. P12.

P12: We kind of were saying the same. So I've again been in a school where headteachers clearly had power but it's kind of had a negative impact on like teachers. I think there needs to be some form of authority so they can make those decisions, but actually still need to consider staff and their opinions. P13.

P13: It was interesting to think about what we're considering as power before we kind of looked at the question – like power, are we talking about presence? Is it important that they have presence in the school? Or power, is it more like should the leadership have the power to change, the power to make things happen? I think the tricky thing is unpicking what we mean by leadership's power, what are we talking about or thinking about...P7.

P7: We were discussing the fact that obviously headteachers have the ultimate power to change decisions, but it is very very important that the headteacher doesn't just disregard the teacher's opinion because ultimately if they do that then trust is going to be completely lost between them. And it is so important that the teacher feels as though they can contribute and you know, make decisions for their own class. So yes the headteacher still needs to have overall power over everything, but they need to take into account the views of other staff. P9.

P9: Building on what you just said, I think in some schools, headteachers, well teachers, are the ones in the classroom, and the ones who are doing everything with the children, whereas headteachers may have only just recently become headteachers, or they may have been headteachers for years and they don't have as much experience in classrooms as teachers do. So I think it's so important that teachers' opinions are listened to, whether or not they're an NQT, whether they're a student teacher, or anyone in the hierarchy, so, yeah. P6.

P6: I was just saying – we were saying before, we started discussing the question as a group whether its – should the power be obvious, or should the power be known? And I think the power should be known by all, when we're regarding what the head and leadership can do for the school, the power should be known, I think that's really important. Whether it should be obvious to all when parents come into the classroom, whether there's that instant hierarchy, they're not going to want to approach them if there's that status in the school, so maybe it shouldn't be obvious all the time, I think it's dependant on who you make it obvious to, but regarding being known, I think it's important that their power, and what they can do for the school should be known. P8.

P8: So when I was a teaching assistant, we were told to – teachers and teaching assistants were told that if someone came in, there should be no distinction of who you are. So I'm thinking that should be applied to the Senior Leadership Team – so it's similar to what Jess was saying that it shouldn't be obvious that 'oh this person's SLT, and this person is just a class teacher', you shouldn't be able to tell that from just walking into a school. P11.

P11: When you just described that you used the word 'just', which I think is really interesting to say this person is just a class teacher, or just a TA, I think that puts a real distinction on, and almost reinforces that hierarchy? So I think that some other people were saying should the members of the team be known, I think yeah, we should know who the figures are that we can turn to, but I don't think there should be a distinction between oh that's the headteacher and that's just an NQT, I think that's something I really want to carry forward into my NQT year.

P9: Yeah I totally agree. And I think if you asked the child, their opinions of hierarchy in the classroom, they'd see everyone the same? Like especially when I went in as a student teacher, after a week, they're going up to you as if they would their teacher, so I think - and the same with TAs, they've the same sort of relationship and trust with everyone, so I think their relationships with

hierarchy, they're completely oblivious to it – in a good way, so I feel like it won't be as obvious to them? If you asked them the headteacher, they'd be able to tell you, but I think if you ask them - it doesn't matter, as long as they've got a good relationship with everyone. P13.

P13: Similarly to what you just said, that kids don't, you know – probably don't know the intricacies that we do, but, especially in rewards, a lot of the rewards are going to the headteacher, and that is the best thing that you can get. SO even though they probably don't know little distinctions between the teachers, it is always seen as important for the kids to know that going to the headteacher is the best thing. So is it necessarily something we should be reinforcing, by saying that this person's opinion is kind of better than everyone else's? P6.

P6: What you're saying, I'm stuck in two minds about that because ultimately that sending children to the headteacher – in the school I was just at, there was a conflict between praise and sanctions, and they were both sent to the headteacher for the same reason.

F: I was thinking that when you said that, it just – I used to be terrified of going to the headteacher.

P6: Yeah – so I think we had a system where it was, they had class bingo, and rewards were agreed upon within the classrooms, sanctions were agreed upon within the classrooms, and you know it was completely down to the power of the children, not letting the power of leadership take that control, which I found really interesting. And I'll take that up on my NQT year. P11.

P11: Yeah so there's a couple of things there. So I found that actually having been sent to the headteacher as a reward and a sanction can be beneficial, so my second year placement the headteacher explained to me she really actually liked that, because it meant that when a child showed up at her office, she never had like a preconception of why they'd be there, she always just tried to remain openminded, and that gave her like a clean slate every time to investigate what had actually happened before you know, you immediately go into barking mode or you know – so that was actually quite useful. But also, on the flipside, this placement, I had one child in particular who has behaviour difficulties, and psychologists are involved, but every time they started to sort of kick off, the immediate advice was 'oh just send them to the headteacher'. And I actually found that quite difficult, because it meant that when I was trying to manage their behaviour, I then, its like oh just send them out – but is that saying that I'm not you know, capable of managing their behaviour myself? And I actually found that quite difficult. So I think that it can be both a positive and a negative, having that kind of behaviour system in place.

F: It can almost sort of disempower you as a teacher.

P11: It's like oh, just sort of send them to this person – but it's like what if I actually want to try and keep them in my room, and sort of keep them learning.

F: Equally in the last school I was at, the head was really really like a grandma – she wasn't really old, but she was like really friendly, she was always – she loved doing the praise thing, but didn't want to – didn't do the sanction thing at all, so then the deputy head became the de facto sort of sanction person and she, she was quite new to the school, and so she took on this sort of role like the big baddy, you know? And I sort of fell into the role as well, thinking oh that was what she wanted, until once I had a conversation with her, and she said I hate that everyone sends the children to me to tell off. And you know, I, you know everyone had sort of gone along with that, that oh, you can't send them to the headteacher because she won't tell them off, so you send them to the deputy, you know. And actually that's not always the role that that person wants to be. And there is definitely an issue there. Sorry, back to P11, sort of jumped in there.

P11: I think there are definitely pros and cons to that, but I think one thing that sits with me is, we've kind of mentioned it but if you're the teacher, and let's say whether you're an NQT or experienced, and you know your children more than anyone in that school does at that moment in time, and by just saying, if they've misbehaved and then sort of saying they need to go to the headteacher, then to that child, that's giving the message that you can't do it, and that by what they're doing, you can't do it, and they have to get moved on to someone else, and to me, that's not very inclusive. But then, at the same time I do get that there's a time and a place for a change of face, and getting someone else to kind of diffuse the situation.

F: Can I just pause us for a second there, and I think maybe it'd be good to just unpick, and I think there are a couple of things we've alluded to earlier on, I think Sarah mentioned it earlier on that there are some big words in here, we've got almost like a triple concept. We've got leadership as a concept, we've got power, and we've got that whole idea of obvious, what do we mean by obvious. So I think can we just have a little chat with your partner, or your three, about power first of all. So we've got here, should the leadership's power always be obvious, and we've alluded to, I think P3 said do we mean presence, um, some people have talked about distance and I think – whether it was P12 – you saying about the headteacher who had been a friend, you know that there's this do we need distance, should you have distance then as a headteacher? But just have a chat with, in your groups, about when you look at that question – “Should the Leadership's power always be obvious?” how might you define power? Or how do you – yeah how might you define power?

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 37:14-38:26]

F: Okay, I think we've got a natural lull there, I think P11 it's your turn to pick isn't it? Would anyone like to kick us off with their thoughts about power, but also then looking at the question, so how does that help us with the question. Any thoughts on that?

P3: We were talking about linking power with responsibility, and actually saying that perhaps we've been looking at it as a negative, but let's consider it as a positive. We live in a society where there is always going to be some form of power, and if you look at taking – we were just saying weren't we – if you say let's take away the SLT and the leadership, make everybody equal, do we really think that could work in theory? Could everybody do – if we were all equal in the school and everybody could just teach what they wanted, or throughout the country if we took away power... You know, we do live in a society where unfortunately fortunately depending on your political views, whether there will always be someone that next step up, that next level of responsibility, and perhaps that's just how it is. We would link power with responsibility when we were talking.

F: But also saying that it can have a positive, that it's not always a negative.

P3: Yeah saying you know without them, who would be there to make those tricky decisions? You know, the ones that you're quite happy to pass on to the next level, you know when you go and say this happened, this parent's kicking off, I've done my bit, I don't know what to do. If you didn't have that person with that power, that power, all that responsibility, you know – would there be more teachers leaving? P11.

P11: We had some people in our, in the school group, who went to a Steiner school, and the Steiner school didn't have a senior leadership team, so they were all you know just teachers who worked together, so not to, you know, it clearly works for some schools, but I don't know whether that's because it's a Steiner school that it works better? But I found that, they found it very strange when they came back, that they'd been to a school that didn't have that like leadership. P9.

P9: Yeah so I went and it was really interesting so we – I was actually in a year seven class but we, morning in the year seven class and afternoon in year three, and there was about five of us that went and we were all in the same class so we had a lovely natter afterwards and it was really interesting that every – there was one [UNINTELLIGABLE] because it was quite a small school, but every class was completely different. Obviously they have the set, with the Steiner education they have the set things that you have to learn, but the rules, the management, everything was kind of, its own hub in the one classroom, in the one year group, so everything – the teachers decided pretty much everything that they wanted to do, and even just going from one classroom to the other, it was such a like a – it felt like you could be in a different school, going from one classroom to another. Erm, now obviously I was only there for a day, and I personally didn't agree with the – that was my own personal opinion about the way that the school was run, just in terms of it didn't feel like, I mean obviously I was only there for a day, but it didn't feel like the children were, they were just learning very different things than I was used to in mainstream schools. So it was a lot of outdoor education, and drama, and I mean it was lovely, but I'm not quite sure where they were going in terms of progress and exam – I mean they didn't do exams, but it was very revolutionary. But it was all very different, and there wasn't that leadership, and it wasn't obvious. But with that, there was no power, I mean the teaching was the power in the one classroom. Which in mainstream school can be great, but I feel like you still need someone above you to guide you, they don't need to be you know power as I'm above you I'm higher than you, but just as a power to guide you if you need help making decisions. Whereas the teacher in that classroom was making all the decisions. P6.

P6: I was just thinking when you were saying that, almost like an umbrella, with light coming in. P7.

P7: Building on P9's point, I think if, when you're talking about each classroom being their own system in a way, do you think if we didn't have that greater leadership level that it's worse off for the children because it's so different for them moving into the next year group, or do you think actually it's not an issue and they can learn.

P9: Erm I think... The thing with the Steiner is it didn't change year after year, in Steiner education, the teacher stays with them from reception to year nine, or it did in that school, and that was – I asked quite a few questions about that actually because obviously what if a teacher leaves, or you know, a teacher comes in half way through? But actually the year seven teacher that I was with had been with these kids since they were five, and they were now twelve, and I was quite – obviously that's how they set up that sort of hub of a classroom as I was talking about earlier, because they've done it for the last five years with them, or six whatever, but I think that hub that you're talking about, and the autonomy that that teacher had, he'd been able to build up over six years. So I guess he was used to it, and the whole Steiner education in that sense. But he was the power, so he had that autonomy from no one higher.

