Working and Learning Together:

The Lived Experiences of Further Education Teachers Engaging with Joint Practice Development as a Model of Collaborative Enquiry for Professional Learning

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of Sunderland for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2022

Abstract

This thesis narrates the lived experiences of a practitioner-led participatory action research study that explores the implementation of Joint Practice Development (JPD) (Gregson *et al.*, 2013) to collaborate with further education (FE) college teachers in professional learning. Inspired by the work of Fielding *et al.* (2005) and Hargreaves (2012) and recommended by Coffield (2017), the JPD model provides teacher-centred, collaborative professional learning at the heart of this thesis. Little is known about how JPD is integrated in practice in the FE context. Consequently, this research contributes to a small body of collaborative professional learning studies in FE and offers particular insights arising from the rich accounts of the experience of six FE teachers' engagement and my own as a JPD facilitator and member of the learning community.

The study takes an interpretivist approach and represents the holistic view that human beings are able to construct and reconstruct meaning through social interactions (Dewey, 1938/1997). Through narrative inquiry-based research methods (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Kim, 2015), interviews, JPD workshops, artefacts, field notes and a research diary are used to record and interpret the experiences of both myself and participants working, learning and reflecting together to develop and enhance aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. A three-dimensional narrative inquiry framework is used to interpret and narrate the messy trajectories of building this learning community together as we move and meld participants' and researcher's perspectives into one coherent research account.

The finding of this study suggests that top down and one off continuing professional development (CPD) rarely meets teachers' professional learning needs. JPD provides an alternative democratic approach to cultivate, nurture and sustain professional learning communities that care and value teachers' professionalism and support them to take ownership of their learning in situated contexts. Additionally, the social and emotional dimensions of collaborative professional learning vital to JPD lays the foundation for trusting relationships that encourage reflective dialogues and reflexivity. A reconceptualised model of JPD is developed building on the initial framework designed by Gregson *et al.* (2015b). There is much scope for FE sector organisations to integrate policy that supports and encourages teacher-led, collaborative approaches to professional learning. Further research is welcomed which explores experiences of collaborative professional learning such as JPD both in the FE context and other education contexts including Higher Education and schools.

Dissemination Outcomes of Study

Publications:

Chen, I. (2019) 'Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging FE college lecturers in professional learning'. *inTuition Research*, 35 (Spring). Available at: https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/publications/in-tuition/intuition-35-spring-2019/intuition-35-spring-research-supplement/using-joint-practice-development-as-model-of-collaborative-enquiry-for-engaging-fe-college-lecturers/

Chen, I. (2021) in Crawley, J., Fletcher-Saxon, J., Powell, D. and Scattergood, K. (ed.) *Working and living in FE during the COVID-19 pandemic: 27 FE practitioners' voices*, pp.25-27. Available at: https://www.researchcollegegroup.co.uk/publication/

Chen, I. (2022) 'Joint practice development: An alternative approach to professional development and learning in the further education (FE) context'. *LSRN Researchmeet booklet: Engaging learners – formal vs informal learning*, pp.20-26. National Education Union. Available at: https://norfolkneu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/NEU2435-LSRN-Researchmeet-booklet-v4.pdf

Conferences and Webinar Presentations:

Chen, I. (2019) *Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging further education college lecturers in professional learning.* *The Education and Training Foundation Annual Research Conference*, 01st July, London.

Chen, I. (2019) *Working Together: Using Joint Practice Development as a model for collaborative enquiry in engaging FE college lecturers in professional learning.* *#FEResearchMeet Conference*, The Ashton Sixth Form College, Greater Manchester, 29th November.

Chen, I. (2020) *Working Together: Using Joint Practice Development as a model for collaborative enquiry in engaging FE college lecturers in professional learning.* #FEVirtualResearchMeet, 29 June, Virtual Conference via Zoom.

Chen, I. (2020) *Working Together: FE Teachers' experiences of using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry and professional learning.* The Education and Training Foundation Virtual Annual Research Conference, 6 - 7 July, Virtual Conference.

Chen, I. and Odell, T. (2020) *Collaborative approaches to professional development: learning the lessons of lockdown.* The Education and Training Foundation online webinar with Dr Tricia Odell, 21 July. Available at:https://enhance.etfoundation.co.uk/remoteworking/view/12/collaborative-approaches-to-professional-development-learning-the-lessons-of-lockdown

Chen, I. (2020) *Working Together: FE Teachers' experiences of using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry and professional learning*. International Professional Development Association, International Virtual Conference, 29 November, Virtual Conference.

Chen, I. (2021) *Praxis as research, practitioner as researcher: A reflexive account of becoming and being a practitioner action researcher in Further Education*. Keynote presentation, Learning and Skills Research Network and the Huddersfield Centre for Research in Education and Society, , 25 February, Virtual Conference.

Chen, I. (2021) *Praxis as research, practitioner as researcher: A reflexive account on doing, being and becoming a practitioner action researcher in Further Education*. Keynote presentation, Learning and Skills Research Network East Anglia: Reflective Practice Symposium, Virtual Conference, 23 June, Virtual Conference.

Chen, I. (2021) *Working Together: Further Education (FE) teachers' experiences of using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry and professional learning*. International Practice Focused Research in Education Conference, The University of Sunderland and the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), 5 - 8 July, Virtual Conference.

Chen, I. (2021) *Working Together: Further Education (FE) teachers' experiences of using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry and professional learning*. The British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, 13 - 16 September, Virtual Conference.

Workshops:

Chen, I. (2020) 'My PhD research journey and what is Joint Practice Development?' *North Hertfordshire College, Online Workshop*, 20 November.

Chen, I. (2021) 'From origami to practice-focused professional development'. *The Education and Training Consortium Winter Conference*, 8 January.

Chen, J. (2021) 'From origami to practice-focused professional development'. *The University of Huddersfield Consortium Network Meeting*, 12 March.

Podcast and Interview:

Chen, I. (2020) *Joint Practice Development – 7 Things in 7 Minutes*. #FEResearchpodcast. [Podcast] 14 October. Available at:https://feresearchpodcast.podbean.com/e/joyce-i-hui-chen-talks-to-us-about-joint-practice-development-7-things-in-7-minutes/

Chen, I. (2021) 'Wired for connection: Why collaborative professional learning now?' Interviewed by Jane Berwick, *The Adult Learning Hub*, 16 September. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClE0a101a3Q&t=1742s

Acknowledgements

This thesis would only be possible with the support and contribution from the various communities I belong to. I would like to give an exceptional thank you to the participants in this study who are unquestionably the most committed teachers, they really put their learners at the heart of their work. I feel privileged to work with such inspirational and dedicated teachers. I feel we have built an excellent professional learning community together. Thank you – Keith, Mathew, Martin, Scott, Sean and Tom.

I am forever indebted to the amazing SUNCETT (the University of Sunderland's Centre of Excellence in Teacher Training) team, Trish Spedding, Maggie Gregson and Lawrence Nixon who have inspired and guided me to begin and continue my practitioner research journey all the way to the completion of this thesis. A special thank you to Trish who has been the most amazing and caring supervisor. When at times I nearly gave up, you were always there for me to cheer me on and to provide food for thoughts.

I would also like to thank my fellow peers on the same programme. Your emotional and professional support have been the source of motivation to continue this research journey together until the finishing line.

To my critical friends, your amazing encouragement has really nurtured my self-belief. Your challenging questions and thinking have given me space, inspiration and resources for my reading and writing.

To my online families (#JoyFE 💛 and The Adult Learning Hub) and research communities (#FEResearch, #FEResearchmeet, the Learning and Skills Research Network, the British Educational Research Association and International Professional Development Association), you have provided an affirmative and inspiring learning space and opportunities and continue to nourish my thinking.

My thanks also go to the Education and Training Foundation who partially funded the ETF-SUNCETT Practitioner Research Programme (PRP) that enables me to embark on this amazing journey. I also receive ongoing support from the Education and Training Consortium and the University of Huddersfield Consortium.

I give my sincere appreciation to both examiners, Dr. John Fulton and Professor Sam Broadhead who made the viva experience enjoyable and reflective, and to Dr. Derek Watson for chairing the viva smoothly and making me at ease during the process.

Finally, I would only be able to complete this thesis with the love, patience, support and humour received from my family in overcoming the difficulties I have encountered on the PhD journey. I love you – Team Chen-Wilson!

Abbreviations

ATS   Advanced Teacher Status

AoC   Association of Colleges

BERA   The British Educational Research Association

BREXIT   British Exit

CoP   Community of Practice

COVID-19   2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease

CPD   Continuing Professional Development

DBIS   Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

DfE   Department for Education

ETF   The Education and Training Foundation

ESOL   English for Speakers of Other Languages

FE   Further Education

Ofsted   Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

PL   Professional Learning

PLC   Professional Learning Community

PD   Professional Development

JPD   Joint Practice Development

SET   The Society for Education and Training

SUNCETT   The University of Sunderland's Centre of Excellence in Teacher Training

T Levels   Technical Levels

QTLS   Qualified Teaching and Learning Status

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Chapter One: From Global to Local: Relearning about Further Education

Beginning

Further Education (FE) colleges in the UK operate in a constantly changing landscape to meet 'urgent' priorities from government initiatives, educational foci, skills demand of employers and industry policy changes. FE college teachers are often required to 'keep up to date' with these changes in a limited amount of time and be expected to 'embed' them in their teaching to ensure that students benefit from these initiatives and policies. Essentially, these priorities contribute to the inspection framework for teaching, learning and assessment (Coffield, 2008; Coffield and Williamson, 2012; Coffield, 2017; Daley, 2001). FE colleges often respond to these initiatives hastily through short-term and one-off continuing professional development (CPD) activities such as training days and/or online courses. It appears that teachers often treat these activities as 'tick-box' exercises and feel little involvement in engaging in the development of the necessary knowledge and skills from these activities, due to insufficient time and resources (Coffield, 2017). These CPD activities are often decided by the organisational needs identified from inspection feedback or government driven priorities, rather than individual professional needs (Harris and Simon *et al.*, 2001; UCU, 2006). Greatbatch and Tate (2018) summarise that the evidence of how much 'impact of different forms of CPD on teaching quality and on learners remain unknown' and identify that amongst these models, 'collaborative forms of CPD are most valued,' although there is limited research evidence to support this (Greatbatch and Tate, 2018, p.13). This represents a core reason for why this thesis is necessary to

investigate further the question of how a collaborative model of professional learning might contribute to a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Coffield and Williamson (2012) argue that 'communities of discovery' are the foundation for building democratic and collaborative relationships between teachers, students, institutions and communities. In FE colleges, there are various structures and models for engaging teachers in professional development and professional learning. Central to this thesis is to collaborate with teachers to develop a narrative account of the lived experiences of implementing a collaborative professional learning model called Joint Practice Development (JPD).

Therefore, this thesis sets out to investigate the use of JPD as a model of professional development within an FE college in England. In order to understand the complexity of the setting for this research, this first chapter focuses upon describing the wider context of the FE sector including policies and existing literature which helped develop and define the research questions in this thesis. It is necessary to contextualise the current situation in which FE colleges are positioned within the wider context of a global perspective through to the local context of FE colleges. Much of the literature refers to the vocational and skills education sector as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) (UNESCO, 2015) and in order to streamline the different terms, in this thesis, the focus is on TVET in the context of FE colleges in England. Teachers' is used as a collective term in this thesis to represent different roles within TVET including lecturers, tutors, trainers, assessors, and facilitators so as to avoid any diversion of the context and focus of the thesis.