F: So quickly, you've just said the word autonomy there, and I've written down autonomy, perfectly done. So I want you to tell your partner, is there – are these strong powerful leadership or whatever you want to call it, and teacher autonomy, are these two ends of a spectrum. So do you think, if you're in a school that has a powerful leadership, using some of those things about you know not just the negative, think about the positive, about presence, responsibility and guiding, but on the flipside, that could be controlling perhaps, and maybe a sort of, potentially an authority that's sort of a little bit overbearing. Do you think you can still have autonomy as a teacher, or even how can you still have autonomy as a teacher, if you are in a school that has a really powerful senior leadership team? Have a think.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 45:12-47:01]

F: Does anyone want to talk about their ideas of autonomy and power?

Px: We were talking about how leadership value other people's ideas. SO to an extent the leadership if they do have that power and that meaning then they do have the ability to make those big decisions that are already set in the schools, so when we enter into a new school, whether those ideas are so set in stone that new ideas aren't valued. If they're not valued, if you turn up to your SLT and come with a new idea, if it's not valued then you don't have autonomy in that instance, but if they do try out new ideas, or are at least willing to hear about them, then you've still got that sense of autonomy even though you've got that strong leadership. So I think it comes down to whether they value other people's input, or whether they think actually we know what we do, and we know it works well, without being open to like hearing new ideas, so I think that's how it links to autonomy from one perspective. P6.

P6: Yeah we were saying about how it's more about working together in that leadership role, I definitely wouldn't enter a school if there was that strong sense of leadership because it just isn't my pedagogy, not my way. And then I was using that metaphor of an umbrella, it would be nice to have them as the umbrella, we know they're there, and then we decide what we want to do for the children. So they give us what we have to do, and then we decide how we do it. And I think that gives teachers autonomy, and I think that – about bringing ideas forward, if they're like no, this is how we do it, then I would step out, I can't teach, I can't enjoy what I'm doing, so therefore the children aren't going to respond at all.

P3: Can I just add that also we were talking about how our autonomy as teachers comes like during the recruitment process, like we were saying as well weren't we, that it's not just them interviewing you, that your autonomy comes in and sees this power dynamic, this hierarchy isn't right for me as a teacher, therefore this isn't the right environment, and perhaps our autonomy is making those decisions – is this the right setting, ethos, values, all of those things – perhaps that's where our autonomy comes from. P11.

P11: I like the distinction that P6 made between what and how. So you said that the leadership team is kind of setting out what we're going to do, as like – we've talked a lot about leadership being like a vision for what's coming next, so leadership being a vision of what we're going to do next to move the school forwards. But then going back to teachers who are in a classroom with those children all the time, the how its going to work for our children. And I think that was a really nice idea of a compromise, or a balance like we mentioned earlier, between getting the teachers involved, while keeping that leadership drive to continue the progress of the school, which I thought was a really nice distinction. P2.

P2: I was just saying, it's quite a specific example, but in my placement school, when world book day arrived, we found – well I found out that the headteacher doesn't allow it because she believes it's over-promotionalised. Now that's her opinion, and I just think being in a school like that, I was like well what if all those children's friends are going into schools to celebrate world book day? And my teacher – my teacher-tutor, she wanted to celebrate it so much, and she'd been in that school for around six years, but it'd never changed. And I think things like that, that's really quite sad. If you want to be able to do it, I know you can't make a decision for the whole school if you're not a headteacher but, yeah... P11.

P11: Another part of leadership that we talked about is being able to take feedback, and work with a team. SO I think that really shows – if you haven't changed your mind for six years then, as a leader are you actually listening to the people that you work with? And maybe she doesn't want to do it

because it's going to be a lot of work for her, but maybe if she had investigated and spoken to her team she would've found someone who was willing or eager to put in the work. So I think part of being a good leader is making sure they're listening to the feedback they're given as well, to then – because if they're going to be making those power decisions and those power moves, then they've got to be something everyone else is going to agree with I think? As [UNINTELLIGABLE] myself. P13.

P13: In a school that I was in, we did do world book day, but because NQTs aren't supposed to have subject specialisms, they actually gave it to the NQT teachers if they wanted, as kind of their first leadership experience. So they actually used world book day to set the NQTs up for the next year when they might think about subject leadership. And that worked so well – obviously it was a massive learning curve, but it was a good step to kind of get NQTs on the ladder of leadership, it was a nice decision that they made. P7.

P7: Building on those two points, with – we said that the leadership have that power, and as you were saying P11 about maybe delegating to someone else – can't remember if it was someone else who said it – delegating those responsibilities to have, so actually is – it depends on a school's leadership, if they want to keep that power to themselves, or if they're willing to share that with those who might be seen as kind of lower down if there is that hierarchy, and be able to influence them and build up their own ability to have that responsibility, and practising like you said, to be able to manage a level of power, even if it seems like a small amount. If they are willing to kind of share that power with other teachers, which is actually preparing them more for when, if and when, they become top of the school. I think again with the autonomy, if teachers are given a level of their own power, whether that is just within their classroom, or across the school, then that can often be a really positive thing, to allow them to take risks and try out new things with a level of power that they might not have been given otherwise. P3.

P3: I'm just thinking about how we're seeing power, like I'm just sort of looking at it a bit devil's advocate perhaps, but if we can – if they're saying they've never had book day, can't remember who said it, but I think sometimes part of having that responsibility, having that power, is making decisions that aren't popular, and I've worked in a school where the headteacher called it the same way, and all the teachers were like 'oh but we love world book day!' – but they'd had emails from parents saying we can't afford money to get costumes, you know five, ten pounds, we've had this, this, and this, and actually she had to like rein it in, and say no we're not doing it this year. And everybody was really disappointed, but actually her power, her responsibility sitting at the top of the hierarchy, however you look at it, was having to make the decisions that might not be seen as popular, and you know I think you can listen to all the feedback, but ultimately, going back to the Steiner school, somebody ultimately will – in a hierarchy – in the society we live in, someone has to make those decisions, unless you end up at a school like that where each class does their own thing, and your teacher did it, and the next one doesn't. So, I think it's an interesting way of looking at responsibility and power. P8.

P8: I completely agree with what you said about them having to make a decision which might not always be popular, but in terms of – when I've seen leadership in schools, I think it kind of goes down better with staff if, yeah they've made that decision, but it's not what the staff want – but explaining it? Saying no we're not doing it this year, because that seems to be when staff come...

F: I'm going to ask you, just another thought to throw out. So it's interesting, P3 keeps saying sort of you know, we're tending to go one way. And I think there is that tendency to think, when we think about power, to think about the negative sides of it, and that's authority sort of thing. So I'm going to ask you to just reflect on what you've seen, across your whole degree, of all the schools that

you've been into, for placements, but also self-directed with your subject specialisms and things, and just to reflect on and discuss with your partner, what does good leadership look like, obvious or powerful or whatever, but because someone said – I think maybe you said about how you wouldn't want to work in a school like that – and ultimately, and I think you're right about saying that's where you do have autonomy – it's hard sometimes to think if you're sitting in an interview, no I don't want to come and work here, but you have that absolute right to say no it's not for me. So part of that is do we recognise the right leadership, the leadership that will match with us? So what does you know, your ideal leader look like? What sort of leader would you like to work for, maybe even what sort of leader would you like to be one day, because maybe you'll all become headteachers one day. Have a chat with your partner.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATIONS: 56:47-58:44].

F: Sorry to interrupt your conversations. Anyone who – I can't actually remember who spoke last – was it P3?

P9: I think it was me.

F: Oh P8. Anybody want to talk about leadership – what does it look like, what sort of a leader might you want to be? [UNINTELLIGABLE]

P9: So I was saying I went on two very different school visits when I went round with two different head teachers, and one – they were both during the school day, so one I went round, you could tell as soon as I met her, very formal, nothing wrong with that, but as we were going round, there was that kind of aura around her, when she walked into classrooms people stopped, would have a look and go 'oh head teachers here!'. And she would acknowledge the teachers, but it was almost – it felt like a hierarchy. When I went to one, like a week later, with another head teacher, as soon as I met him you could completely tell the difference. He was really lovely – just came across really kind, really lovely, he'd walk around the school and all the children would be like 'oh hi Mr. whatever!' and they'd go up to him, and he'd walk into classrooms and have sort of mini conversations with all the teachers like 'how're you getting on', and 'oh this looks really fun', and actually he was just more bubbly, and felt like he was more on the teachers level? And there was – it just amazed me, the difference. I must – I can't tell you who was the better headteacher, I met them for half an hour, but I much enjoyed my visit at the school with the headteacher who had that, felt like he had that relationship, and actually felt like he knew the kids more than the aura, and sort of feel that I got with the more formal visit. P6.

P6: Yeah, similar – I went to a school and walked around, and the first question the headteacher asked me was 'so how can you help us?', and it was really, really nice, because immediately they wanted my ideas, and weren't just like, right this is the way we do it. That type of leader is the type that I'd like to work for, and potentially be, if [UNINTELLIGABLE]. P12.

P12: So in the last placement there was a teacher who I felt was extremely approachable, she had this positive energy around her, so I could go to her for anything, good or bad, and she'd always be there helping me find a solution. So when I was applying for schools, she was like 'oh, let me hear your ideas, let's have a look at your personal statement, and I'll look through it', and she was just extremely approachable, and that's the kind of leader I would want to be. P7.

P7: Building on your point P12, you said how she was good at giving advice, and also willing to hear your ideas and things. And I think that's really important in a good leader, is that even though you do know lots of things, as we mentioned earlier, and you do have that experience, but actually lots of

people have other ideas that are worth hearing at least, even if you don't act on them – if they're not the right ideas at the time. But yeah, a good leader should know how to help others, and be willing to help others, but then also be willing to learn from others, and if that means changing how they do things because someone's brought a good idea then being willing to have a go, and seeing if it works, and then carrying on with it. And you know, we just kept coming back to the idea of valuing other people's opinions as a leader, unless you want nothing to change. And that probably means – if you want nothing to improve, that – you should be listening to other people's ideas. There might be an NQT who comes in, who you might think, that they aren't experienced, but actually, because of the experiences that they have had, whether that's in other placements, or just in life, they are likely to have something worth hearing. So there shouldn't be a distinction between an SLT's idea, and an NQT, or any other teacher, or a TA, whoever, all those ideas should be valued and taken on board, whether acted on, you can make that decision afterwards, but at least to be listened to and considered. P11.

P11: I was thinking about the leadership teams that I've worked with over the four years, and some of the best leadership experiences I've had, like learning experiences – a leader is someone who ultimately I want to learn from as well, is when they've managed to turn off their 'capital L' leadership, and been just teaching and interacting with the children, and watching as a teacher I've seen – sort of on my level as a teacher, how, what I can learn from that. Or just in conversations, turning off the 'capital L' leadership, or the 'capital H' headteacher mode, and just being a teacher in the teaching community. That's when I've had the most opportunities to really learn from them. Because otherwise you get this like, again coming back to this idea of power, this is like the, you know the alpha of the pack, and I'm not going to want to, I'm going to "yes miss, okay miss", rather than being involved and feeling comfortable. So I think that that idea of a good leader is someone who is able to turn it off and relate to you on a more personal level, and on your level within their created hierarchy. P13.

P13: I wanted to bring up something you were saying P7, about finding people's opinions, because I think it's so important that headteachers can compromise. So its completely fair that they have to make those horrible decisions that not everyone wants to hear, but its then important that they act on that, and say "you know we can't do that, but what can we do instead that you would all want to do, and that these students would want to do?" So for the idea of world book day, fair enough, that makes complete sense for them to all not dress up, but can we still, you know base a day around books, do something fun that the teachers will want to do, and the students will enjoy as well. So ultimately, the headteachers need to have that power, but they also need to learn to compromise, and listen to what the teachers want.