Global Context

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has historically been the central driver for educating young people with the skills required for their future employment or study for adults to upskill or train for current or future employment. However, economic disparities between different countries impact upon the equality of education for all (Keohane, 2017; Park, 2009; UNESCO, 2016). Global issues such as youth unemployment, climate change, poverty, refugees and political influences have an alarming effect on future generations (UNESCO, 2016). In 2015, the United Nations set up 17 global goals in the Sustainable Development Goals, known as the 2030 Agenda. Based on the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Strategy for TVET 2016-2021 was developed (UNESCO, 2016). The Strategy,

> *'devotes considerable attention to technical and vocational skills development, specifically regarding access to affordable quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); the acquisition of technical and vocational skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship; the elimination of gender disparity and ensuring access for the vulnerable.'*
>
> (ibid., P.4)

The importance of investing in education and training is paramount to providing accessible resources and future prosperity to all learners who need these opportunities to improve their life. Moreover, the Strategy identifies three priority areas which aim to,

> *'address the multiple demands of an economic, social and environmental nature by helping youth and adults develop the skills they need for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship, promoting equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and supporting transitions to green economies and environmental sustainability.'*
>
> (ibid., p.4)

The implications of the Strategy reinforce the importance of transferable skills for the economic growth of the future in view of growing populations and ageing societies. Young generations will have to equip themselves with personal qualities, such as adaptability and resilience, in order to stay in the labour market. Adults return to education and training in pursuit of improving their skills and gaining qualifications so that they can better themselves and their life. How to ensure lifelong learning for all is an important determinant of TVET. The Lifelong Learning Policy of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2001) stipulates directions to promote lifelong learning; the key elements include,

> *'increased opportunities for the workforce; equal status of adult education and training in the education system; expanded and improved forms of co-operation between public and private institutions; increased access for disadvantaged persons; permeability between the dual system and the other education and training tracks; re-employment rights to permit employed persons to participate in continuing education and training; improvements to apprenticeship training; increases in schools' autonomy.'*
>
> (OECD, 2001, p.5)

With such emphasis and global impact on lifelong learning, providing consistently good quality of TVET education is essential to the life of all young people and adults. In 2014, UNESCO-UNEVOC held a virtual conference with a focal discussion on vocational pedagogy and a summary report produced by Lucas specified six competencies of a vocational teacher, including 'routine expertise, resourcefulness, functional literacies, craftsmanship, business-like attitudes and wider skills' (Lucas, 2014, p.10-11). The report highlights the importance of possessing the 'wider skills' for employability and lifelong learning such as enquiry, teaching and helping others etc. Additionally, teachers who work in the education and training sector should be encouraged to develop their 'craft' (vocational skills) and 'scholarship' (competencies) (ibid., 2014).

Although global organisations such as OECD and UNESCO recognise the importance of education and training in the role of fighting unemployment and closing the poverty gap, as Ball (2003) argues, there is 'a policy epidemic'. The constant turnover of education reforms has become 'embedded' in our education system and politicians focus on 'performativity' of the education and training sector without really understanding or engaging with the 'frontline' professionals who work in the sector (Ball, 2003).

UK Context

In the UK, the system of TVET is similar but has some differences in approaches across the four home nations: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The British Council produced a comprehensive document about the UK skills system in 2017 (British Council, 2017). Within the introductory section, it summarises the range of organisations which deliver vocational skills, including colleges, employers, independent training providers, schools and universities (ibid., p.3). The following figure illustrates the TVET system in the UK.
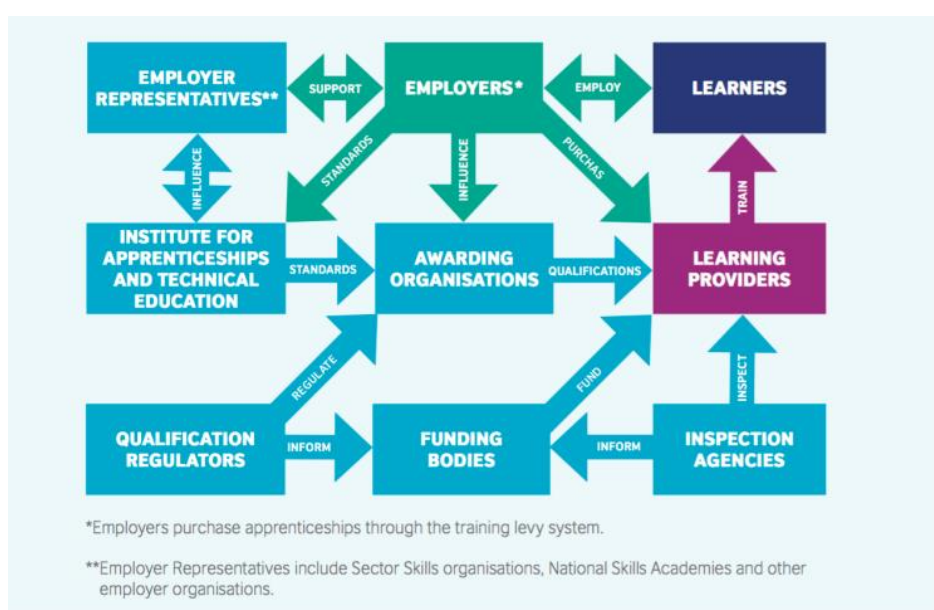
Figure 1.1: The TVET System in the UK (British Council, 2017, p.4)

As the figure illustrates, the correlation between different institutions, awarding organisations, employers and learning providers is complex. Individually, they have different responsibilities in setting the standards and requirements to each other. Teachers working in the UK system of TVET have to carry out accountabilities in different roles such as lecturers, tutors, trainers, assessors, facilitators, quality assurers and so on. Within these roles, teachers also need to be compliant with different policies, procedures and regulations. This means that teachers who work in TVET have to keep abreast of current standards and regulations from industries as well as the curricular and educational focus of their institutions, the Department for Education (DfE) and regulatory bodies such as the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and awarding bodies. Continuing professional development is one of the key drivers to enable teachers to keep up to date with their professional growth and adaptability. In the UK, Further Education (FE) is used to describe any study after secondary education that is not part of higher education offered in universities (UK Government, 2020). The FE sector is at the heart of providing education and training in the UK's TVET system. In this thesis, FE is used as key term because my research focus is with colleges.

The FE sector in the UK is facing challenging times with rigorous reforms since the publication of the Report of the Independent Panel on Technical Education (DfE, 2016), chaired by Lord Sainsbury. The recommendations from this report have led to the introduction of T levels which come on stream in 2021 and 2022. According to the Department for Education, T levels become one of the options alongside A levels and apprenticeships programme with potentially twenty-five employment areas. T levels are 'technical programmes that include a qualification and an

industry placement' (DfE, 2017, p.4). The aim is to equip students with 'the knowledge and practical skills needed to progress into skilled employment at level 3 and above, or higher levels of technical training.' (ibid, p.4). With the new reforms, it means that further training and CPD support needs to be in place for teachers to understand and plan the new study programmes (Thomson, 2017). The demands of keeping up to date with government policies, initiatives and institutional needs can have a detrimental impact on teachers' professional identity and autonomy (Ball, 2003; Gregson and Spedding, 2018; Hardy and Rönnerman, 2011). Teachers are already required to undertake regulatory training on 'Equality and Diversity', 'British Values', 'PREVENT' and 'Safeguarding' and ensure that learners attend English and maths GCSE resits alongside their vocational programme. Motivation to attend English and maths classes are low as all too often students are stuck in a cycle of failure emanating from experiences in school which is then carried through to FE. With limited time, space and resources for teachers to engage in meaningful professional development (Fielding *et al*., 2005; Gregson *et al*., 2015a), it is no surprise to see there is a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention which is examined in further detail later in this chapter.

FE Colleges in England

The FE sector in England has been valued as a diverse educational provider, which offers a wide range of learning and training opportunities and provisions (Gray *et al*., 2000; Gregson *et al*., 2015a; 2020; Thompson, 2014). As Lingfield (2012) summarises in the final report *Professionalism in Further Education*, there are at least five main dimensions of learning and training in the sector:

> • *'Remedial FE, redressing the shortcomings of schooling described in the Wolf Report and acknowledged by the government;*

• Community FE, offering lifelong learning to local people, with benefits to their health, longevity and wellbeing, as well as continuing education;

• Vocational FE, teaching occupational skills in colleges, training centres and in the workplace;

• Academic studies up to Level 3 pursued in some colleges;

• Higher education studies.'   (Lingfield, 2012, p. 2)

The range and levels of courses provided at FE colleges demonstrate the diverse needs of teachers who work in this sector. The training needs and demands are far more complex than other educational sectors. Teachers need to possess pedagogical skills alongside the knowledge and skills required for different subjects and vocational specialist programmes delivered to students across a wide range of ages, needs and experiences from the local community. With the complexity of FE colleges in mind, it appears that policy makers, governors and politicians do not have the fundamental understanding of what FE colleges are and how important they are in transforming lives of people in the local community (Coffield *et al.*, 2014). Much pressure to reform this sector is based on 'financial viability' and 'performativity' (Ball, 2003; Dennis, 2016; O'Leary, 2017). As a result, many colleges constantly 'restructure' or 'reorganise' or even merge with other colleges to become so-call 'super colleges' (Burke, 2016).

> *'The further education sector in England has been acknowledged by government as a vital sector for the future success of the UK, particularly in achieving a prosperous post-Brexit economy. The harsh reality is that central government policy interventions and cuts to public funding have resulted in the closure of courses, the loss of over a million adult learners, 15,000 experienced teachers and a similar number of support staff since 2009. There is a drive toward fewer, larger colleges in the name of efficiency that fails to understand that accessibility, flexibility and rootedness in the community forms the transformative heart of the further education sector.'*
> (Duckworth and Smith, 2017, p.2)

The impact of this scale of merger on the effectiveness and efficiency of the FE sector has not yet been established but it is expected that there will be 'fundamental change, which has considerable implications for leadership and governance' (Ryan, 2018). The identity of the further education sector, as Duckworth and Smith (2017) point out, seems to be in contradiction to what politicians and government envisage. This current trend of mega merger of colleges and 'marketisation' of FE colleges can foresee the harmful impact on teachers' professional autonomy and integrity (Illsley and Waller, 2017; Nash and Jones, 2016).

Underpinning the pressing demands of these reforms and initiatives lie a number of hidden agendas: austerity, funding issues, the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention, the workload and morale of teachers, the political and economic impact from government policies, the inspection framework and the 'fear' culture within the sector (Coffield, 2017; Gregson *et al.*, 2015a).

Austerity as a condition of the UK economy began to take precedence when the Conservative Party was the government in power in 2010; the impact of reduced funding has spread across the public sector including the National Health Service, schools and the FE sector. The impact of financial constraints such as budget cuts sees many colleges forced to merge and reduce the expenditure on resources and equipment. 'Financial strain was making it more difficult to recruit and retain high quality staff and invest in improved facilities' (Keohane, 2017). Yet FE teachers have been 'persuaded' to embrace the changes, implement new local and national initiatives and stay on top of their game in maintaining the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Performance management becomes the 'genre' and 'measuring' of managerial and leadership in the FE sector. There is consensus that it is necessary to improve the performance of education systems in order to tackle

socio-economic issues; however, many education reforms become difficult to sustain in order to appreciate the real impact (Ball, 2003; Corrales, 1999).

Key to this thesis is an examination of the initial and continuing professional development of teachers. It is widely acknowledged that there is something of a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention. A survey published in October 2015 by the National Union of Teachers (NUT, now National Education Union (NEU)) and YouGov found that over half of teachers were thinking of leaving teaching in the next two years citing 'volume of workload' (61%) and 'seeking better work/life balance' (57%) as the two top issues causing them to consider this. 'Job security, working conditions and pay' are also amongst the major concerns for FE college staff (Bloom, 2018a; 14-19 Learning and Skills Bulletin, 2018).

According to Bloom (2018a, para. 3-4), '… teacher-training offers fall by 37 per cent over two years. The fall comes despite a significant increase in the Department for Education's spending on advertising and PR in an effort to recruit new teachers – £14 million last year, up from £5.6 million in 2014-15: a 150 per cent increase.' At the same time, many teachers are choosing to leave the profession because they feel 'overworked' and 'undervalued' (Hinds quoted in Bloom, 2018a, para. 10). 'There has also been a sharp decline in the number of teachers in further education. Since 2010, their number has fallen by nearly 20,000, according to the Office for National Statistics' (Ward, 2018, para.4). These statistics raise alarming concerns over whether the FE sector can attract appropriate qualified and experienced individuals to enter education and training roles (Grollmann, 2008); and why teachers choose to leave the sector after having invested their time and efforts in the first place. The impact of COVID-19 only exacerbates the issue of teacher recruitment and retention (Kay, 2020).