F: [UNINTELLIGABLE], time has gone. So we're just going to have some last thoughts, I'm not even going to start to try and summarise this – we've gone everywhere this afternoon. So just last thoughts, and I'm just going to give you a moment to think first of all, I just – an opportunity to say something which hasn't been covered yet about the whole question, about leadership, about power, about whether it's obvious, should it always be obvious, etc.? But also just to reflect on any last thoughts that you want to say, in terms of reflections from maybe your drawings, about whether anything's changed, anything you think that is very significant that might have changed regarding your teacher identity, or the sort of teacher you want to be, as a result of that, you know, that last placement, or looking back over the four years. So a couple of things there – number one about anything we've said, secondly anything that you want to comment on about anything that you feel has changed with your identity, or a new focus that you've got as you take this next exciting step.

Shall we go round, or P13 we'll start with you. Clearly you don't have to, but just if anyone has any last thoughts.

P13: I think my identity has definitely been changed mostly by leadership, over this placement. It was the first thing that I put on my sheet when I came back from placement. It was something that was on there originally, but now I've kind of developed a lot of intricacies, and I really do understand how a lot of tiny things that might happen in relation to leadership effect everything you do as a class teacher. So that's definitely something that's more in the forefront of my mind than it was when I went on placement.

P7: I think based on what we said about good leadership, I think we should all be trying to implement that into our own classrooms, and not putting ourselves down for not being as experienced, but actually trying to be a leader on a small scale for now, with the other teachers, the other staff in our classroom, and the children, whether that goes up to headship at some point, or not, but just to be a leader with the people we have around us. And using those experiences as best as we can to just shape their learning.

P9: Yeah I agree, I was going to say a similar thing about being a leader in your classroom, and actually [UNINTELLIGABLE] saying about 'just being a teacher', you can just be a teacher, but also be a leader for your children. And in kind of sharing those leadership skills with them, to show them that one day they can be a leader too.

P11: I was thinking about something P13 said just now, oh yeah, I was thinking a lot about the TED talk [UNINTELLIGABLE] this week, and so something that's really changed, or been solidified in my experience of this placement is the idea of always digging deeper. So someone suggested something great, its not going to work, what can we do instead, that's what P13 was saying, or a child has reacted in a certain way in the classroom, and I reacted in this way to that, okay but why did they do that? And just making sure that I'm always looking for multiple perspectives, and I think in terms of leadership, that's something that's really important as well, to seek out, we've mentioned this already today, but seeking out other perspectives, who's actually got the expertise here, or what do you think about this situation? Just making sure that both as a leader, and as someone within that leadership structure, I'm always looking for multiple perspectives on any given situation.

P3: For my teacher identity, I'm looking at how I can have that balance of being a teacher, but not being, I was going to say 'just a teacher', because I don't want that to be my full life, I want to still have time for myself, so I'm not just like – ah I can't explain it. So I'm not like this, its like my brain has just gone ergh, because I want to still be able to give my best to the children, have balance as well, not just teaching as in, that's the whole –

F: Not consuming you. It's amazing, sometimes doing less is more for the children isn't it, things like actually if I go to bed earlier, don't spend another hour on that maths preparation, actually the children will get a better me tomorrow, because I'm not going to be really tired and grumpy. And sometimes, you're absolutely right –

P3: And I've learned a lot about doing that from this last placement, not having to write the extremely long lesson plans, just writing one piece of paper for the whole weekend, done.

Px: Erm I think for me, the biggest thing about my teacher identity, mostly from the last placement, but also from the time off, is I'm still a learner. No matter how far I go in my life, I will always be a learner, because there's children coming in, new children with different difficulties at home, different, new children from different schools – everything that happens, I'm still learning, and what

I managed to do on this placement was make it clear that I'm – yes I'm a teacher, but I'm also part of that learning. And if you can show me you, then I can help you. So if you're learning, I'm learning, it's different.

Px: I think just following on from today, what we've been talking about, I as a teacher, have the power to positively and negatively impact the children around me, and that's a great thing, but it's also a really scary thing, and we've got to be really careful about, just going forward, how you know, how [UNINTELLIGABLE] I'm going to have the power, and ultimately responsibility to, you know, help shape children's beliefs, all sorts. That's really exciting.

Px: Yeah, I would say the same, but also thinking about the, what I would want from leadership, is also what I would want to supply to those children. So what I would expect from somebody else, actually I need to be a role model for that.

F: Which is a little bit like what you were saying isn't it P7? About being a leader in class as well. Thank you very very much. I really appreciate, it's been lovely spending time with you.

Focus Group

F: Are there any points from either the first or the second script that you wanted to comment on, or expand or that you think we did not cover in enough detail or anything from those first 2 enquiries that you wanted to pick up on, before we move to the focus questions? P11

P11: Um I read through the first transcript and I saw that you suggested power as one of the concepts for that discussion, but when I was reading it seemed that none of us commented on it or drew on it, which I found then interesting for our second discussion we suggested it as ourselves and ended up talking about it as the question. So it is interesting that something you suggested originally and we all kind of didn't think about, then afterwards, after coming back from placement that was at the forefront of our discussion.

F: That is really interesting, because that is something that I had not picked up on at all actually.

P13: No me neither.

F: This is why it is great to do this, because you will see things that I have not seen. That is interesting. Any other things?

P11: So then, in the first CoE we were much more concerned about teaching pressures such as performativity and pressures like SATs and assessments and those kind of things in December, but then personally, I found that was not as much of an issue when I was on placement as the issues of power dynamics and the things that we ended up discussing afterwards. So I wondered, opening this up to the floor, what you thought about how we seemed really anxious about performativity and teaching pressures before, did any of you feel that ... P13

P13: In my second placement [NB her second year placement], as I said before, we got rid of all foundation subjects and just focussed on maths and English so I was thinking a lot in the first CoE about SATs specifically, but then when I went on placement I realised that actually even though they were only year 5s, SATs was something that was engrained, all the way down, and they were thinking at that point of getting rid of foundation subjects for year 4 and year 3 to prepare them for

SATs in year 6, so it was far worse than I had thought in some schools, which is just ridiculous, its horrifying.

P11: So I say that personally I did not feel that pressure, but I think that you are right, that that pressure definitely exists in the school community and that foundation subjects are undervalued, which we all know, that is no surprise and that the worse thing - I was in year 4 - 'when you get to your SATs you will need to 'x, y, z' kind of those pressures were definitely there, but I think personally they weren't such a struggle for me as they could have been, or as I was worried about.

F: Any other points at all that anyone had?

P11: In December, in the discussion, I said that I believe I should be willing to change and adapt my views because I have very strong values and vision of leadership, that was the point I was making, but I had to be willing to listen to feedback and change and adapt, and reflecting on that this morning when I was reading the transcript, I feel that I really did do that and it was something that I was able to embody in SE4, being willing to listen to the feedback from teacher tutors or whoever it happened to be whilst holding on to my core values, but being able to adapt my teaching, so that was kind of a success moment for me, in that I proved to myself that I can maintain my values whilst adapting to feedback, so that has given me a boost of encouragement for my NQT year to know that is something that I can do.

F: To know that you can keep your integrity, that you can adapt without compromising? Your core values.

P11: Yes. P13.

P13: It was exactly the same for me, my core values, as much as I thought I knew what I stood for before, going through the placement made me think exactly what I wanted in a school and my teacher was very set in her ways, she had been there a while, she knew what she wanted, and initially when she would give me feedback it would all be tailored towards what her vision for the lessons would have looked like, but it took me a long time to realise that if I was going to be happy in this placement I was actually going to have to challenge what she was telling me and to have the courage to put across my core values, over her own, and this was a key part of the placement and she respected me for doing that, and it was part of the reason that by the end we got on so well and she, I don't think, had ever had a student who challenged her ideas before, and I did it in a tactful way, I wasn't just attacking what she was saying, but she did really respect having someone there who disagreed with her opinions at times so it definitely helped me form my values as well. P8.

P8: I did not have a chance to find out my values like you did because I did not have to change how I taught or how I wanted to be because they were open to my ideas and the way I taught and the way I am, so I did not have to challenge anyone, yeah so that is quite a different experience from what I had.

F: That is one of the really challenging things isn't it about school placements? You know, you might go to a school where they do no foundation subjects from year 4, or to a school, like yours P8, where they say be who you want to be, what a different experience you can have from one to the other, and that is really difficult to manage at our end, about how much freedom schools give students and we do try to, well schools where students have not had good experiences we do not use them again. Any last things you want to bring up before we move on to the questions?

P11: I wanted to ask, do you think, that not being challenged at all, could almost eventually be detrimental if that continued for you, might that eventually be negative if they did not challenge you, do you think that might hinder your development or do you think you would develop naturally?

P8: I think I would develop naturally, I am not sure, I think if I kept on being challenged over and over again, that would just get tiring and I just would not want to keep fighting, cos I would rather just be, like, me, in a way, so yes I think I would still be developing without the challenges, but a bit of challenge every now and again would be healthy.

F: Ok, so I have got 6 focus questions and then a wrapping up one, so, and these are all very much linked to what I am thinking about for my thesis, so they are quite focussed, so my first question, and take a moment to think about it, and do chat with the person beside you as well, because we bounce ideas off each other, and it can help to clarify our own view is *'Do you think that ITE should teach more explicitly about Teacher Identity in the programme?'*

Discussion amongst group

F: Who would like to kick off? What do you think? P8.

P8: We did a bit of it in year 1, have not really touched on it since year 1, and in year 3 in SEPPR we were told to think about our values and what schools we would like to be in and for me, I still don't know, what my values are, its just surface type things, so I don't know what my inner values are, just my surface ones, and it is kind of hard to actually articulate it, what I want, I am just talking about surface level.

P3: I think it is quite an organic thing, not something that can be taught, I feel like my values are changing all of the time, as I am older, you have more experiences, we are brand new teachers we are going to go in with lots of 'pow pow pow' this is what I believe in and I think that as realism sets in, and when we are not brand new, I think our values will be constantly changing, due to external pressures, pressures at home, I am not sure, I think the input we had was good enough to make us think what is important to you, I am not sure how – what was the question?

F: If it should be taught more explicitly?

P3: I am not sure how it could be done, what could they do, other than making me think more about who I am?

P11: OK, I did four years, I did an entire module about my teacher identity, I think that everyone should do four years, no I don't haha, I think everyone should do what they want, but I think that if that leadership module was on the three year route I think everyone would have a much stronger understanding of what their teacher identity is, and that is where I come at it from a different perspective, because P3 is saying she is not sure what they would do to develop that further, but I think having that taught leadership module gave us the focus to know what actually are your core values, and having Barry standing there saying, 'No, but what are they?', so I could say straight off the bat, when asked in an interview, what are your core values, that my values are clear communication and honesty, and if I don't have those things, then I am out, because there is no point in me being here cos if you can't provide me with these two things, then I am not the right fit for your school. So I think that put me in a very strong position going into an interview, and writing my personal statement, I could say – my core values are clear communication and honesty, your school values, determination, respect and friendship, I think my values really align well with your school values, which puts me in a really good position, because I can advocate why I am a good fit for your school and why you want me and why I ought to be in your community. So I think that is an

excellent way to round out my understanding of my teacher identity because before fourth year, I did not know, I mean if I had to do my interview in my third year, I would not have got the job I have got now, so I think that module really enhanced my experience.