Amongst the many factors contributing to the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention, the workload of teachers is highlighted as one of the major issues. 'Teacher workload is at unprecedented levels' (Steward, 2018). The most recent DfE teacher workload survey showed teachers working on average 49.5 hours a week, pre-pandemic (National Education Union, 2021). Poor management and unmanageable workload are cited as the most common reasons teachers and leaders for leaving the FE sector. Most teachers said they didn't have time to update their subject knowledge or skills due to their workload. (Jones, 2015; DfE, 2020). In the Teacher Voice Omnibus survey published by the Department for Education in March 2018, the four key factors attributed to teachers' workload include 'accountability and perceived pressures of Ofsted, tasks set by senior and middle leaders, working to policies set at local and school level and policy change at national level' (Smith *et al.*, 2018, p.23). This is also true for the FE sector as the general secretary of Association of Teachers and Lecturers (which has been merged into the National Union of Teachers in 2017), Dr. Bousted said, 'The government needs to acknowledge that it is responsible for much of the current workload because staff have to keep re-planning what they are doing to keep up with changes to the curriculum and its funding cuts have led to colleges cutting jobs — particularly among admin and support staff.' (Bousted quoted in Jones, 2015, para. 13). The University and College Union (UCU) also conducted a workload survey in 2016 and similar findings are reported, including 'a significant decline in time spent on development activities including attending and presenting at conferences and networking, research and reading, self-directed study or scholarly activity' (UCU, 2016, p.2). This is the harsh reality that FE teachers are enduring in the current storm of reforms and changes, despite a speech on 10th March 2018

from Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds, who promised to reduce unnecessary workload and emphasises that teachers should focus on teaching. This challenge to reduce workload campaign will see how institutions and Ofsted respond to the current culture of 'managerialism' driven by onerous demands for statistics and performativity (Ball, 2003; Dennis, 2016).

On 23rd June 2016, the UK electorate voted to leave the European Union (BREXIT). The UK formally left the EU at the end of 31st January 2020 with a transitional period for the remainder of 2020. The impact and implications of BREXIT on the UK economy and education are not fully established but the Association of Colleges (AoC) have identified and explained key BREXIT issues for colleges on their website (Association of Colleges, 2018). In particular, there are concerns about 'teachers leaving for jobs in industry', which add further trepidation to already high staff turnover levels. With the uncertainty of how BREXIT might impact on the sector, it is important to stay informed of recent government negotiations with the EU and take careful consideration of how the FE sector manages this unforeseen future.

Another key factor influencing the FE sector is professionalism. Since the publication of Lord Lingfield's Independent Review of Professionalism in Further Education in 2012, it is no longer a statutory requirement for FE teachers to achieve qualified teaching and learning status (QTLS). This deregulation of the FE sector has led to individual colleges defining and regulating professionalism themselves with many colleges recruiting unqualified teachers as a means to save costs (Association of Teachers and Lecturers, 2014). This again echoes issues around recruitment and retention of FE teachers with deregulation of the sector implying that professionalism is not a priority and individuals with occupational or academic

experience and knowledge can teach without prior training and understanding of pedagogy.

Following Lord Lingfield's report (2012), the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) conducted a review of the 2007 professional standards originally developed by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK). The review, which included consultation with teachers, was undertaken to 'support teachers and trainers to maintain and improve standards of teaching, and outcomes for learners' (ETF, 2014, p.1). The introduction of the Professional Standards sets out the expectations of teachers and trainers working in the sector and ETF has a key role to promote these standards as a professional framework to help practitioners improve and develop their practice and subject knowledge (ETF, 2014). Currently, these standards are used as benchmark for QTLS and the Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) launched in 2017.

A significant report, *Training Needs Analysis* (ETF, 2018b), provides an insightful and detailed evaluation of the workforce development and training needs of the sector. Over 90% of providers responded that CPD activities carried out have met all or most of the needs of the organisation. However, over a third of individual respondents from FE colleges felt that some CPD activities they undertook were 'of little value' or were just 'tick box' training. Moreover, the report suggests that the main barriers to training for both individuals and organisations include 'pressure on staff time to release them for training' and 'shortfalls in available funding' (ETF, 2018b, p.8). This further reveals the need to explore the experiences of FE teachers' engagement with the professional development on offer.

Local Context

> *'So, we had the Ofsted inspection last year and we were given a Grade 3 with many areas in teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) requiring improvement. I had only just come back from maternity leave and the world seemed to come crashing down on us. It seemed that the College where I had been working for more than a decade was now not good enough. It was only three years ago that I joined the department where staff development and teacher training courses are provided. Because of the results of the Ofsted report, I started thinking about what and why had not been working with staff development and how rarely we know if these sessions have had an impact on teaching, learning and assessment (TLA).'* (I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 20 January 2018)

This personal reflection of the situation is a reality not just for my organisation, but I suspect one that is not unfamiliar in a number of colleges across the country (Coffield, 2017). In order for people to develop, they need to feel good about themselves and to be motivated to change (Ball, 2018). It is imperative to understand the motivation and needs of teachers to engage in professional development.

Feedback from the inspection report prompted me to reflect on our current staff development model and issues around engaging teachers in professional development. As part of my job role, I support staff with the development and improvement of teaching, learning and assessment (TLA). The current staff development model is based on the 'traditional' continuing professional development (CPD) model, which involves whole college Training Days, sharing good practice within subject areas, delivering training sessions, which are often driven by the results of Ofsted reports or formal observations, and mentoring. Although this model can contribute to professional learning, the activities are often disjointed and provide little evidence of how these CPD sessions are further

developed and have impact on the teachers' practice (Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Gleeson and James, 2017).

Although relatively new to this job role, I feel the frustration of engaging teachers with professional development. This requires investigating the barriers and reasons why teachers choose to participate or not in professional development and if there is a better model to engage teachers in the first instance. With a number of unsatisfactory issues raised in the Ofsted inspection report, there appears to be much resistance from teachers to proactively engage with professional learning. There are a number of factors, which might contribute to this resistance. These will be investigated in detail in the literature review, data collection and analysis phases of the thesis. Staff morale is low after the inspection. Staff motivation to engage in professional learning might be affected by increased workload which has already been identified earlier in the chapter as a national issue. It might be part of a 'fear culture' described by Claxton and Lucas (2015), Coffield (2017) and Gregson *et al.* (2015) created within the institution and the lack of trust between staff and leaders to allow open and honest discussion about teaching, learning and assessment.

There are issues around having the 'time' and 'space' for teachers to engage in collaborative ways to explore different strategies for TLA. This corresponds with the following quote, 'CPD opportunities in FE are few and access is made difficult by lack of funding, the sessional nature of the work, and there being less of a tradition of inter-institutional collaborative networks to share good practice than there is in schools' (Greatbatch and Tate, 2018, p.15). This resonates with the situation in my own workplace. As Greenacre (2017) discusses, during 2016 and 2017, 19% of lecturing staff had left their employment voluntarily after less than two years of service. Reasons include management style, leaving for a job with better pay or

prospects, career change, working conditions identified as a concern, promotion and lack of job security (Greenacre, 2017).

These concerns have further prompted me to research how Joint Practice Development (JPD) which encourages teachers to work collaboratively to share ideas, to plan, implement and evaluate together might help to improve outcomes for teaching, learning and assessment. Coffield (2017) goes even further suggesting an alternative model of inspection which draws upon Joint Practice Development (JPD) saying it is, 'proving to be a major advance in professional learning over teachers ''sharing practice'', which may not change what they do in classrooms; instead they jointly (J) evaluate their practice (P) in order to develop it (D)' (Coffield, 2017, p.39). Coffield's work certainly provides a wider and different perspective on how as a college, we should rethink and re-evaluate how effective our current staff development model is and to think about how, JPD might provide an alternative method to re-engage teachers in professional learning. Fielding *et al.* (2005) define JPD as 'learning new ways of working through mutual engagement that opens up and shares practices with others' (Fielding *et al.*, 2005, p.32). It is a 'democratic' process (Coffield and Wiiliamson, 2012), which connects practitioners to discuss and explore ideas together. The model Gregson *et al.* (2015b) outlined in their 'Six-Step Cycle for putting joint practice development into action' will provide the foundation for testing out my research. A detailed guide from Gregson *et al. (*2013), with examples of how the Six-Step Cycle is implemented, provides 'an overview of how JPD could be used to improve teaching, learning and assessment within their organisations as an integral part of existing approaches to CPD' (ibid., p.6). I am keen to test out and examine the JPD cycle within this research. This study aims to bring to light the lived experiences of FE teachers in collaboration to develop a

narrative account of professional development through the implementation of JPD in practice.

Having discussed the context and problems in FE, the next chapter commences with a literature review on the exploration of different continuing professional development models, including literature on the JPD model and its implementation. Factors, which influence professional learning, will be investigated. The literature review provides the critical background and knowledge on why and how the JPD model might be introduced in our institution and what differences can be made to strengthen professional learning.

The methodology underpinning this research focuses on qualitative data and narrative inquiry (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Daiute, 2013; Kim, 2015; Riessman, 2008). The rationale for using narrative research method is based on its strong 'inclusion of social, cultural and environmental influences on experiences' (Haydon *et al.*, 2018). The method offers a collaborative and equal connection between the researchers and the participants; as Hogan and Noddings (cited in Connelly and Clandinin, 1990) emphasise narrative inquiry allows both researchers and practitioners to give their 'voice' through building relationships, sharing experiences and connecting between the participants' personal and social world (Clandinin, 2006; Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007). This method provides the theoretical basis to tell the experiences of teachers who are in a 'caring community' and 'see themselves as participants in the community' (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). This strongly mirrors my personal philosophy and values a collaborative model of enquiry as a theoretical approach.

Research methods will include interviews with teachers to establish relationships and to use them as the beginning of a collaborative journey to build dialogues for

discussion of issues and questions. Based on the interview dialogues and notes, the intention is to follow the stories of these practitioners and record their experiences. The narrative accounts collected during this journey will provide empirical data for analysis and evaluation of the impact of using the JPD model.

Shaping Research Focus and Questions

The aim of this research is to collaborate with practitioners to co-construct a narrative account of professional development based on the lived experiences of implementing JPD in practice.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What do FE teachers tell us about their experiences of CPD?

2. In particular, what are the ways that teachers describe the enablers and barriers to their CPD?

3. What are FE teachers' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model?

4. How do the narrative accounts co-constructed from teachers' experiences of participating in JPD workshops tell us about implementing JPD in practice?

Chapter One Conclusion: Back to the Start

This chapter sets out the context of the thesis from the global landscape of technical and vocational education and training, to the national picture for FE colleges down to the focus on the local context of my organisation and the research questions at the heart of this thesis. An overview of key factors which influence teachers' professional development and learning has been outlined and explained with current political and societal changes. My personal critical reflection and work-based dilemmas have set the scene for why this thesis aims to put JPD into practice

by using the narrative inquiry method in an attempt to tell and interpret the experiences of what it is like to try out JPD with FE teachers. This chapter concludes with a preliminary structure of the thesis, as well as a brief overview of my positionality and philosophical stance within this research, this will be critically examined in Chapter Three. In the next chapter I continue to explore factors impacting on teachers' professional development and learning in more detail, as well as critiquing different models of continuing professional development commonly used in FE.