P3: I would like to come back, and say, that although I said about Teacher Identity growing organically, I have a very strong teacher identity, and I don't think that would have changed as a result of doing that additional module. But that could be because I am older, I have a very strong sense of who I am, the teacher I want to be, and I feel that is not going to be a fixed thing – I have it now, and if you asked me in 10 years' time, it might be the exact same thing, or it might be completely different, but, that is just me.

P13: I don't think it needs to be taught as explicitly as another module, as I think the reason my core values have come up, is, having a series of bad placements, things have surfaced, where I was forced to think about it, which if I had not had those placements I would not have come up with those things, these placements have caused me to question things, so I don't think my values would be the same because of having another module, because it is completely different.

F: It is interesting because Carol Dweck and her work on growth mindset, says that we learn most when we are struggling, which is sort of what you are saying through this placement, and also links to what you were saying with your placement P8, with schools have embraced letting you be who you want to be, and so you are not sure about it, whereas it sounds like your challenging placements P13, have made some things clearer for you. And your point P3 about experience, hones these things, sometimes you do not even know what is a value until it is challenged. Like your honesty or clear communication, or whatever, in your case the module made that clear, but also a bad experience of say dishonesty, might make you realise how important this value is.

P11: Yes, can I just expand? So, I don't know that I explained the module very well, what I think the module gave me most was the opportunity to reflect on school experiences and what was it that made me really like, so I loved my placement in SE2, why did I love that school? And not like SE3 so much? So it gave me that space to reflect, and Barry said, well if I walked in, if I was your headteacher, what would you want from me, what would be a breaking point for you? So it gave me that space to think about those placements in a way that perhaps you guys already have, so I am not trying to undervalue the 3 of 3 route, but I just think for me personally having that directed focus on that placement there really drew together those experiences and allowed me to find my values.

F: And it is challenging isn't it, four year, it used to be all four year, and you can't fit everything in to three years, we need to consider what bits we can fit into the new programme, what do we prioritise. That leads to my next question, which is on the concept of performativity, a concept that is looked at in the four year route, I don't think it is taught so explicitly in the three year route – should we teach it more explicitly in the three year route, what might some pros and cons be? Performativity as in a results-driven agenda, no foundation from year 4, where outcome is valued over the process, not about educating the whole child, sort of lose track of the whole person – you have 2 assignment on this in year 4? Could be seen as negative or disheartening? Balance of preparing?

P13: I think the absence of any input on that in the three year course sort of helped me more when I went to a school like that because even though the school was performance focussed, I was able to get some of the other stuff we talk about into the performative culture so it made me change my thinking, it made me challenge what we had learnt at uni, because it was so opposite

F: sort of a counter message to what we teach in ITE?

P13: so I think not having it made me be creative in thinking of ways to get other stuff in.

P11: in 4th year we look at performativity and the article by Ball about performativity and Clarke's response and those are really interesting to consider how strongly you feel about something either how amazing something is or how terrible it is, and I could never do this, the module showed me the extreme views, from yes we must test it is the right thing to do, to, no it is terrible and it is going to destroy the whole education system, it gave me the opportunity to find my own middle ground. So my school is very SATS driven and in English on Wednesdays and Fridays, the whole day is English for year 6, reading, writing, spelling, grammar, handwriting – only for year 6, but that is a lot, so Marnie said why did you apply there then? And I said, I think it is really interesting, because as much as that could be a damaging environment for these kids, it is a way for me to try and see it from their perspective, whilst bringing my own perspective so although personally I think it is stupid, who is learning anything about grammar at 2:30 when you have been doing English all day? Certainly not me, I am bored, but that is why I want to work there, I have that curiosity now – this is why some people say it is a good idea, here is some research that says it is a good idea, why do you think it is a good idea? I am more on the side of the people who think it is going to destroy the education system, not that extreme, I don't think SATs are going to break the world, but I think it will be interesting to compare and see where it goes, my teacher, I was in year 4, was like, wait til you get to year 6, but I am not like that so it will be interesting to compare, if I am not like that, how will I fit in that system – it does not put me off, sorry I went off on a tangent.

F: No, I think it is interesting to think about the different types of teachers (research) – some reject and go to Steiner, some teachers think performativity is amazing (academy head research) and embraces, and third type, who acknowledges challenges but opts to stay in and change from inside – but I like the idea about the curiosity to see how they are managing this as well. As I have been thinking about this for my thesis, I have come up with a made up word – 'perform-ability' – I will explain it to you, as it sounds negative, as my thinking, when I have talked with people like yourselves, and PDTs who have maybe had negative experiences of placements, SATs revision all day, and come back quite dispirited and it has made them question what we teach here and the contrast to that and what they might experience on SE and so in my thinking I am considering how do we enable a teacher to become 'perform-able' so they are able to perform in this culture without becoming performative, so they are able to achieve things, but without giving up all of their values, and compromising – so I want to throw out that idea of a 'perform-ability' that we could somehow negotiate these two tensions, that we can hope to nurture a teacher that is able to match the targets of this driven world but nurture the whole child – is this possible? I don't know? Chat amongst yourselves for a bit.

P3: I was saying that as teachers it comes down to, we are going to have to perform, we all have strong core values, whether they are the same or different, about wanting to bring on those individual children socially, I think for most teachers that is the most important thing, a safe space that nurtures the child to achieve the very best they can, but ultimately if we do that for the whole year and those children academically don't make any progress, we've failed. No one is going to pat you on the back and say P8 you have 30 lovely children, all very happy and very safe, they are very content, but academically they are not performing, so it is, how do you achieve that balance, how do you achieve that balance of creating that, whilst also – I am thinking whilst I am talking that this is not what I think – for me it is all about achieving that balance, we have to, as teachers we are .., in an ideal world, if we could change the world and the society, you know we were saying about skills based, it would be lovely to .. and perhaps people passionately believe that, and go and work in a Steiner school, or go and do something completely different, but I think, if you are signing up to be a

primary teacher, I think it is about that balance, isn't it, how do you achieve that .. as a mum as well, I want my children to be happy in school, but ultimately they want to come out with a certain thing at the end, to be able to do what they want to do next, and that boils down to a teacher 'performing.'

P11: As part of that you said that you wanted to create an environment where children can achieve their best, which I think just shows that you kind of need both, so you are creating that safe environment because that helps them to achieve, not creating it because you want them, well you do want them to be happy, and you are doing it for that reason, but I think also, if my children do not trust me, they are not going to want to learn from me, they are not going to want to take part in the activities I am providing for them, take part in the lessons I have, so I think that you need that safe environment, you need those foundations before anyone is going to achieve anything.

P13: I was saying how, especially with Ofsted's views at the moment, I mean it could change now, from where it is so focussed on exams, teachers can't go in thinking, you know, I am just going to develop the whole child, that would be completely naïve if you did that, so teachers have got to have a sense that you do have to go in and make sure that the kids are performing, but you can get your own views in as well, make sure that you are developing other parts. But, while the view is 'exams are the way to go', you have to follow that, and you just have to change slightly to follow what they are wanting.

F: The interesting thing about education, a new government could get in, and suddenly we could have a skills, I mean that is the exciting, scary, frustrating thing about education, from one government to another we can have it totally turned on its head, depending on how they view education, or and so on, which is something I have seen in my career in education. So, thinking about this balance, that you have talked about, can you think about, have there been things specifically on your taught programme here, that have helped, or that would or will help you to thrive, - so thrive, when you read about wellbeing, is not just about surviving, it is more than that, it is about being fulfilled yourself as a teacher, as well as doing your job well, and all that, it is a really positive, embodied word, right, so have there been things on your taught programme, that you think have helped you, or will help you to thrive as teachers? Have a chat.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

P3: On a general basis, I think, just being taught to reflect, I know some people hate it, I know a lot of my friends, they embrace it in year 1 and then it goes out of the window, but for me, I have kept a reflective journal for the whole three years and I look back at it, in year 1, and I think 'oh yeah, I thought that, and that has really changed' or that looks a bit naïve now, so that, I don't write a page for everything I do, but I wrote a page for each week at placement, write certain lectures, that made my blood boil, or that I am really passionate about one way or another and, I think that will continue, not to the point that I sit and make beautiful pages in a journal, but that I will still keep that up. We were talking about specific taught modules as well, particularly in third and fourth year, I was saying about Ed Theory Current Issues in year 3, where you pick that issue that's a passion, rather than the lecturer saying 'we are all going to look at this', pick something in education right now that you are passionate about, and research it, and find out about it, I think that was a really good module. And also in year 3 you got to choose your own option modules, so I did P4C, you had that option, to almost tailor towards your values, people that had a real passion for Pupil Voice, that is what I am passionate about, could pick P4C, things like that, I think the bits [of the programme] where you could tailor it to who you were as a teacher, for me, where probably the bits that I found most valuable.

P13: I said the same thing, I think the subject leader modules, so mine was RE, was one of the only modules where I felt like that module was for myself, as opposed to for the children, or for the school, it is going to help me to succeed, in my future, and it is obviously benefiting the school, but it feels like it was one of the only things that I was doing for myself, which was great to have.

P8: I was saying that I could not pinpoint a certain thing, because everything will help me, but I have to agree with what P3 was saying, now you have said it, but I was thinking it is not always in the taught sessions, it is what lecturers do outside of sessions, like I bump into lecturers whilst sat outside in the Terrace Bar, and they will come and talk to me, and if I am like in a 'I am going to fail this module' they are like, ok, what is the worst that can happen? Well I will fail, no, what is the worst that can happen? Ok, nothing then, and they will talk me through things, so it is not necessarily the taught modules, it is what they do outside of it, so I am applying what they are saying to other things, so I am not worried about failing, not worried like, I am always thinking, so what is the worst that could happen? So, it is not really the worst that can happen, so that's fine.

P11: I was really interested to hear what you guys had to say, because I was saying to P3 that after fourth year I am like 'Oh 4th year changed my whole teacher identity' and I get all really passionate about 4th year, and its true, but I think I was saying to P3, but that I almost overlook what the other three years did for me, so I am not like dismissing it, but like, you just mentioned the leadership module for specialism, and I am like, oh yeah, and Ed Theory 3 was my favourite module, and I had one tutor for Ed Theory 1 and Ed Theory 3 and I absolutely hated Ed Theory 1, it was my worst thing ever, and Ed Theory 3 was one of my favourite modules of the whole degree. But it is really interesting how in 3 years my perspective could have shifted so much, because it was like my favourite thing, and um Inclusive Curriculum, we said, being able to tailor that learning, I did P4C as well, did Geography this year, which I never thought I would do, and that was amazing, so having those opportunities to tailor the learning, but then again, I think if I had that in first year, I would have been freaked out, panicked, because I feel like, I came straight out of 100% exam to 100% coursework and if I had had to choose my coursework topics, I think I would have just drowned, I would have been absolutely terrified, so I think the structure in year 1, this is what the assignment is, and this is what you are doing, can be frustrating in its limitations, but for me, as a person who had never done coursework in her life, was a bit of something to hold on to. Like, I know what the outcomes are, in an exam you know what they are looking for, they are looking for you to answer the question, so in an assignment that was nice. Now, in 4th year, if someone told me what assignment to write, I would be really annoyed. So again, that is a nice growth journey, if they had told me what to write in Ed Theory 4, I would have been like, no, why? But again, there are a lot of choices in year 4, leadership was chosen, I chose Geography as an option, and in MFL that was your own choice too, so that meant a lot more personal direction, but I would not have been able to do that in year 1.