Chapter Two: Literature Review: What Others Have Said and How This Informs My Thinking

Introduction

This chapter explores current literature, policies and research that has direct influence and impact on the professional development and learning of teachers in Further Education (FE) colleges. The first section looks at issues relevant to the recruitment and retention of teachers in FE, grounding this discussion in the current political and educational context. The chapter continues by comparing and contrasting literature relating to definitions of continuing professional development (CPD) and professional learning (PL). The main part of the chapter focuses on critiquing six models of CPD, and the Joint Practice Development model and how these impact on teachers' professional learning. The chapter ends with a discussion of issues relating to FE teachers' engagement with professional development and learning.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Further Education (FE) colleges in the UK are facing a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention (Bloom, 2018b; Keohane, 2017). The current Technical Qualification reforms through the introduction of T Levels (Department for Education, 2016; 2019; Lord, 2021) and the prevailing government agenda in terms of targets (Sainsbury, 2016; Department for Education, 2017), means that FE college teachers are under immense pressure to change curricular offers and update their knowledge in the ever diminishing time available (Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Gregson *et al.*, 2020). Coupled with impact from the pandemic, the newly introduced T Levels present a potential

further strain on the recruitment of 'well-qualified and experienced' subject specialist teachers and put pressure on existing teachers who are already 'over-worked and under-valued' with increased level of contact hours and the new technical qualifications demand for high quality industrial placements (Martin, 2018; Lord, 2021). There is still uncertainty as to whether the implementation of T Levels will last longer and be more 'successful' than previous qualifications: General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and Diplomas, which were the products from previous reforms (Richmond, 2018). The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) published two FE workforce data reports between 2017 and 2019, which highlighted a 3 per cent decline in the FE workforce (ETF, 2019a). With the recent reforms expected to 'reshape the skills that are required', there are growing concerns over recruitment particularly in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects (Martin, 2018). Even more uncertainty from BREXIT has affected the workforce over the impact of 'economic disruption' and 'mobility' of staff and students in FE colleges (AoC, 2019). Such political and economic upheavals impact negatively upon FE teacher retention and their engagement with professional development and learning. With such threats and concerns over teacher recruitment and retention, it is not surprising that teachers' professional development and learning has become fragmented and increasingly driven by the inspection framework (Coffield and Willisamson, 2012; Coffield, 2017). Further exploration of the factors, which affect professional development and learning will be examined throughout this chapter.

Although some FE colleges provide time and support for teachers to engage in professional development and learning, the extent to which teachers have

autonomy in deciding what that development will be, is questionable. Amongst the different types of professional development, there still remains little research on how different models of professional development (PD) and professional learning (PL) transform teachers' practice and enable teachers to drive their own professional learning. A key question here is the extent to which external factors, such as policies, inspection frameworks and the performativity culture of FE, influence professional development and learning. Kennedy (2014b) argues that there is a growing need for longitudinal studies to understand the relationship between pedagogical and policy constructs of CPD in a variety of contexts. Therefore, part of this thesis sets out to analyse and contribute to discussions on CPD in the context of FE colleges.

In an era of 'hyper-accountability', there remains the issue of how leadership and management in FE colleges recognise teachers' work and life by supporting them to develop their 'craftsmanship' and have real focus on teaching and supporting learners (Coffield, 2017). Within the complexity of performativity and staff reactions to the culture of 'hyper-competition' and 'hyper-accountability' (Ball, 2018), FE teachers face the dilemma of conformity in meeting the pressures of this culture or deciding to leave the sector all together. Teachers appear to have lost autonomy in controlling their own professional learning even when they have good intentions and ideas to contribute to the organisations, their voices are not heard. The following quotation from Sennett illustrates the kind of organisations where leadership and management value their workers and trust them to do their work well.

> *'Most people want to believe that their lives add up to more than a random series of disconnected events. The well-crafted institution wants to respond to this desire, once it decides that loyalty matters. Workers who have been retrained by an institution are much more*

bonded to it than are in-and-out workers. Loyalty especially matters to a business when the business cycle turns down; workers will stay the course, work longer hours, even take pay cuts rather than desert. Strengthening skills is neither an individual nor a collective panacea. In the modern economy, dislocation is a permanent fact. But figuring out how to build on existing skills – to expand them or use them as a base for acquiring other skills – is a strategy that helps orient individuals in time. The well-crafted organization will want to pursue this strategy to keep itself together.'

(Sennett, 2008, p.266)

The vast majority of teachers choose to enter the profession because they want to support learners in achieving their very best. However, a recent survey from YouGov reveals that three in four teachers believe that teaching as a profession is less valued than five years ago (Ashmore, 2019). The issue of teacher recruitment is further hindered by the pressure of work on teachers with limited resources. It is pivotal in the current politically unstable climate to establish how teachers' quality impacts on the quality of education. It can be argued that the quality of education rests on the quality of its teachers (UNESCO, 2018). Effective teachers, according to Hattie (2008), are one of the key factors influencing better student learning and outcomes. What this implies is the importance of teacher quality and by extension, their continuing professional learning.

Increased pressure from central government policy changes and financial budget cuts result in little increase in teachers' pay but increasing demands on teachers' workload (ETF, 2019a). Teachers want to do their jobs well and they want to put their efforts into classroom practice; however, 'teachers are under pressure to "increase their accountability" and to demonstrate competent performance against centrally defined criteria' (Gregson *et al.*, 2015a, p.118). Too many colleges now put teachers under scrutiny by judging good teachers and underperforming teachers

through learner recruitment and retention data, surveys, achievements rates and records. This data becomes the 'indicators' of what constitutes 'impact' on learners. Teachers leave the profession because teaching is no longer just about educating learners but includes other external factors which 'standardise' what is expected of teachers and the quality of teaching. Teachers struggle to meet inconsistent and constantly changing standards that are imposed internally and externally. This leads to a mixture of fear and mistrust between teachers, managers and leaders. Recent studies reveal the 'toxic atmosphere' of the FE sector, which imply the outcry for stability and culture change in the FE sector (Coffield *et al.,* 2014; Petrie, 2015a; Petrie, 2015b).

Sennett's quotation inspires what professional learning communities such as FE colleges should build upon; through believing and trusting that teachers want to do a great job, organisations should support teachers in mastering their skills. Coffield (2017) supports Sennett, saying organisations should support experienced teachers in becoming expert teachers. He cites Fielding and Moss to argue that educators should be given 'the resources, time and space to grow as professionals' (Coffield, 2017, p.36).

> '*Education is first and finally about how we learn to lead good lives together, lives that enable us individually and collectively to survive and flourish.*'
> (Fielding and Moss, 2011, cited in Coffield, 2017, p.36)

The value of education is for institutions, systems and society to prepare individuals to develop and learn to live their lives well. Education should engage everyone in the community to learn, develop and grow together. Coffield (2017) draws on

Dewey's quotation to justify the purpose of education, 'the value of school education is the extent in which it creates a desire for continued growth and supplies means for making the desire effective in fact' (Dewey, 1916, cited in Coffield, 2017, p.36). Based on this pragmatic view of education, it is vital for FE Colleges to 'reimagine' how learners, teachers and leaders can work together to grow within this professional community. As for FE teachers, it is time to rethink what professional identity means to FE teachers and to reclaim teachers' voices in professionalism (Biesta, 2012; Petrie, 2015a).

Definitions of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Since further education (FE) workforce regulations were removed in 2012, there is no longer a mandatory requirement for teachers and trainers in the FE sector to declare their annual CPD activities (Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 2012; Lingfield, 2012). However, in most colleges, there are still internal requirements to undertake and record CPD as part of staff development requirements which are sometimes in line with staff appraisal systems. What is considered to be valuable professional development to teachers may not be thought of as being of the same value to college management, and vice versa. In FE colleges, CPD includes a wide range of activities such as training days, mentoring, coaching, subject specialist training, attending meetings, standardisation activities, action research and observations etc.

Historically, most definitions of CPD are generalised and purposed around developing competency of the subject knowledge and skills which teachers should acquire for their teaching, e.g. CPD is the means by which employees maintain the

knowledge and skills needed to do their job (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b). However, the Society for Education and Training (SET) have provided a more current and independent definition centred around professionalism; the purpose of SET is 'to help teachers and trainers develop and improve their skills to enhance their own professional standing, and with it the wider quality and recognition of the education and training system' (SET, 2016). SET is 'the professional membership organisation for practitioners working in the post 16 education and training system' and is part of the Education and Training Foundation which is 'the government backed, sector-owned workforce and professional development body for the Further Education (FE) and Training sector' (ETF, 2016a). The Professional Standards for Further Education teachers and trainers were first developed in 2014 by ETF and consist of twenty standards underpinning professional knowledge and understanding, professional skills and professional values and attributes. The ETF Professional Standards can be found in Appendix 1. These standards are set out as professional indicators for teachers and trainers to self-evaluate their own professional development and are employed as a framework for Qualified Teaching and Learning Status (QTLS) and Advanced Teacher Status (ATS). There has been an ongoing debate and research about the impact of the professional standards on teachers' professional development. Further examination of the professional standards will be found within the later section reviewing the award bearing model of CPD.

Traditional approaches to CPD often involve a one-way dissemination of knowledge or strategies with little continuity to allow teachers to prepare or transfer them into practice. Many CPD events or training tend to be organised in a 'hierarchical'

structure in which 'expert' teachers or presenters lead the training or workshop sessions to disseminate or share 'good practice'. Gregson *et al.* argue that such CPD opportunities might 'be helpful in raising awareness of new developments, exchanging ideas and sharing resources…but it is not enough to guarantee it' (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b, p.268). This argument is supported by Eraut (2004) who uses the metaphor of an iceberg to describe how the formal learning of knowledge appears only above the surface of the iceberg with the large amount of further learning necessary to transfer 'the codified knowledge' into 'personal knowledge' in practice to 'remain hidden below the surface' (Eraut, 2004, p.15).

Appleby and Hillier (2012) raise issues around how mandatory CPD has increasingly become 'externally imposed, unsupported and based upon an uncritical individualism' (Appleby and Hillier, 2012. p.32). Moreover, there has been criticism from several commentators who argue that competency based CPD has fallen into part of performance management indicators, what Zukas (2006, cited in Appleby and Hillier, 2012, p.32) describes as 'competing competency discourses' which view the 'individual reflective practitioner being the sole location of learning' (ibid.).

Day (1999) argues that many of the professional development definitions focus on 'the acquisition of knowledge and teaching skills' and do not appreciate the complexity of the process of professional development. Day (1999) provides a more nuanced definition,

> *'Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good*

professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives.'
(Day, 1999, p.4)

Day's characterisation of what professional development means, provides a much wider view of what constitutes professional development through a personal, emotional and social perspective. Although Day's definition dates back to 1999, it still remains relevant to the current context of FE colleges today. His more recent work (Day, 2017) emphasises this inter-relationship of different perspectives on professional development. Although collaborative forms of CPD have been identified as valuable to teachers, there is limited research on how they impact on teachers' professional development and learning and how the results of their learning impact on students' progress, particularly in the context of FE colleges. Therefore, central to this study is to implement a different model called JPD to collaborate with teachers in professional development and learning and to tell the narrative accounts of the lived experiences.

Inspired by the work of Fielding *et al.* (2015) and Hargreaves (2012) and recommended by Coffield (2017), I have chosen the Joint Practice Development (JPD) model as the form of staff development to be trialled in this study. This model, according to Coffield (2017), 'is proving to be a major advance in professional learning over teachers ''sharing practice'', which may not change what they do in classrooms; instead they jointly (J) evaluate their practice (P) in order to develop it (D)' (ibid., p.39). Gregson *et al.* (2015b) established 'the Six-Step Cycle for Putting Joint Practice Development into Action' (see Figure 2.1) with suggestions for how each cycle with a corresponding workshop can be conducted (ibid., p.270). This