F: Final focus question, is there anything that you would have liked to have had as part of your programme around this whole issue of Teacher Identity point of view etc, or would have liked more of, for example do you think, if only I had had that or that, that would have helped me with something I experienced or might experience, or something that you only had a taste of and would like to know more?

P3: I think that in the three-year course you only really, and this might be addressed in the 4th year, but I think that if you are saying, if the university is saying that you come out as a primary school teacher at the end of three academic years, you should be able to leave at the same standard, we did not do much on assessment, we touch on it, but it is very general, and that is what we are going to, performativity, be judged on, but a whole module on assessment is going to put people off.

P11: I think I throughout the programme was saying, I want more on assessment, but I think that because assessment is so school-specific now, now they have got rid of levels, it is so hard, however I completely agree in what you said, because I feel completely confident in assessing maths, English, I don't know what the grades for assessing English are, I have no idea and I have done four placements. If you can't do it, great I know that you can't do it, can't use a, whatever you might need to use, it's the fuzziness, of you have kind of got it, you have got it, and you know those kind of blur for me in English, whereas in Maths, they are clearer. And again, I am talking about English and Maths, where are the other subjects? You know?!

F: and that is a really interesting point, actually isn't it? You know, when you go to your school, are all subjects, all curriculum subjects, including foundation subjects, are they all assessed?

P3: Has anyone seen music be assessed?

F: As the RE leader, I had to fight to get all teachers to assess RE.

P13: I assessed some RE this placement

P11: So did I.

P3: RE I did, but music I did not.

F: so it is interesting what is assessed, because what is the message behind, if it is not assessed? It is not important?

P3: I think this might change with Ofsted and the focus on curriculum, all of those schools who are just teaching Maths and English all day, who suddenly think, hold on, we have not taught Geography

F: And they are going to have to justify the curriculum choices that they have made. But thinking about the levels, it is really interesting. Because thinking of English, you had very clear criteria of what was a 2a and a 2b, it is far woollier now, and as you say, you go from one school to another, one school is doing this, and calling it this, you know, that is really challenging actually.

P3: And that is really hard for a university to teach that. How do you teach that?

P11: So they come up from year 2, so I am in a junior school, and the year 2 teacher is saying 'yes they are at greater depth, amazing' and they come in to year 3 and you think, this child cannot even write a sentence correctly, and you have to try to hit that greater depth in year 3 because otherwise that looks like you are a failure teacher. I think that is a real challenge.

F: I think it is a particular challenge for separate infant and junior schools, because in primary schools, the year 2 teacher does not want to stuff up the year 3 teacher, they are really aware that is my friend that I am stuffing up, you can have that conversation.

P11: I was just talking to another tutor about science, saying how I have never had a science target in four years, never assessed science in four years of placements, I have barely even taught science and it is a core subject. Maths and English, bam bam bam, we always have targets in Maths and English, haven't we, science, where's that?

F: Science has, sort of lost

P3: Since they took the SATs away isn't it?

All: Yeah.

F: Exactly, that is performativity isn't it, because before then, science was absolutely at the forefront wasn't it, and now that has gone.

P13: Now just half termly, if you are lucky.

F: It is pretty much, equivalent to a foundation subject. It has definitely been devalued.

All: Yeah.

P11: We ended up missing it, cos they were like, we taught it last half term, well where is it? It is a core subject?

P3: and if you look at the science curriculum, you cannot cover it in a half term, there is so much to cover.

F: I am aware that we have just five minutes left to go, so final question, are there any final points that you would like to comment on, anything of this whole, reflection on the CoE, today, anything that you think is really important that you have not mentioned, or your final position if you like? I will give you a moment to reflect on that, 2 minutes to reflect.

P13: I was going to say, going back to the teaching about of teaching about assessment, I think there was a lot of emphasis on KS1 and whenever we talked about assessment, we kind of tiptoed around the KS2 stuff, I am presuming it is because it is easy to see where they are in KS1, but I have only had KS2 placements, so actually focussing on KS1 assessment was exceedingly unhelpful for me when I got to KS2 and had to learn what to do, especially in the first year I was in year 6. I knew I wanted to go into KS2 but for example in year 2 the whole English module was about Phonics and there was not the equivalent, say Year 6 English. It was not particularly balanced.

P11: I agree with that, there was a lot of phonics. It has ended up being useful to me, but in terms of English.

F: We (ITE) are as guilty on performative responses, because we know we will be inspected on phonics input and outcomes ... P8, any last thoughts?

P8: Reflecting on the CoEs, it is interesting to see other people's points of view, and why can't I speak, laughs, and seeing their points of view and having them challenge my own, or just bouncing off of each other, its just interesting, and the words that we are using, like, 'I know you caught me out last time, when I said, 'just a teacher' when I don't think that is a bad thing, that is what I want to be, I want to be 'just, just, a teacher and that is not necessarily a bad thing, that I get that the way we say things it might be misconstrued as something different, so yeah, like that.

P3: I think for me, just sort of, just what we have talked about today, thinking about we all seem to be unanimous about the bits we liked most about the course, those bits that are tailored to who we want to be as teachers, so nobody has come out and said 'you know, that maths' module' (laughs) – it is important obviously, to know those things, but actually all four of us have said those things that are important to us, for me I want to be a SENCo, so the Additional Needs module that is right up there, and actually if you look at other university courses there are probably more options to tailor it than there are in primary teaching, because of the fact that you have to cover so much core, so I think it is really interesting to think that actually teacher identity is important to all of us, and that we are saying that the bits of the course that means the most to us are the bits that are really relevant, those bits you could tailor.

P11: I am just saying again that almost suggests that, what you were saying about ITE ticking your own boxes, so we have less wiggle room to tailor it for ourselves because you as an institution are trying to tick off those boxes. I was thinking about another person's research, Marnie, was talking about how we have our experience in university and our experience in school and not very much overlap, so her research was about the third space, which is the overlap between ITE and school, so I think that what I would like to see is Link Tutors, particularly because they work so closely with the university, but also teacher tutors, really valuing the reading that we have done, the assignments that we have done and the learning that we have done at uni and how we are applying it in school because I feel so much of our in school assessment is based on what we have done in school on that day, it is not based on **why** we did that in the classroom that day, and I want more of a connection between **why** have you chosen to teach your maths this way? Some days it is going to be, because my teacher tutor teaches it that way, and I am trying to explain it to the class, great that is a school experience based learning, some days it is going to be, because I read this really important thing in year 2, that if you don't in maths talk about the ELPS model .., that's **why**, and that is university based learning, and I want to talk about that in school, not because I want the validation, but I think that Link Tutors and Teacher Tutors should value that a lot more than they currently do perhaps, because it is not just about the school, yes I work at your school, but I did not do a four year degree for no reason, so, that is what I would like to see, eventually.

F: Thank you all so much, I cannot tell you how much I have appreciated you giving up your time to come and participate in this research.

Appendix 4 NVivo

The decision to use a software package to facilitate my approach to data analysis was based on many factors, in particular the suggestion that the transparency of the process would provide effective records of the whole analysis journey, leading to rigorous qualitative data analysis (Carcary, 2011). NVivo (version 12) was the software chosen, primarily due to its adoption by the institution. The capacity for computer packages to manage large amounts of data generated was a prime attraction, as my data corpus included 49 pages of transcripts as well as 23 annotated drawings (Yin, 2016; Harding, 2018). Advocates propose it enables the creation of an efficient data management system 'whereby large volumes of unstructured evidence can be systematically organised' (Carcary, 2011:14). The ability for the programme to process such large quantities of written texts, for example searching for frequency of words or combinations thereof (Harding, 2018), was particularly useful for this study.

Key advantages often relate to the efficiency compared to manual approaches; enabling complex data to be processed, with potentially less human error (Carcary, 2011; Harding, 2018). In particular, using NVivo meant immediate access to not only the transcripts, but also a range of supporting data, such as fieldnotes, concept maps and images etc. (Carcary, 2011), enabling connections to be drawn with ease (Harding, 2018). This ease of access also is significant when considering the codes that the

researcher might be using. Manual approaches of recording data under codes, are not only time consuming compared to Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CADQAS), but there is also a risk for the researcher that codes might be missed or overlooked. An advantage of CADQAS is that the search and retrieve functions mean that this concern is eliminated (Harding, 2018).

Opinions around CAQDAS' value for qualitative data analysis vary, often due to concerns over the dependence on the researcher's interpretation (Carcary, 2011; Yin, 2016). It is important to clarify, that even when using CADQAS, it is still the researcher that is undertaking the qualitative analysis; it is their intuition and ability to engage with nuances, see connections and make judgements that are paramount (Carcary, 2011; Harding, 2018). Disadvantages of using CADQAS were considered before my decision was finalised. One particular caution is that packages will restrict researchers in the way that they approach their data (Woods *et al.*, 2016; Yin, 2016; Harding, 2018), leading to fears that the software might drive and dominate the analysis process (Woods *et al.*, 2016). Some qualitative researchers posit that using such programmes can distance the researcher from their data (Yin, 2016) or restrict analysis due to inflexibility of their package design (Harding, 2018).

The decision to use CAQDAS largely focussed on my confidence in using NVivo and an acceptance that although time consuming to build familiarity with the programme, the benefits of using such a systematic approach and its usefulness for data management and supporting coding processes (Wickham & Woods, 2005) outweighed the negatives. While NVivo provided this study with a systematic method of managing and organising data, its use for this study was not to facilitate analysis. This is where thematic analysis was engaged to add rigour to the process and enable a coherence with the study's theoretical framework (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013). NVivo was primarily used for managing and organising the coded data, however the capacity of the programme to present findings in both word and pictorial form was also utilised. The specific function used was the word frequency tool. This process enables the most frequently occurring words in either the complete coded data corpus or from particular nodes (sub-themes) to be displayed. It cannot be assumed however, that frequency automatically denotes significance to either the participants or to the research questions (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Consequently, I chose to include discussions of word frequencies only in so far as I felt that they had something particular to offer with regard to the clarity of my findings.

Appendix 5 Detailed Data Analysis Process

Phase 1 Familiarisation with data

The initial process of analysis involved a re-familiarisation of the entire data corpus. The data had been collected over a six-month process, from December 2018 to May 2019, however the data analysis process started in February 2020. This meant over a year had passed since the data collection and initial transcription, which had occurred immediately after the data collection. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that Phase 1 involves immersion in the data, potentially reading and re-reading the data as you note initial themes and ideas. Although intending to use the NVivo package as a data coding tool, for Phase 1, I decided that hand sorting and recording the data would provide the familiarisation that was required. Therefore, I manually recorded, sorted and linked initial ideas prompted by the data. Rabiee (2004:180) describes this as the 'long-table' technique, useful for initial considerations of the data. I concurrently took field notes to record my initial ideas regarding emerging codes.

Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend multiple readings of the data, therefore I returned to my initial Phase 1 recording after a couple of days, to reconsider initial codes and connections that I had made. Once I was satisfied with these considerations, I took the Phase 1 data from each data set and recorded in a table and word cloud to provide an initial visual representation of Phase 1 considerations.

The entire data corpus was processed in the same manner for Phase 1.

Phase 2 Generating initial codes

During Phase 2 the data generated was uploaded to the NVivo programme. The data corpus was systematically coded, with relevant data collated to specific codes.

Coding is a common method of organising data and facilitating interpretive thinking, but it is important to clarify that coding does not in itself constitute analysis (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Silver & Lewins, 2014). It is more accurately imagined as a form of indexing, to indicate and catalogue particular sections of data that are relevant to the research questions (Silver & Lewins, 2014; Harding, 2018). Yin (2016) describes how coding enables the researcher to move to a higher conceptual plane, where the codes represent meanings that have been inferred from the data, allowing for insights and connections to be made.

There are limitations to coding, in particular in identifying the nuances between similar, but distinct areas of data, that technically would be associated with the same code (Silver & Lewins, 2014). Another disadvantage of coding is the time that it can take to consider and work through the mechanics of the coding process (Yin, 2016; Harding, 2018). It is however seen as useful for managing larger amounts of data, such as transcripts, as coding can help to focus and reduce the

content (Harding, 2018). Codes are often either full words or phrases, or representative initials (Harding, 2018).

Following the process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) codes were not limited at this phase, nor was data restricted to a single code. From the data corpus (transcripts from the two CoEs and focus group plus the annotated posters used as stimuli in both CoEs) over forty codes (parent nodes) and thirty sub codes (child nodes) were generated following two sweeps of the data, which is recommended to ensure accurate collation across the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These ranged from empirical codes of commonalities that emerged during the coding practice (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013), as well as theoretical concepts derived from prior reading, particularly those pertaining to Freirean Critical Pedagogy (for example connections with love, respect, power and justice) (see Chapter 3) in addition to those lined to the pedagogy and practice of Philosophy for Children (for example resonances with Caring Thinking) (see Chapter 3).

Phase 2 concluded with a list of codes collated from the entire data set:

Initial Code	New Codes		
Achievement	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform	positive	Teacher Characteristics/values
Agency	Teacher Agent	power	Banking Education/Freire
authority	The role of leadership individual and SMT	Pressure	Banking Education/Freire
balance		Problem Posing Educator	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Banking Education	Banking Education/Freire	reflective	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Caring Thinking	Caring Thinking & Being/Dispositions	relationships	The role of emotion/pastoral
challenge	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	resilient	Teacher Characteristics/values
change	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions	resistance	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
Collaborative Thinking	Collaborative Thinking & Being/Dispositions		Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Commitment	Teacher Characteristics values	respect	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Communication	Importance of Communication/Dialogue		Caring Thinking & Being/Dispositions
Confidence	Teacher Characteristics/values	responsibility	Teacher Characteristics/values
CPD	Importance of ongoing learning	role model	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers: PPE
Creative Thinking	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions	SE	Theory into Practice
curious	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions	Social Justice	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
Creativity	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions		Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking & Being/Dispositions	empower	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
Curricula	Broad and balanced curriculum		Problem Posing Educators/Freire
emotions	The role of emotion/pastoral		Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform
empower	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform	Teacher Agent	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
enthusiasm	Teacher Characteristics/values	Threats	Banking Education/Freire
Environment	School values and culture	performativity	Banking Education/Freire
equality	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	pressures	Government policy impact
facilitator	Teacher as facilitator		Banking Education/Freire
flexible	Teacher Characteristics/values	relationships	Government policy impact
fun	Teacher Characteristics/values	resources	Banking Education/Freire
Government policy	Government policy impact		Government policy impact
holistic education	holistic philosophy of education	support	Banking Education/Freire
honesty	Teacher Characteristics/values		Government policy impact
hope	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	Teacher Presence	Teacher Characteristics/values
humility	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	Worry	Wellbeing: Work/life quality
identity	Teacher Characteristics/values	Trust	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
inclusive	Teacher Characteristics/values		Caring Thinking & Being/Dispositions
inspiring	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform	Values	The role of emotion/pastoral
ITE	Role of ITE	wellbeing	Teacher Characteristics/values
Leader	The role of leadership: individual and SMT	wisdom	Wellbeing: Work/life quality
Listening	True listening attending to the other		Teacher Characteristics/values
Love	Problem Posing Educators/Freire		
Love of learning	Love of learning		
lucky	?		
passion	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform		
Perform-able	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers		
performativity	Banking Education/Freire		
Perspectives	Critical Thinking & Being/Dispositions		

Phase 3 Generating themes

The third phase required codes to be collated into potential themes, followed by the gathering of all relevant coded data extracts. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe a theme to be something that captures significance from the data and represents patterns or meaning within the data, in relation

to the research question(s). They emphasise that themes are both the starting point for analysis and the end point and enable the researcher to interpret, interrogate and make sense of the underlying assumptions of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2018).

Since the original publication of their approach to thematic analysis in 2006, Braun and Clarke (2018) have revised their thinking about Phase 3 and prefer now to name it Generating themes rather than Searching for themes to better capture the active role that this process entails. My experience of working with Phase 3, was that it was not a discrete step and on occasion blended into the approach designated for Phase 4. For example, generating the themes developed into concurrently reviewing and amending these themes, meaning that some aspects of Phase 4 were completed in tandem with Phase 3. Comprehensive field notes were kept as I worked through Phase 3 to aid in clarifying my understanding of how the themes and codes were developing.

Braun and Clarke (2006) caution against single word themes, proposing that the theme title should welcome the reader to the underlying patterns of the data generated. They clarify that often some codes will be reimagined as sub-themes.

Three candidate themes were initially generated:

Theme 1: Teachers as agentic beings

Theme 2: Teachers as Problem Posing Educators/Critical Consciousness/Equity

Theme 3: Threats to flourishing as a teacher

However, as Phase 3 progressed, the codes these were amended and expanded to:

Theme 1: Agency (Teachers as Agentic Beings)

Theme 2: Conscientização (Critical Consciousness) (Teachers as Political Beings)

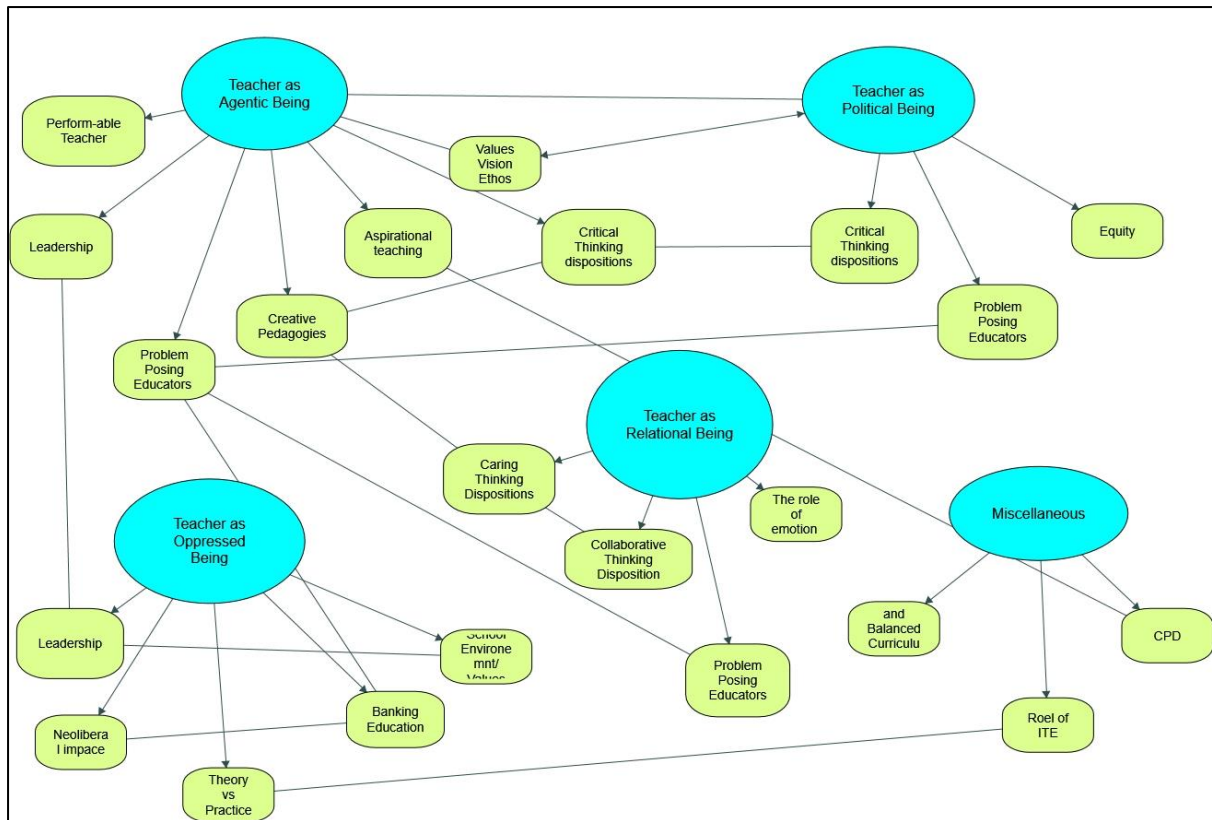
Theme 3: Relationship (Teachers as Relational Beings)

Theme 4: Threats (Teachers as Constrained Beings)

Theme 5: Miscellaneous

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that a Miscellaneous Theme can often be useful to house relevant data codes that do not seem to fit under the other candidate themes. Although cautioned against using single words in themes, my thinking was that giving an overview name as well as a more detailed title would enable the reader to immediately capture the meaning of the data gathered.

A thematic map of this process was produced to help to clarify my thinking, with emerging candidate themes in blue and sub-themes in green:



Initial Thematic Map, showing four main themes and one miscellaneous theme

The second part of this phase was to gather all coded data relevant to each potential theme. This was a time-consuming process as many sections of data had been coded under multiple codes in NVivo, yet the repeated immersion in the entire data set resulted in a useful re-familiarisation of the contents.

In order to capture the contextual information around the relevant data, a decision was made to include the entire utterance of the participant rather than just the discrete sentence(s) that held pertinent meaning. A characteristic of analysis of a focus group, that is shared with a Community of Enquiry, is the interactive nature, or group dynamics of the dialogue. This means that the context of speakers before and sometimes after the particular contribution, need also to be considered during the analysis (Gill et al., 2008). Consequently, this meant that the final document with all of the coded data under the five themes was 139 pages long. Although cumbersome, I refrained from stripping the data down at this point to ensure that I would be able to accurately attribute the meaning indicated by the participants, rather than the danger of misinterpreting isolated sentences of text. This was particularly important to reflect my ethical positioning as a researcher.

Although it could be suggested that this phase is a mechanical process, my experience of working with the data was the opposite. Phase 3 was a dynamic experience, reliving the data and the experiences and relationships generated as part of being in the community with my participants.

Phase 4 Reviewing themes

The process of Phase 4 is the refinement of the themes, alongside scrutiny of how they work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set. At this stage thematic maps helped with the visualisation of the whole.