cycle will be implemented as a springboard for how the guiding principles of the Joint Practice Development model can motivate teachers to engage in professional development and learning. It is a democratic model for promoting and sustaining teacher autonomy in professional learning. A more in-depth critique of JPD is found within the discussion of CPD models later in this chapter.
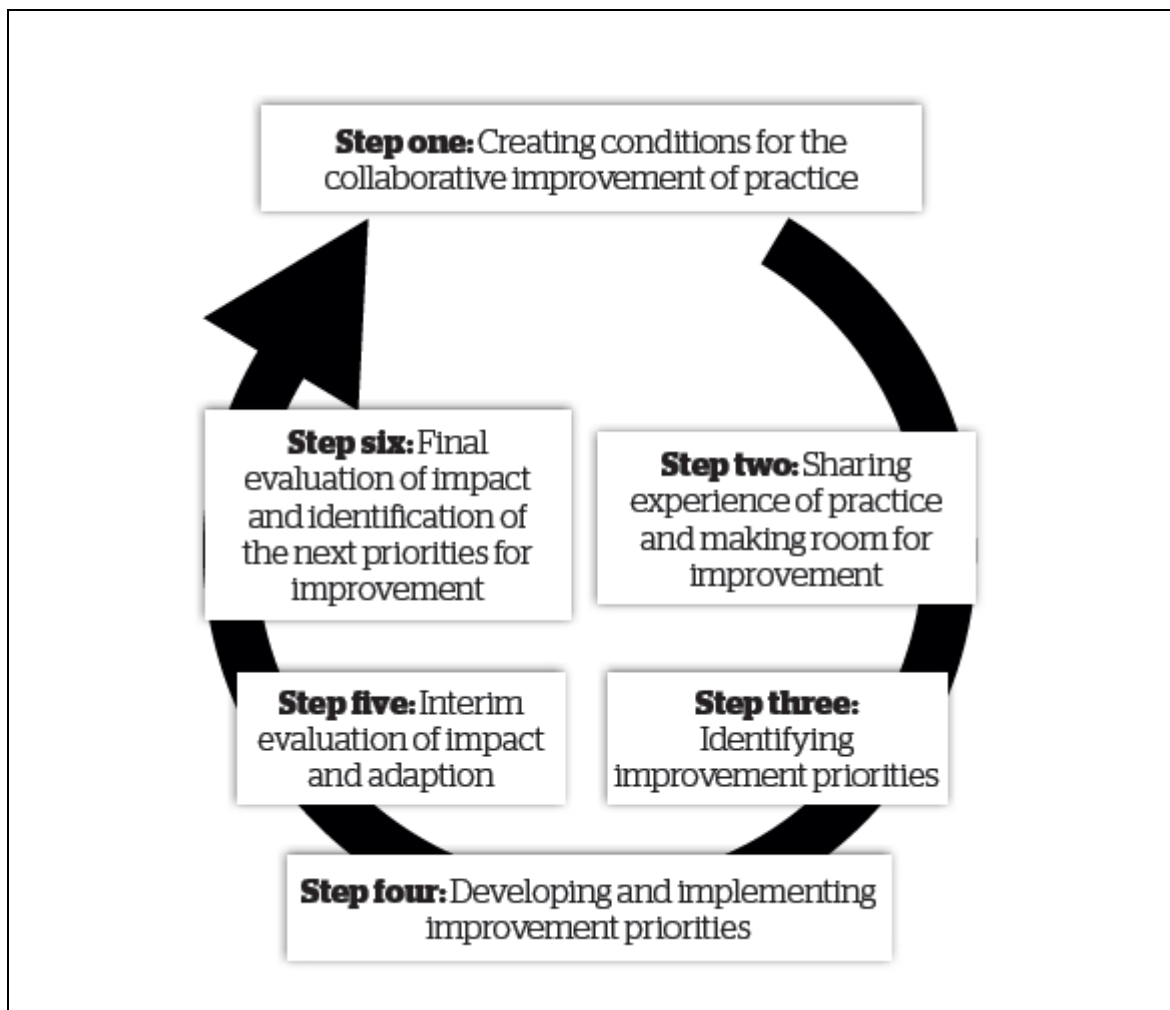
Figure 2.1: The Six Step Cycle for Putting Joint Practice Development into Action (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b, p.269)

Professional Learning (PL) and Professional Development (PD)

Williams (2009) explains that 'Professional Learning (PL) could be considered as an effective extension of Professional Development (PD). PL occurs when a participant is able to implement and make changes to their work practices on a continuing basis' (Williams, 2009, p.5). However, Timperley (2011) has differentiated professional development from professional learning. She argues that much professional development is 'often seen as merely participation' (ibid., p.5) and has very little impact on teachers to improve student learning; whereas professional learning 'implies an internal process in which individuals create professional knowledge through interaction with this information in a way that challenges previous assumptions and creates new meanings' (ibid., p.5). Based on her professional development projects (Temperley *et al.*, 2007), she concludes that it is vital to place students at the centre of professional learning in order to shift from professional development to professional learning. She also claims that other fundamental shifts contributing to professional learning include 'attending to requisite knowledge and skills, engaging in systematic inquiry into the effectiveness of practice, being explicit about underpinning theories of professionalism and engaging everyone in the system in learning' (ibid., p.4). The transference of knowledge requires time and space for teachers to reflect and cultivate their learning collectively (Rushton and Suter, 2012).

Coffield (2017) also emphasises that Professional Learning (PL) is 'the key engine of improvement' and he proposes a series of questions for educators and managers to reflect on. The key message for PL is that educators need to learn collaboratively to develop their professional confidence in order to challenge their own and other's

assumptions and methods, with the focus on improving learners' learning. The drive to PL does not merely rely on teachers but everyone.

However, with the FE sector in the UK facing challenging times with rigorous reforms (Ball, 2018), the uncertainty of political impact from BREXIT (Association of Colleges, 2018) and COVID-19, teacher professionalism is facing unprecedented 'testing times' (Day, 2017). Teachers' professional development in the FE sector often means that teachers need to update their knowledge and skills rapidly to accommodate the changing needs of teaching subjects and levels. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought an immense challenge which tested teachers' responsiveness to adapt their teaching online. As always, FE teachers rallied to the requirements of online teaching for students with perseverance and resilience (Crawley *et al.*, 2021). It is thus important for teachers to consider educational empowerment and teacher autonomy in driving their own professional development and learning.

This literature review follows the framework developed by Walliman and Buckler (2008) moving from the 'macro' level of defining key terminology associated with professional learning to the 'micro' level of critical analysis on a selection of six continuing professional development models. These include training, mentoring and coaching, the deficit model, the cascade model, award bearing model, community of practice (Kennedy, 2005; 2014b; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) and the JPD model (Gregson *et al.*, 2015). A critical examination of the barriers to professional learning, including motivation, time and resources are identified and analysed (Fielding, *et al.*, 2005). The final section of this chapter brings the discussion back to how the literature relates to the research aim and research questions for this thesis.

Models of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

There are a range of different approaches traditionally at the heart of CPD activity. The most commonly used approaches are evaluated and compared in this chapter through a discussion of the literature supporting their use.

With a diverse range of literature on the different forms and shapes of CPD, Kennedy (2005) proposes a framework which includes nine key models of CPD with an assessment of individual characteristics. The framework is constructed and based on the spectrum of the 'capacity for supporting professional autonomy and transformative practice' (Kennedy, 2005, p.235). Although the examples that Kennedy (2005) uses are mainly in the Scottish context, there are resemblances to circumstances found in the English context. The framework provides a solid foundation with commonly acknowledged terminologies for reviewing the CPD models in this chapter. Kennedy has since reviewed her 2005 work and has updated her framework (Kennedy, 2014b). She argues there is a need to 'consider the extent to which the component parts of the framework have stood the test of time' and a need to 'develop the conceptual basis of the framework further to enable a more systematic and contextually appropriate analysis of CPD policies' (ibid., p.5). The differences between the 2005 and 2014 framework include changes to some of the terminology and their purpose across the 'transmission to transformative' spectrum. Based on a spectrum of purposes for CPD, the 'transmission' type of CPD 'is conceived of as fulfilling the function of preparing teachers to implement reforms', for example, 'training, award-bearing and deficit models'; the 'transformative' type of CPD 'is conceived of as supporting teachers in contributing to and shaping education policy and practice', for example, 'the collaborative professional inquiry models' (Kennedy, 2005, p.248; Kennedy, 2014b, p.7).

Six of the nine CPD models as well as Joint Practice Development (JPD) model have been selected for review and critique as they are routinely employed within the context of my workplace. The following questions are adapted from Kennedy's original 2005 framework for CPD critique with consideration of her 2014 review and are used as the means to critically evaluate each CPD model examined in this chapter:

- *'What types of knowledge acquisition does the CPD support, i.e. procedural or propositional?*
- *Is the principal focus on individual or collective development?*
- *To what extent is the CPD used as a form of accountability?*
- *What capacity does the CPD allow for supporting professional autonomy and teacher agency?*
- *Is the fundamental purpose of the CPD to provide a means of transmission or to facilitate transformative practice?'*

<div align="right">(Kennedy, 2005, p.248; Kennedy, 2014, p.10)</div>

The Training Model

One of the most common models of CPD is for organisations to arrange in-house CPD events and training days. It is usual for FE colleges to use their CPD budget on internal training days involving all staff attending pre-determined workshop sessions that are often identified through college quality improvement plans (QIP)[1] based upon self-assessment reports (SAR)[2] and Ofsted requirements.

Gregson *et al.* (2015a) comment on this type of training as, 'usually (this) involves attending time-consuming, often expensive courses, conferences or other events where someone who is considered (or considers themselves) to be ''an expert'' tells everyone else in attendance what to do' (Gregson *et al.*, 2015a, p.386). Although

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[1] A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is designed for educational providers to self-assess own performance in delivering quality education and to plan future improvements.
[2] A Self-Assessment Report (SAR) is used to identify and evidence key strengths and areas for improvement of educational providers.

this type of CPD provides networking opportunities and can also be 'helpful in raising awareness of new developments, exchanging ideas and sharing resources', Gregson *et al.* (2015a) argue that 'they are not enough to guarantee it'. Although this method can be a fast way of introducing and updating 'best practice' across the organisation, without follow-on support and thorough research in advance, these training days can fall into merely 'selling' and 'promoting' ideas. Invariably, these events focus primarily on processes and procedures instead of teaching and learning. Another key limitation is that many of these events are organised from 'the top down' without using systematic consultation to find out what teachers need. Similar views are expressed by Kennedy (2005) who describes this CPD model as quite often 'a standard-based view of teacher development where teachers strive to demonstrate particular skills specified in a national agreed standard' (Kennedy, 2005, p.3). One of the major drawbacks and how this model fails to have an obvious impact on professional learning is 'the manner' in which this model is used and delivered and in which teachers are 'placed in a passive role as recipients of specific knowledge' (Kennedy, 2005, p.4).

In my role as teacher in professional development and teacher education, the limitations resonate keenly with my own experiences. I have been involved in many in-house training days and the impact from these training sessions often shows little evidence of how teachers transfer these ideas or 'good practice'. Equally important for me as a teacher educator is to unravel the reasons why good practice is not always transferred and what possible approaches can facilitate deeper professional learning. My own reflection and experience of delivering training days led to the primary rationale for this thesis, which is to trial a collaborative approach of professional development and learning together with teachers.

Mentoring and Coaching

The mentoring and coaching model is another well-established approach to supporting teachers' professional development and learning. This model is usually based on a one-to-one relationship, with the more experienced teacher supporting the novice teacher by modelling and introducing practical skills and knowledge. Coaching is different from mentoring but 'is sometimes used interchangeably with mentoring' (Day, 2017, p.117) and is often used as a developmental tool within a mentoring relationship.

Brockbank and McGill (2012) identify the purpose of mentoring and coaching as 'the learning and development of an individual, a process which involves change for the individual client and potentially for the organization in which they work' (Brockbank and McGill, 2012, p.9). A situational framework developed by Brockbank (2010, cited in Brockbank and McGill, 2012) suggests a two-dimensional analysis between ownership of purpose and learning outcome to identify four situations of mentoring and coaching. These include performance, engagement, developmental and systematic change situation as visualised in the figure below.
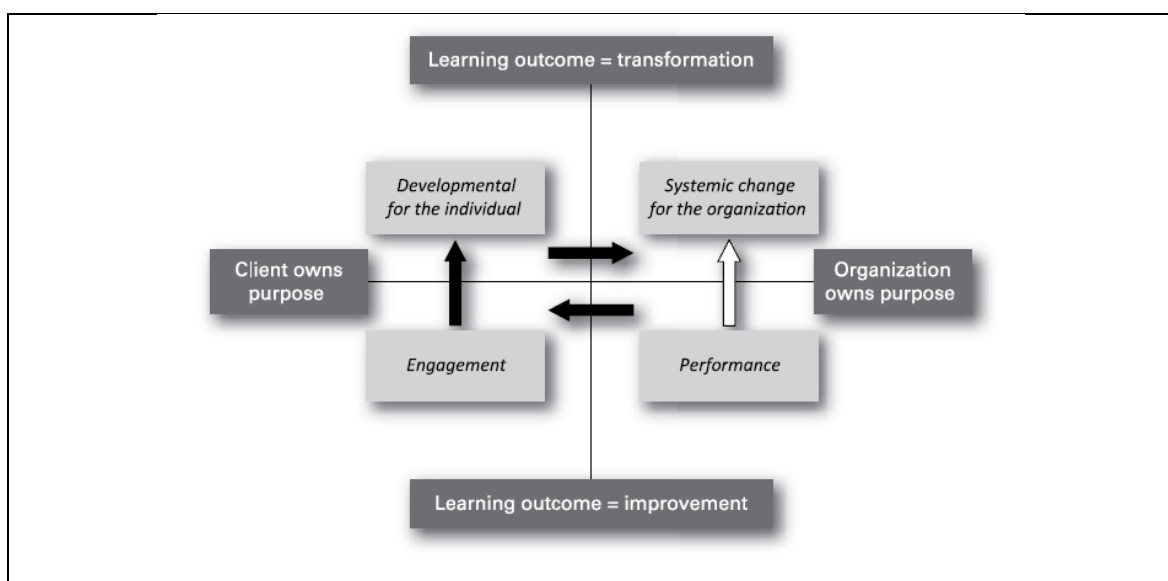
Figure 2.2: Situational Coaching or Mentoring (Brockbank, 2010, cited in Brockbank and McGill, 2010, p.13)

In the context of FE colleges, mentoring and coaching are often employed to support new teachers or staff who 'under-perform' and require improvement in their practice. This model offers a cost-effective method for in-house support which is potentially 'individualized and flexible' and teachers should benefit from developing practice on a regular basis (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b). Some of the benefits include opportunities to discuss experience and difficulties in their practice and in the workplace, and support teachers with their pedagogical knowledge and teaching techniques (Hobson *et al.*, 2015).