An important part of this phase is to deliberate on the candidate themes chosen to justify their inclusion. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest rigorous reflection on each theme to ensure that it has enough data to support it and that there is a clear coherence within the data in that theme, and identifiable distinctions between the different themes. Accordingly, each theme was scrutinised, which led to the realisation that the data in Theme 5 Miscellaneous was not isolated and unconnected as previously thought, but actually spoke of the participants' hopes for their futures as teachers. Additionally, Theme 4 was revised from Constrained Beings to Oppressed Beings to signify clear patterns that were emerging with Freirean thinking. Sub-themes were also interrogated for their relevance to and significance for their allotted themes, and changes made as necessary. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the importance in this phase of continually revisiting the data.

The two previous iterations of themes were then amended again to:

Theme 1: Agency (Teachers as Agentic Beings)

Theme 2: Conscientização (Critical Consciousness) (Teachers as Political Beings)

Theme 3: Relationship (Teachers as Relational Beings)

Theme 4: Threats (Teachers as Oppressed Beings)

Theme 5: Hope/Future (Teachers as Hope-full Beings)

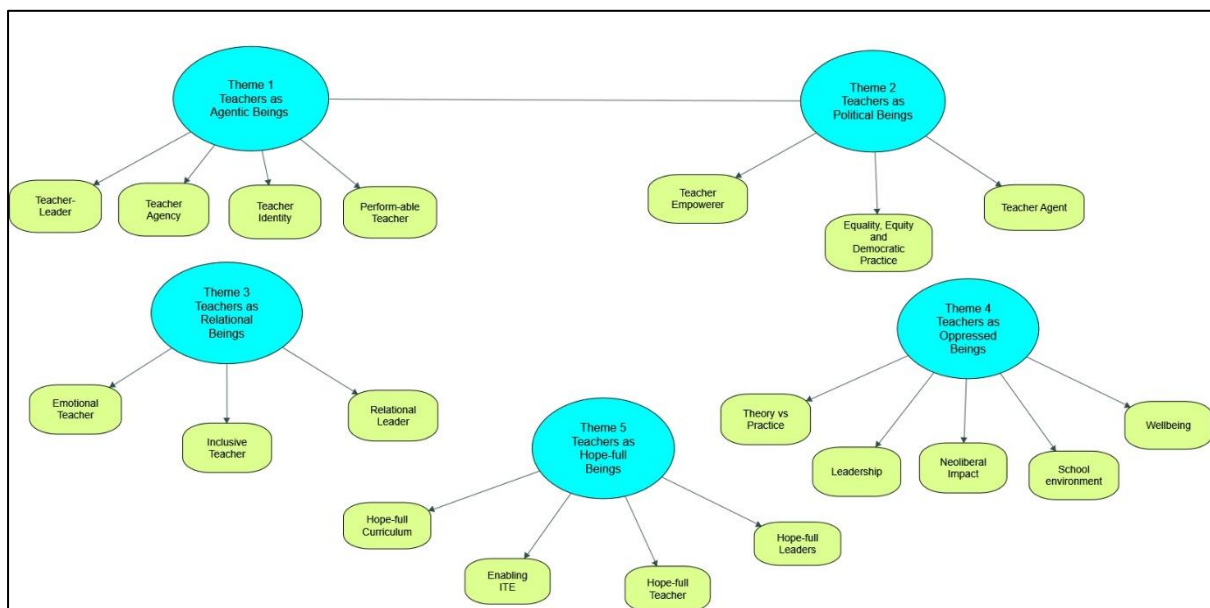
What was observed, was that my initial inductive collation of the data that had emerged organically from Phase 1 to 3 had reconnected with the Freirean framework as a way of making sense of the emerging patterns from the data.

After consideration of the themes, attention turned to the coded data. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the importance of scrutinising all of the collated extracts for each theme individually to check for coherence. The purpose of this micro scrutiny is firstly to ascertain whether the story of the themes resonate with the linked data, but secondly is an opportunity to code any additional extracts that might have been overlooked in the previous coding stages (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This

was an onerous iterative process, that necessitated careful reflection and indeed interpretation on each extract (Carcary, 2011).

During this phase individual coded data was reviewed and re-evaluated as to its relevance to the research questions. This was a challenging process as I felt there was a tension between my ethical responsibilities as a researcher to appreciate and value all data generated by my participants and to do justice to it and them, and the necessity of refining the data set to that which was specifically relevant to my research questions. As a result, it did not feel equitable to merely discard what could be perceived as irrelevant data (Rabiee, 2004; Braun & Clarke, 2006). In order to satisfy both aspects and to honour my participants, coded data that was deemed not relevant for this thesis was removed and stored in a new Nvivo folder to be used in future research projects. This was very important to me, to ensure that I maintained a consistent ethical approach throughout the whole process of my thesis, and the empowering of my participants and their voices.

The benefit of such scrutiny was a growing confidence with regard to the data corpus and a clarity about the patterns that were starting to emerge. At the end of this process, sub codes for each theme had been refined, streamlined and in some cases reimagined and a revised thematic map was drawn to reflect these changes:



Phase 4: Developed Thematic Map, showing five main themes

At the end of this Phase, although there were still elements of the themes and sub-themes that I was uncertain about, there was a sense of clarity in the themes and the story that they were starting to tell (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 5 Defining and naming themes

This phase of the process required a detailed reflection on each individual theme, in order to identify the story that it was telling, as well as the consideration of how each theme fitted within the overarching story of the data corpus and research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) caution that researchers should not merely ‘paraphrase the content of the data extracts presented but identify what is of interest about them and why’ (p92). This was a painstaking process of examining the coded data under the sub-themes to ensure clarity of inclusion and to indicate a hierarchy within each theme. The end process of this phase for the researcher is to clearly define each theme and related sub-themes and the story that they tell. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the importance of the name of the themes, stating that it should be ‘concise, punchy, and immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about’ (p93). With this consideration, each theme was once again subject to intense scrutiny, cross checking against the research questions, to ensure that all of the coded data was relevant. I considered amalgamating Theme 1 and Theme 2, as the amount of coded data gathered for Theme 2 was considerably less than for the other four themes. However, Braun and Clarke (2018) emphasise that the formation of a theme is not dependent on the quantity of coded data, rather the researcher should consider how many ideas that theme contains, and its relevance in answering the research question. As a result, I decided to retain Theme 2, although it has considerable links with Theme 1.

The sub-theme of *Teacher-Agent* was shared under two themes, although my initial reflection was to retain this, upon careful examination of the coded content under each sub-theme I decided that there was significant overlap, and that the most suitable location for this sub-theme was under Theme 2.

The resulting themes and stories were as follows:

Theme 1 - Agency: Teachers as Agentic Beings

The story of this theme is the participants’ articulations of their understanding of teacher agency and its importance and relevance to them. This was deeply entwined with their conceptualisations of their Teacher Identity, and their capacity to be both Teacher-Leaders.

Theme 2 - Conscientização: Teachers as Political Beings

This theme is about Critical Consciousness, as conceptualised by Freire (1996), which speaks of educators who refuse the possibility that education is neutral. The story here is about the willingness of the participants to challenge status quo, to refuse to be ‘neutral’ and to enact democratic principles in their classrooms to empower themselves and their pupils.

Theme 3 - Relationships: Teachers as Relational Beings

Echoing the importance Freire places on the relational aspect of education, the story of this theme explores the importance that the participants placed on the role of Caring Thinking (as conceptualised in P4C) and emotions in their practice, but also very importantly in the practice of school leaders. The issue of inclusion and inclusive practice was connected in their thinking in this area.

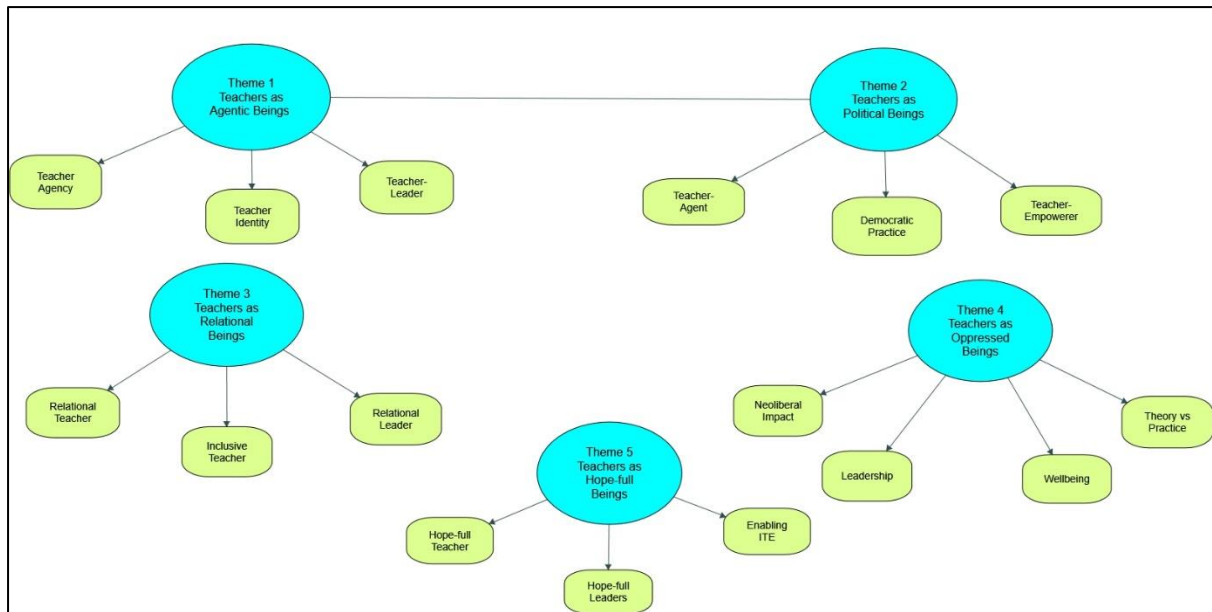
Theme 4 - Threats: Teachers as Oppressed Beings

The story for this theme covered the pressures that the participants identified as student teachers in schools. A clear focus was on performative measures, but equally the school leadership and environment (people and values/ethos) played a key role, as did the tension between what was taught in their ITE programme and expected in practice. All of these had the potential to impact on wellbeing.

Theme 5 - Hope: Teachers as Hope-full Beings

This theme explored the vision the participants had for their future as teachers: the type of teachers they wanted to be, and the curriculum they wanted to teach, and the sort of leaders they wanted to be led by and become. They discussed the role the ITE programme had, and could have, to enable this.

As a result of these considerations, a further version of the thematic map was produced, to clarify the final iteration, including refined sub-themes arranged in order of priority:



Phase 5 Thematic Map

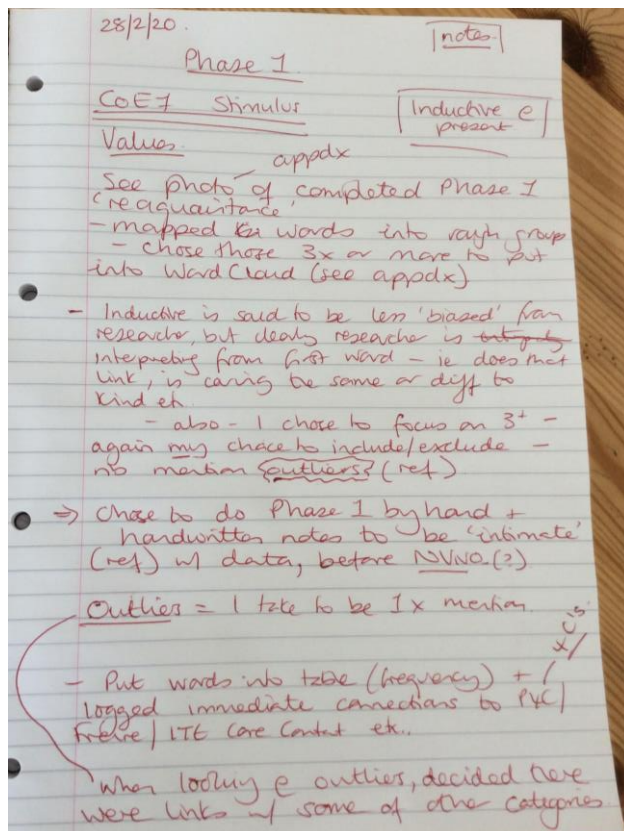
Phase 6 Producing the report

The final phase in Braun and Clarke's (2006) data analysis process, is the writing of the academic report of the study.

Appendix 6 Phase 1 data familiarisation



Appendix 7 Phase 1 Field Notes



Appendix 8 Phase 1 Emerging codes



Word Cloud: Phase 1 initial coding from CoE 1 Stimulus: Values (Wordclouds.com, 2020)

Data 3 x evidence	No.	Notes
caring	22	P4C Caring Thinking friendly/smiles/kind/nurturing came here
Integrity	15	Link with Trust Freire & P4C Caring Thinking honest/trust/fair
inclusive	13	Big focus on AEN and RRE at UoW? P4C Caring Thinking
creative	12	Interesting – look in Core ITE Guidance – does it mention creativity?
empathetic	10	P4C Caring Thinking
fun	9	P4C Creative Thinking Freire – hope happy/humour
relationships	8	Freire P4C Caring Thinking
equality	8	Freire
continual-learner	8	Interesting, focus on life-long learner?
respect	8	RRE & Part 2 TS? P4C Caring Thinking
Leader	7	Responsibility/communication/professional/organised
resilient	7	
motivational	6	Freire – role model
passionate	6	
inspiring	6	TS
reflective	5	UoW Vision for ITE student thoughtful link?
thoughtful	4	P4C Caring Thinking
empowerer	4	Freire – political activist Teacher-Agent Enabler
risk-taker	4	Freire – political activist Teacher-Agent P4C Creative Thinking
collaborative	4	P4C Collaborative Thinking
flexible	4	P4C Creative Thinking
knowledgeable	4	But key focus of ITE! Core ITE Guidance P4C Critical Thinking
love	4	P4C Caring Thinking
positive	4	P4C Caring Thinking Freire - hope
patient	4	P4C Caring Thinking calm
observant	3	P4C Caring Thinking – Intuitive/awareness
Outliers (Marshall, 1996)		
Rule breaker	1	Freire – political activist Teacher-Agent
Rule maker	1	Freire – political activist Teacher-Agent

confident

awareness

Safe place

Could link to caring?

facilitator

holistic

Could this link to inclusive?

(Inter)Cultural
understanding

2 Could this link to inclusive?

Cross curricular

Humility

2 Freire P4C- Lipman

relevant

Example of recording Phase 1 initial coding

Appendix 9 Phase 2 Final Codes

Initial Code	New Codes		
Achievement	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform	positive	Teacher Characteristics/values
Agency	Teacher Agent	power	Banking Education/Freire
authority	The role of leadership individual and SMT	Pressure	Banking Education/Freire
balance		Problem Posing Educator	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Banking Education	Banking Education/Freire	reflective	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Caring Thinking	Caring Thinking & Being/Dispositions	relationships	The role of emotion/pastoral
challenge	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	resilient	Teacher Characteristics/values
change	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions	resistance	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
Collaborative Thinking	Collaborative Thinking & Being/Dispositions	respect	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Commitment	Teacher Characteristics/values	responsibility	Caring Thinking & Being/Dispositions
Communication	Importance of Communication/Dialogue	role model	Teacher Characteristics/values
Confidence	Teacher Characteristics/values	SE	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers: PPE
CPD	Importance of ongoing learning	Social Justice	Theory into Practice
Creative Thinking	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions		Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
curious	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions	empower	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
Creativity	Creative Thinking & Being/Dispositions		Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking & Being/Dispositions		Problem Posing Educators/Freire
CURICIA	Broad and balanced curriculum		Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform
emotions	The role of emotion/pastoral	Teacher Agent	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers
empower	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform	Threats	Banking Education/Freire
enthusiasm	Teacher Characteristics/values	performativity	Banking Education/Freire
Environment	School values and culture		Government policy impact
equality	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	pressures	Banking Education/Freire
facilitator	Teacher as Facilitator		Government policy impact
flexible	Teacher Characteristics/values	relationships	Banking Education/Freire
fun	Teacher Characteristics/values		Government policy impact
Government policy	Government policy impact	resources	Banking Education/Freire
holistic education	holistic philosophy of education		Government policy impact
honesty	Teacher Characteristics/values	support	Banking Education/Freire
hope	Problem Posing Educators/Freire		Government policy impact
humility	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	Teacher Presence	Teacher Characteristics/values
identity	Teacher Characteristics/values	Worry	Wellbeing: Work/life quality
inclusive	Teacher Characteristics/values	Trust	Problem Posing Educators/Freire
inspiring	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform		Caring Thinking & Being/Dispositions
ITE	Role of ITE		The role of emotion/pastoral
Leader	The role of leadership: individual and SMT	Values	Teacher Characteristics/values
Listening	True listening attending to the other	wellbeing	Wellbeing: Work/life quality
Love	Problem Posing Educators/Freire	wisdom	Teacher Characteristics/values
Love of learning	Love of learning		
lucky	?		
passion	Aspirational teaching, celebrate, enable and transform		
Perform-able	Teacher Agent: Perform-able Teachers		
performativity	Banking Education/Freire		
Perspectives	Critical Thinking & Being/Dispositions		

Appendix 10 Word Clouds and Word Frequencies

When considering the word frequency for the entire data corpus, as might be expected with dialogue concerning education, *teacher* and *school* dominated, closely followed by *pressure*:



Top 100 (left), 50 (middle) & 10-word (right) frequency from entire coded data corpus

Discussions around the concept of pressure occurred across all three data collection points, suggesting that the participants were cognisant of the pressure that they would be experiencing in school (Anspal *et al.*, 2012; Pillen *et al.*, 2013a; Buchanan, 2015), and highlighted issues of power, performativity and leadership:



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency in *Teachers as Oppressed Beings*



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Neoliberal Impact

This was echoed by the participants' notations on the posters, where threats related to pressure, accountability and performativity were frequent, alongside a perceived lack of time:

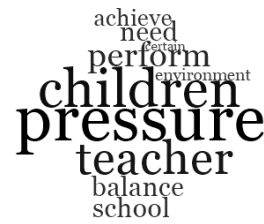
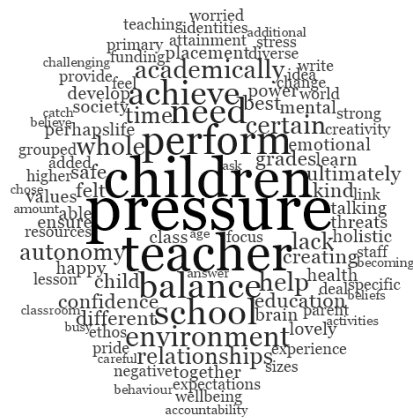


Words appearing 3 x or more in stimulus CoE1 (Wordclouds.com, 2020)

The wordclouds illuminate that the coded data related to Leadership under the theme of *Teachers as Oppressed Beings*, highlighted a focus on issues of power, leadership and hierarchy:



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Leadership



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Wellbeing



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Theory vs Practice



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Teacher Agency



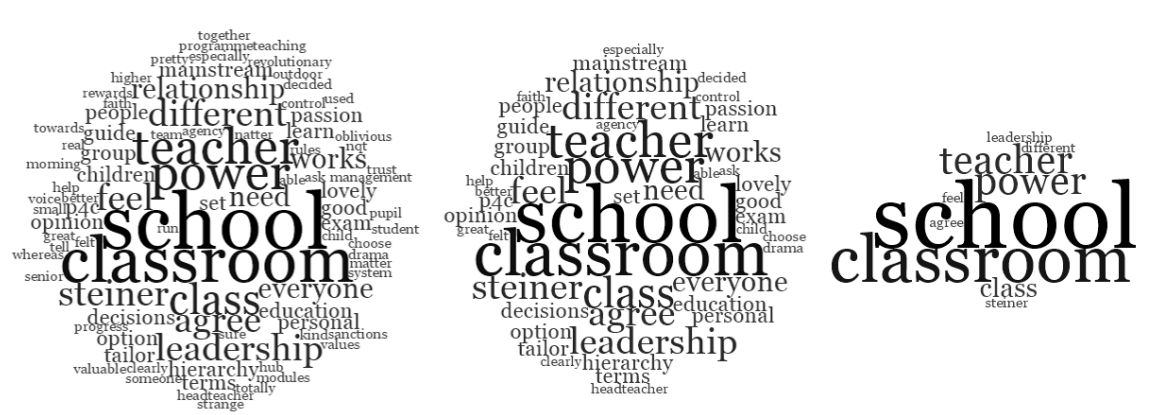
Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency in sub-theme Teacher Identity



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub theme Teacher-Leader



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Teacher-Agent



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Democratic Practice

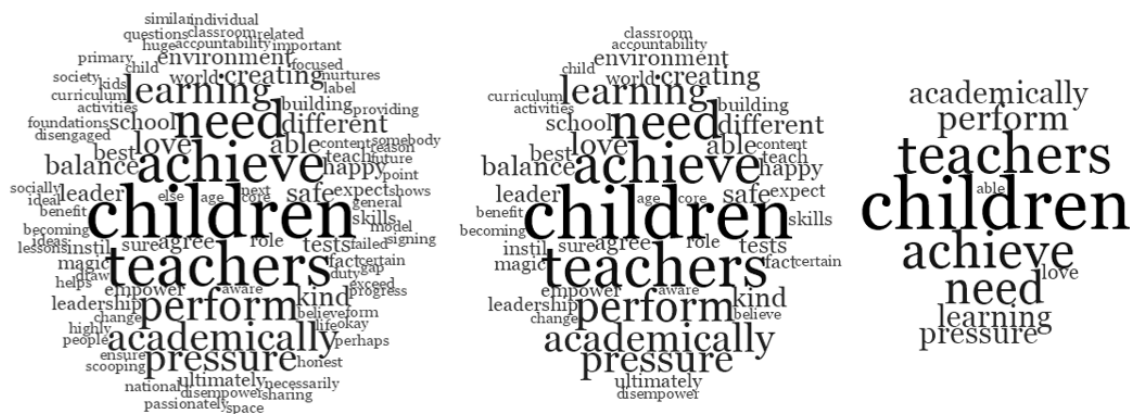


Figure 29 Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Teacher-Empowerer



Poster CoE1 pre-placement (left) and CoE2 post-placement (right) (Wordclouds.com, 2020)



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Relational Teacher



Figure 32 Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Inclusive Teacher



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Relational Leader



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Hope-full Teachers



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Hope-full Leaders



Top 100, 50 & 10-word frequency sub-theme Enabling ITE