However, there are various factors which impact on the effectiveness of this type of CPD, not least the quality of mentors and coaches. Morton-Cooper and Palmer (2000, cited in Brockbank and McGill, 2012) characterise a list of 'destructive minds' which 'toxic' mentors may have and amongst them, 'the rigid, stereotypical mind with set values and ideas, found in bureaucratic organizations, so a danger in the public service sector' (ibid, p.69). There is risk of damage to the supported teachers if poorly trained mentors are used. It is also likely to deter teachers from appreciating their own beliefs and values hence building a barrier to trust in the equality of dialogue that Day suggests (Day, 2017).

Other limitations include 'hierarchical relationships; one-way flow of influence and expertise from mentor; taken-for-granted practices can be perpetuated; can inhibit the development of reflective critical attitude … students are rarely involved' (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b, p.385). Elsewhere Kennedy (2014) argues that 'mentoring can be used to support, encourage autonomy, creativity and independence, but

equally can be used as a powerful means of professional socialisation to encourage conformity to the status quo' (Kennedy, 2014, p.6). As discussed previously, the mentoring and coaching model is often used to support 'under-performing' teachers with 'a list of standards' which should be seen in their practice or 'ticked off' within a deadline. This 'surveillance' relationship certainly does not motivate personal professional development and self-reflection (Rushton and Suter, 2012; Mather and Seifert ,2014).

The Deficit Model

The deficit model resembles the training model with 'transmissive' purpose; both have a focus on the standardisation of teachers' practice and performance (Kennedy, 2005). Typical approaches and characteristics of implementation of this model include individual workshops or a collection of workshops organised by the leadership team; and these workshops are led by internal or external 'experts'. The intention of this model is to 'remedy perceived weaknesses in individual teacher performance' (Kennedy, 2005, p.239). This is closely associated with performance management and assumes that teachers need to fulfil certain 'expectations' and if they fail to meet these 'expectations' they are deemed incompetent or ineffective in their practice. What is questionable with this model is who these expectations are for; what standards are judged against these expectations; what the fundamental purposes of fulfilling these expectations are. Coffield (2017) argues that to enable transformative learning, leadership needs to 'stop prescribing or controlling teachers' efforts at change and instead nurture the improvisations that flowed from the new ideas they had created' (Coffield, 2017, p.41). The deficit model in many ways can be comprehended as a top-down prescriptive method to address what the

management team would like to 'fix' and is often associated with inspection frameworks.

This type of CPD model can be described as 'a quick fix' which only covers up what is perceived as 'underperformance' and 'weaknesses' without promoting a deeper understanding of why and what causes 'poor' performance. It is also arguable that effective interdependent competency of teachers relies on leadership which promotes the conditions of professional learning (Kennedy,2005).

Although the deficit model might temporarily address and remedy teachers' deficiency in competency in a short period of time, it is seen as a model based on a managerial perspective of professionalism, which views teachers as 'employees', who should be compliant. It very often judges teachers based on standards which are imposed externally. This technical-rational model of professional development and learning is problematic in many ways including a lack of respect for teachers as professionals and offering no encouragement for teachers to take ownership of their professional development.

The Cascade Model

The cascade model aims to maximise the number of participants within limited resources during a short period of time and this makes it a popular choice for FE colleges and educational organisations with restricted CPD budgets (Dichaba and Mokhele, 2012; Gregson *et al.*, 2015). Due to the potential to engage with large number of participants, it is sometimes referred to as a multiplier model (Karalis, 2016). It is usually disseminated or cascaded by individual teachers who have

attended internal or external training events or workshops and followed by the participants sharing the information with a wider number of colleagues. Some believe that the cascade model allows different stages of development. For example, training sessions are delivered in segments and materials can be disseminated incrementally so that progress can be tracked and checked (Dichaba and Mokhele, 2012).

Despite the advantages of large-scale and cost-effective dissemination, this model of CPD is often based on a hierarchical organisational agenda (Karalis, 2016) and the principal purpose of this type of CPD is one-way transmissive (Kennedy, 2014). The information filtered down to the participants can often be distorted and misunderstood during the training (Hayes, 2000; Suzuki, 2008). Other issues around the effectiveness of this model include the generalisation and the gap between different levels and subjects of teaching; there are few opportunities for trainers and participants to follow up progress and evaluation. It does not always provide evidence of how the result of the training leads to direct impact on teachers' professional learning and how the implementation of the informed practice benefits learners' learning. An important factor which drives the transference of good practice or change of behaviour is motivation and commitment. One major problem of this model is 'the manner' in which it is implemented (Hayes, 2000) and some argue that this type of professional development becomes 'a management control tool' (Mather and Seifert, 2014, p.105). This 'top-down' approach does not encourage teachers to participate in the decision-making of training needs from the teachers' perspective. This passive and one-way commitment hardly leads to transference of knowledge or behavioural change (Suzuki, 2008). It is important for

teachers to consider questions of 'why' rather than questions of 'what' and 'how' in relation to professional development and learning (Nieto, 2003).

Much of the literature on the cascade model is in the context of in-service teacher education at primary and secondary levels in developing countries (Hayes, 2000; Suzuki, 2008). This model is also commonly implemented in FE colleges in the format of cross college training days and local training events. Evaluation of the cascade model is largely being criticised as having little impact on the 'transfer' of good practice.

In a more contemporary format, some of the approaches in implementing this model are digitalised in the form of virtual learning environments (VLE), online videos, podcasts, online webinars, webchats and so on. Some might describe it as a blended learning model of CPD (Ossiannilsson, 2018). With COVID-19 disruption, there is a surge of online CPD on offer. Examples of this type of CPD model can be found in many of the recent external training offered by the Education and Training Foundation and Association of Colleges which provide professional development or training. There seems to be an emerging trend in combining the cascade model along with another form of CPD model, such as following up with face to face or virtual mentoring and coaching sessions. Although this mixed model of CPD may not seem a new concept, it is a possible way of bridging the issues around changing behaviour and commitment. Flexibility for accessing information and taking control of the choice of training content may be attractive but caution needs to be taken as this trend of digitalised CPD as online delivery on its own without any support or contact can lead to isolation (Croft *et al.*, 2010). As Haye (2000, p.136) argues, 'It

should be clear then that, if any innovation is to have a chance of moving from the planner's desk to the classroom, the process needs to be carefully managed.'

The Award-bearing Model

The award-bearing model is usually associated with studying on programmes or courses validated by higher education institutions, external examination organisations or professional development bodies. The content and structure of these programmes are externally validated. Kennedy (2004) describes this as 'a mark of quality assurance' but can equally be viewed 'as the exercise of control' (Kennedy, 2004, p. 238). The 'assessment criteria' set out by awarding bodies are often used as standards and teachers are required to use academic discourse to demonstrate and evidence their practical experience and performance. Teacher training courses, such as the Certificate and Diploma in Education and Training, are often mandatory to teachers who are new to teaching in FE colleges. Many teachers need to complete this type of course in order to be deemed 'qualified'. Success in these qualifications are often reflected in teachers' pay scales. It is important to note that this type of teaching qualifications is more associated with the 'initial' training or education of teachers, rather than the CPD they may access after completion.

Externally awarded status or qualifications can bring professional benefits such as career progression and promotion (Avis *et al.,* 2019). In the English context of Further Education and Training, Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status (QTLS) is a recognised status which presents as a badge of professionalism and commitment to being a professional teacher (ETF, 2016b). It is a voluntary process

which requires teachers to complete professional formation providing evidence to demonstrate the effective use of skills and knowledge in practice, based on professional standards. These standards were developed and published by ETF in 2014 (see Appendix 1). Prior to the ETF standards, two sets of standards were published by the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) in 1999 and by the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) in 2006. Some concerns have been raised in relation to the purpose of the short-lived iterations of professional standards (Husband, 2015; Tummons, 2016). Tummons (2016) argues that these standards are valued by some teachers as helpful guidelines to facilitate discussion, debate and reflection on practice; but on the other hand, some teachers see them as unavoidable box-ticking exercises to achieve qualifications or licenses. Whilst the impact of professional standards remains uncertain, it is imperative to recognise that the FE sector has been regulated and then deregulated. The underlying issues from the wider political climate, such as a paucity of funding and regulatory systems and managerial culture, will continue to 'marginalise' the FE sector (Tummons, 2016, p.11).

However, Hattie takes a different view, believing that 'professional standards for teachers must be backed by assessment and a regulated structure' (Hattie, 2019, p.11). He emphasises that 'the Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in England should be part of a system of national regulation of teaching (ibid.)'. Furthermore, he also addresses the importance of 'shared evaluations' of teachers' professional development that shapes teachers' beliefs which impact on students' learning and experiences (ibid.). The implications perhaps emphasise that standards are only meaningful to teachers when they see the value of them in

making a difference to their learners, instead of them being imposed as a method of compliance.

In 2017, Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) was introduced by the Education and Training Foundation. The purpose of ATS is to provide 'the badge of advanced professionalism and mastery in the Further Education and Training Sector' (ETF, 2018a). Teachers who are awarded with the status should demonstrate 'mastery in teaching and/or training; an exemplary degree of subject knowledge in their area of professional expertise; and effectiveness in working collaboratively to improve teaching standards amongst their peers or within their organisation' (ibid.). From 2019, teachers achieving ATS are also conferred with Chartered Teacher Status by the Chartered College of Teaching (CCT), previously known as the College of Teachers which held the Royal Charter for the teaching profession. The introduction of ATS provides recognitions for experienced teachers as well as possible career progression for them. As ATS has only been in place since 2017, the concrete evidence of what ATS brings to experienced teachers remains uncertain and the ETF still collects evidence and testimony to ascertain its impact. Some of the major challenges described by ATS holders include time for reflection and attainment of mastery practice; significant 'step-up' from QTLS; and the criticality of receiving appropriate mentoring and coaching support (SET, 2019). The emerging trends of how ATS supports and benefits teachers' professionalism include raising the status of the teaching profession and providing recognition of teachers' expertise (SET, 2019). Further research on the direct and indirect impact of ATS is necessary to understand and evaluate how teachers engage with professional development and learning and what differences are made through the process of ATS.

In summary, the award-bearing model of professional development can bring external accredited recognition to teachers but the debate between a 'managerial' or 'audit' professionalism discourse and an 'autonomous' professionalism discourse continues to influence teacher education and policies (Révai, 2018). Leaders of FE colleges need to take careful considerations of teachers' professional development learning needs from novice to mastery levels.

Community of Practice (CoP)

The notion of communities of practice is not new and there has been growing discussion and research on how communities of practice are seen as being a key to improving the performance of individuals and organisations. Lesser and Storck (2001, cited in Day, 2017) provide a mapping of how communities of practice connect with social capital and organizational performance. Their 'business-oriented' explanation of how this type of collaboration is implemented, demonstrates a wider range of benefits, including 'individual growth, raised expectations, collective sense of trust, identity and well-being and standards of teaching and learning' (ibid., p.117).

There are different definitions and understandings of what communities of practice represent. Lave and Wenger (1991) were the first to develop the concept of communities of practice (CoP). They define CoP as 'a group of people who come together to share common interests and goals, with the aim of sharing information, developing knowledge and developing themselves both personally and professionally' (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.29). Later, Wenger redefined CoP as 'a

group of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise' (Wenger and Snyder, 2000, p. 139) and 'groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis' (Wenger *et al.*, 2002, p.4). The social learning characteristics of CoP, Wenger (1998) emphasises, include a joint understanding of the purpose of their community, a mutual agreement of how the community evolves and the development of the community's knowledge and practice.

> *'The strength of communities of practice is self-perpetuating. As they generate knowledge, they reinforce and renew themselves. That's why communities of practice give you not only the golden eggs but also the goose that lays them. The farmer killed the goose to get all the gold and ended up losing both; the challenge for organisations is to appreciate the goose and to understand how to keep it alive and productive… Although communities of practice are fundamentally informal and self-organising, they benefit from cultivation.'*
> (Wenger and Snyder, 2000, p.143)

A community of practice is built on a group of members who share mutual understanding of the community but as Kennedy (2004) argues, the learning experience from a community can vary from positive to passive. The key to maintain a successful community of practice, as Wenger and Snyder (2000) and Kennedy (2004) contend, is to nurture its growth through a structured and explicit relationship built on shared expertise and knowledge.

On the opposite spectrum of traditional CPD models, the principles of CoP significantly focus on equal weighting for everyone involved in the community. Several studies have addressed the importance of trusting relationships and collaboration in teachers' working life (Hargreaves, 1998; Day and Gu, 2010; Coffield, 2014; Day, 2017). This model values individual's knowledge which can

potentially lead to transformative learning, but caution is needed when organisations use CoP as managerial jargon or a tool without understanding the fundamental values of CoP and how individuals cannot be forced to integrate into a community without shared trust and beliefs.

In recent years, professional learning community (PLC) has become on trend as a model of professional development and learning, particularly in the educational context. The principles of PLCs have many resemblances to CoP but PLCs focus primarily on school settings. Several research studies and literature support the correlation between PLCs and learners' learning outcomes (Stoll *et al.*, 2006; Battersby and Verdi, 2015; Timperley, 2011). The purpose of PLCs, according to Stoll *et al.* (2015), is to 'enhance teachers' effectiveness as professionals, for students' ultimate benefit' (p.229). Kennedy (2014a) argues that instead of dwelling on the terminology or details of each individual professional development model, it is more important to identify the 'purpose' of each model. With PLCs or CoP, the purpose of any learning community should always be driven by teachers and learners otherwise 'they risk being used as a form of contrived collaboration which serves to promote externally imposed interests' (Kennedy, 2014a, p.6).

Joint Practice Development (JPD)

Central to this thesis is an examination of the impact of the implementation of a Joint Practice Development (JPD) model of CPD. Although there are many models based on the collaborative mode of professional development such as CoP and PLCs, there is currently little literature about JPD or any analysis of its longitudinal impact on professional development and learning, particularly in the context of FE colleges.

In this section, three key pieces of literature are reviewed and critiqued to justify using JPD as a theoretical framework in this thesis.

JPD was first introduced and used in schools by Fielding *et al.* (2005) who conducted a large-scale research project for the purpose of understanding 'the factors and challenges of the transfer of good practice'. They argue that Joint Practice Development is a much better terminology to describe the concept and efforts of teachers who are working collaboratively in sharing, shaping and developing their practices together. This preliminary introduction to JPD has provided a new terminology for describing the process of how 'good practices' are formed. In Fielding *et al.*'s study, they argue that the use of JPD as terminology is not merely a linguistic shift, but rather that it brings about 'an important conceptual re-alignment' of where a teacher's position lies in professional development and learning. Several key factors which underpin the effective implementation of professional development, particularly JPD, include the importance of building trust between each other; creating policies which promote a positive relationship; seeing challenge as part of healthy development and the complexity of different types of relationships which impact on the sustainability of JPD (Feilding *et al.*, 2005). The notion of JPD has since emerged as a new concept which brings a fresh perspective to professional development, differing from more traditional CPD models which see professional development from a top-down perspective without clear evidence or research to suit local needs.

Another significant study conducted by Hargreaves (2011; 2012) prioritises JPD as the first professional development dimension in creating and sustaining a self-

improving inter-school system. JPD is much more conceptualised as a model of professional development with practical features, as Hargreaves describes,

> *'It is a **joint** activity, in which two or more people interact and influence one another, in contrast to the non-interactive, unilateral character of much conventional "sharing good practice". It is an activity that focuses on teachers' professional **practice,** ie what they do, not merely what they know. It is a **development** of the practice, not simply a transfer of it from one person or place to another, and so a form of school improvement.'*

> (Hargreaves, 2012, p.9)

'Sharing good practice' has long been a 'popular' choice of terminology in the format of training events, conferences and in initial teacher training programmes. The expectation of these types of activities is for the recipients to learn from the contributors and transfer the shared 'good practice' into their own practice. There is little evidence to support the actual transfer of the good practice, as Hargreaves argues (2011), unless teachers 'take responsibility for ensuring real practice transfer, and being accountable if the practice is not really transferred' (ibid., p.11). This argument is the foundation of JPD which forms one of the key strands to the professional development dimension, proposed by Hargreaves (2012) in creating a self-improving school system. He also emphasises that one of the key drivers to high-quality JPD is to create a culture of coaching and mentoring through effective leadership, which requires senior leaders to identify teachers with an evident strength and then share these teachers across the organisation to 'co-construct improvement' with others (Hargraves, 2012, p. 9). This argument brings another dimension of JPD to the fore which focuses on whole organisational development and the importance of leadership in pioneering and leading JPD as key principles

to engage everyone in professional development. It is essential to consider the perspectives from the leaders' positions themselves on professionalism. The culture of professional learning in an organisation does not simply arrive without efforts, instead, it requires leaders and managers to work with teachers on building up this engine of development. This requires not only skills and knowledge but also professional confidence, built upon trust, to support and challenge each other in learning collaboratively (Coffield, 2017).

Based on the model of JPD, Gregson *et al.* (2015b) completed an empirical research study involving more than one hundred and fifty practitioners in the Further, Adult and Vocational Education (FAVE) sector over five years on researching and developing practices. Drawing on theories from Fielding *et al.* (2005) and Eraut (2004), Gregson *et al.* bring practitioners together to share their experiences and explore educational research together in putting ideas or theories into practice. During the research, a guide has been produced as a resource for educators (Gregson *et al.*, 2013), from leaders to teachers, to engage in the professional development of practices and organisational development. Four guiding principles of JPD, proposed by Gregson *et al.* (2013) include:

- *'Make space for trust, openness and honesty;*
- *Work to establish a shared understanding of the education problem and how it makes educational sense for it to be addressed;*
- *Share the experience of trying out interventions/innovative practices;*
- *Critically review overall progress together.'*

(Gregson *et al.*, 2013, p.8-9)

In the current uncertain political and educational climate, the 'top-down' and 'managerial' model of professional development has become embedded in the culture of FE colleges, positioning CPD as a tool with the intention to engage teachers in professional learning but where by many have fallen into the routine of

little more than a box-ticking exercise. This 'technical-rational' view of teachers'

professional learning and development, contended by Gregson and Spedding

(2018), perceives teachers as 'passive consumers of knowledge' and assumes that

knowledge can be simply transferred by cascading down on training days or similar

events. Gregson and Spedding (2018) continue to argue that externally imposed

standards by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) are not only financially

costly but also 'consume time, morale, energy and resources' of teachers and

organisations (ibid, p.168). Elsewhere, Fisher *et al.* (2019) describe that teachers'

autonomy 'has been eroded both by routine monitoring systems and by external

inspection regimes' (ibid, p.253).   This culture of conformity weakens teachers'

agency and endangers trust necessary for teachers' professionalism. Thus, a

different approach to CPD is much needed to rebuild trust and teachers' autonomy

in working together for their professional learning. The guiding principles of the Joint

Practice Development (JPD) model see knowledge as collaborative endeavour

which requires joint efforts in exploring, trying and reviewing practice together

through experience, evidence and literature (Fielding *et al.* ,2005; Gregson *et al.*,

2015b).

> *'FE colleges have led the way in listening and responding to the voices of their students and of local employers, but there are other voices that deserve to be heard: the voices of tutors. Politicians are convinced of the efficacy of student voices in improving TLA, yet they remain deaf to the voices of those who have the most power to enhance the quality of TLA: educators.'*

> (Coffield, 2017, p.47)

Coffield's quotation supports the needs for teachers' voices to be heard. Yet,

managers and leaders seem to bypass teachers' ideas and thoughts, even though

these are the people who work with students, day in and day out at the frontline of

education. Different ways of thinking and working with teachers are urgently needed to enhance teachers' autonomy and professional identity.

Referring to Kennedy's (2014) framework, the guiding principles of JPD recommended by Gregson *et al.* (2013), hypothetically, should increase teachers' autonomy through collaborative capacity building. Overtime, the results of collaboration should encourage transformation of teachers' practice which in turn should benefit learners' learning sustainably (Gregson *et al.,* 2015). While there is evidence and recommendations of positive effects on professional development with the use of JPD (Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Hargreaves, 2012 and Gregson *et al.*, 2015), it is vital to also recognise the possible barriers and constraints of using this type of collaborative learning model.

Stated first and the most significant limitation to the JPD approach is the opportunity for colleagues to actually get together and work on local concerns and practice. With increased accountability and limited resources in the FE sector, time is precious to teachers who are preoccupied with day to day responsibilities and administrative tasks alongside their teaching. With the JPD approach, regular and structured meetings need to be supported, by senior management to enable teachers to engage in productive and useful joint practice. Managers need to recognise that JPD is not a 'sheep-dip' style of professional development (Scales, 2012, p.3) which is often transmissive and requires little engagement. The role of leadership plays an important part in any organisational development. Coffield (2008) emphasises the importance of democracy and distribution of leadership and power in teaching and learning which should be at the heart of an educational institution. The journey

to a truly professional learning community involves everyone, from the Senior Management Team (SMT), managers, teachers and learners. FE has long been known as the 'Cinderella' sector, a metaphor to describe an 'invisible', 'disempowered', 'deregulated' and 'de-professionalised' sector (Randle and Brady, 1997). Yet, in recent years, there has been a resurgence from teachers who work in the sector fighting to re-engage with professional identity and agency. Instead of being a 'Cinderella', Petrie (2015a) in *Further Education and the Twelve Dancing Princess,* claims that the tale of the dancing princesses 'suggests the possibility of subversion, of autonomy in teaching and learning, and a collective rather than individualist notion of professionalism; even within repressive contexts' (ibid., p.5). In order to reclaim their professional identity, teachers have to start with themselves, collaboratively engage in a teacher learning community to drive their own professional learning. This requires whole organisational support to allow realistic allocation of time and resources to support such communities.

A second factor which can impact on the effectiveness and sustainability of Joint Practice Development is the quality of facilitator(s). Timperley (2007) and Kennedy (2005) have highlighted the importance of 'expertise knowledge' which is required to facilitate professional learning. Gregson *et al*. (2015b) have also emphasised that JPD facilitator(s) need to be 'research experienced' to engage colleagues in using research to develop their practice. It is essential that such meetings are supported by experienced colleague(s) so that they do not fall into unstructured 'ranting' sessions. Furthermore, facilitator(s) of the JPD model need to be able to support and engage leaders and teachers in promoting 'adaptive expertise' (Timperley, 2011). This means that facilitator(s) need to appreciate and balance the wider context of the organisational needs as well as the local needs of teachers in

practice. They need to be able to use their 'practical wisdom' in order that implicit and explicit knowledge are communicated (Wiliam, 2007). This capability of adaptive expertise builds on the facilitator(s)' participation in the group of teachers and leaders. I believe that the ongoing participation in the cycle of JPD is also a case of professionalism.   For teachers to become adaptive experts, they need to feel empowered and in control of their own practice and professional learning.

> '*Excellent teachers do not emerge full blown at graduation . . . . Instead, teachers are always in the process of "becoming." Given the dynamics of their work, they need to continuously rediscover who they are and what they stand for … through deep reflection about their craft*'.
> (Nieto, 2003, p. 395-396)

With the complex roles and responsibilities that FE teachers often possess, facilitator(s) of the JPD model need to be aware of power-relationships which can potentially influence participants and their relationship in the communities. Further discussion around power relationships is discussed in the next chapter.

Another risk to consider, which applies to all professional development and learning approaches, is how the model is introduced. As discussed previously, leaders need to be aware of the danger of imposing 'good ideas' to teachers from the 'top down' (Gregson *et al.*, 2013). If an approach is seen to be effective in one organisation, it is not guaranteed that it will work in another. There is a danger of the outcomes of JPD research being disseminated in ways which do not reflect the guiding principles and core practices of JPD (ibid.). Superficial views of JPD, just like other types of CPD, can result in the model being reduced to a 'tool kit', 'jargon' or 'branded' professional development, sold like a package to organisations. This reductive risk

of becoming a managerial tool rather than a joint endeavour to work together to develop and improve practice should not be underestimated. Therefore, before introducing the JPD model, it is important for everyone involved in the process to appreciate the underpinning values of JPD and to provide the time to develop a shared vision. It is important to note that JPD 'is not a quick fix but a slow burn' (Gregson *et al.*, 2013) and the purpose of the JPD model is to develop a sustainable learning community for the benefit of everyone in the community.

The critique of CPD models and JPD lays the theoretical foundation for this thesis and provides a conceptual ground for planning and designing the process for data collection and analysis. Having the awareness of the purpose, potentials and challenges of each model broadens my thinking and deepens my knowledge of professional development and learning with sensitivity in understanding context-specific issues and benefits of these CPD models. This leads to further examination in the next section on what potential barriers and challenges can affect professional learning.

Barriers and Challenges to Professional Learning

Eraut (2004) suggests that in order for professionals to become 'learning professionals', there are five factors which need to be taken into account:

- *'an appropriate combination of learning settings;*
- *time for study, consultation and reflection;*
- *the availability of suitable learning resources;*
- *people who are prepared to give appropriate support; and*
- *the learner's own capacity to learn and to take advantage of the opportunities available.'*

(Eraut, 2004, p.13)

Continuing professional development and learning requires appropriate conditions for learning at personal, collegial and organisational levels. It also depends on wider factors, such as government policies, political influences and funding. In this research, it is particularly important to appreciate what barriers and enablers might affect professional development and learning in the local context. Subsequently, the research design needs to take account of these factors carefully in the early stages of introducing Joint Practice Development to potential participants and throughout the research. This is because all types of learning take time, resources and space, factors that are already considered scarce in FE colleges (Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Gregson *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, teachers' conditions of service in FE colleges have reached unprecedented levels of dissatisfaction, with little autonomy and limited opportunities for teachers to make decisions for their own learning, rather CPD is largely driven by organisational and operational needs. A further situation is in play for teachers in the FE context, relative to their school and HE counterparts,

> *'In some nations TVET teachers and instructors are not treated in the same manner as are 'academic' teachers with regard to their various conditions of service. In particular, issues of different terms for remuneration, promotion and benefits are a source of frustration. This often leads to alienation and high teacher turnover; especially when highly qualified TVET personnel can be tempted away by higher salaries in commercial enterprises.'*
>
> (MacLean and Lai, 2011, p.8)

This has a detrimental impact on staff morale, as Hodgson and Spours (2015) contend,

> *'Staff morale remains fragile and conditions of service for staff in GFEs remain worse than for those in schools or universities. This concern about professional status, together with notable instances of poor management style and 'gaming' behaviour, has tarnished the reputation of the sector.'*
>
> (Hodgson and Spours, 2015, p.202)

Wiliam describes a true reflection of the reality of what consumes teachers' time and work. He asserts,

> '*Teachers are spending their time doing admin and photocopying. This is not something they are very good at. Teachers need to teach.*'

<div align="right">(Wiliam quoted in Hart, 2018, p.11)</div>

He continues to argue that,

> '*teachers should meet together as part of their contracted time, but when teachers work part-time and are paid on an hourly paid basis, this makes it difficult.*'

<div align="right">(ibid., p.11)</div>

Concerns around funding and teacher retention as discussed earlier in this chapter have a detrimental impact on teaching. Between 2010 and 2017, 'more than 23,000 posts have been lost in FE colleges in England, amounting to a third of the teaching staff overall' (Branwen, 2018). At the same time, the government is also concerned about the quality of education in FE colleges. Without adequate resources and funding to support FE Colleges, it is likely that more teachers who work in FE colleges will leave the profession. Eraut (1994, p.239) argues that,

> '*In the public sector, however, government control of the purse strings has always been the decisive factor. Moreover, government is concerned about not only policy but also with efficiency and with quality. Financial constraints have been accompanied by a deluge of accountability measures which are transforming the nature of public-sector organizations.*'

<div align="right">(Eraut, 1994, p.239)</div>

This is not to say that FE teachers are not willing to learn. In fact, with the right conditions and motivation, as Day (2017) argues, 'it would be more productive to focus upon how teachers' willingness and abilities to teach to their best and in meeting the challenges of different scenarios in their work and lives may be built,

sustained and enhanced' (Day, 2017, p.172-173). Therefore, affective factors should also be considered and handled carefully in this research. Brockbank and McGill (2012) emphasise the power of emotion in learning which is closely connected to motivation and they argue that 'emotional factors are essential for learning and decision making in every sphere of human endeavour' (Brockbank and McGill, 2012, p.26). Elsewhere Illeris (2017) examines the 'incentive' dimension of learning that focuses on the mental energy, including emotion, motivation, attitudes and volition, which 'is the driving force of learning' (Illeris, 2017, p.89).

It is important to understand these challenges and barriers to professional learning, which will help with the design of the research especially the choice of methodology and the methods used to collect and analyse data.

The final section of this chapter draws particular attention to language and thinking which play essential roles in all human interaction and communication, particularly in professional development and learning that requires collaboration and co-construction.

How Language Shapes Our Thinking and Practice (or vice versa)

This section focuses on the interrelationships between language, thinking and practice. The relationship between language and thinking has been studied by linguists and it remains debatable whether language shapes our thinking and action or vice versa. There has been emerging research from evolution psychology and neuroscience to support the role of language to mediate the iterative relationship between individual and collective thinking (Mercer, 2013). There is strong recognition that 'language is the carrier that reflects our identity to others and delivers our culture' and identity is, 'people's concepts of who they are, of what sort

of people they are, and how they relate to others' (Alshammari, 2018, p.98). Boroditsky (2001) suggests that 'habits in language encourage habits in thought' (p. 12). How we use language often reveals our thinking associated with a multiplicity of identities and values. My own experiences of working and living in two different languages and cultures mean that I have to examine and balance different values and beliefs I encounter on a daily basis. As a late bilingual, it means that extra efforts are made cognitively and emotionally particularly in social contexts; sensitivity is taken to linguistic relativity (Pederson, 2012). However, our identities are developed in constant process through constructing and reconstructing in personal and professional communities (Partridge, 2015). This also implies ways in which language may be used differently in situating ourselves in various communities. It is important to consider the role of language in the relationships between personal, local, and institutional context. As a narrative inquirer and a JPD facilitator, I am conscious of the social semiotics that can potentially influence the power dynamic of participants and our engagement (Halliday, 1978). Although it is not the purpose of this thesis to analyse discourse, I pay careful attention to syntax and modes of communication to engage with participants. This focus on language comes to the fore in the data collection and analysis chapter.

In Joint Practice Development, the concept of communities of practice plays an important role in engaging and creating conditions in which 'groups of people who genuinely care about the same real-life problems or hot topics, and who on that basis interact regularly to learn together and from each other' (Pyrko *et al.* , 2016). Mutual engagement lays the foundation of creating social structures in collaborative professional learning communities. Pyrko *et al.* (2016) further contends that thinking

together 'allows for developing and sustaining an invigorating social practice over time' (ibid, p.390). When engaging with colleagues who are also participants in this thesis, 'thinking together' forms an essential element in all JPD workshops, in order to bring tacit knowledge and nuanced practices to the surface. It is worth noting that at times my 'silence' is used deliberately to ensure my participants are not interrupted in expressing their thinking during interviews and workshops (Gutiérrez Menéndez, 2019; Kline, 2020; Wenger, 1998). It is equally important to remember that language can be communicated in different modes such as written, spoken and non-verbal. Subtle changes of tone, physical position and facial expressions can all reflect thinking (Djenar *et al.*, 2005).

Practice is defined by Wenger (1998, p.47) as 'doing, but not just doing in and of itself. It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do'. This concept of social practice brings out the complexity of how human thought can be grasped. The negotiation of meaning is a central process for understanding how learning happens in practice. This leads to the role of language in engaging participants in JPD workshops, particularly with the research intention to understand how the process of learning happens in 'joint enterprise'. Tusting (2005) builds on Wenger (1998)'s definition of community of practice and emphasises that in order to sustain the engagement of CoP, '*the people involved develop a repertoire of ways of engaging in practice, which includes ways of thinking, speaking, discourses, tools, understanding and memories which are to a greater or lesser extent shared amongst members of the community' (ibid., p.39).*

Chapter Two Conclusion: Reflection and Planning Ahead

This chapter sets out the theoretical foundation for the thesis. Examining key literature, theories and research have informed my understanding and critical thinking about current issues related to teacher retention and recruitment, as well as how these issues impact on professional development and learning. Through defining and evaluating commonly used CPD models in FE and the Joint Practice Development model as well as identifying the barriers and challenges of professional development and learning, I have been able to conceptualise and start planning how JPD may be tested out in the arena of practice.

Although this chapter is entitled literature review, the process of reviewing literature takes place across the thesis. The review evolves in each chapter and demands the need for the researcher to reflect on what is relevant and what at times may need to change in the light of new reading and developed understandings of concepts and new knowledge. From exploring the context, evaluating relevant theories in CPD, planning and designing data collection and analytical approaches to writing up the findings, reflecting upon and examining extended literature back and forth to bridge gaps in my knowledge is essential. This process of reflecting allows me to deepen my thinking. The process of reviewing literature has contributed immensely to my practice of 'reflection in action' and 'reflection on action' which in turn cultivates my learning to 'becoming' a researcher (Schön, 1983).

An important aspect of my own learning in this thesis is to determine my methodological position and consider the ways in which my thinking has shifted through my understanding of theory and practice. This requires me to reflect upon the influences and challenges that arise through the process of research and the

impact of this upon me both personally and professionally. The following chapter details my methodological position and critically discusses the ways in which this arrived at. This methodological position closely aligns the methods chosen for data collection and analysis, reflecting a constructivist ontology and interpretative epistemology.

Chapter Three: Back to the Rough Ground[3]: Research Methodology and Methods

Introduction

This chapter critically evaluates research methodologies and clearly presents my methodological position, ethics and methods chosen for data collection.

The purpose of this study is to collaborate with FE teachers in co-constructing a narrative account of professional development through reporting and analysing participants' and my own experiences of implementing JPD in practice. The research questions are as follows:

1. What do FE teachers tell us about their experiences of CPD?

2. In particular, what are the ways that teachers describe the enablers and barriers to their CPD?

3. What are FE teachers' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model?

4. How do the narrative accounts co-constructed from teachers' experiences of participating in JPD workshops tell us about implementing JPD in practice?

The motivation for this study originated from reflecting on my own practice as a teacher educator and quality practitioner[4]. Instead of using the customary title of 'teacher trainer', I deliberately use 'teacher educator' to identify how I perceive myself as part of my role at work. This study uses a practitioner-focused approach which seeks to improve aspects of educational practice (Murray, 1992). To begin

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[3] The chapter title is inspired by reading chapters in Dunne, J. 1997, Back to the rough ground: practical judgment and the lure of technique, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Ind.
[4] My work, according to the job descriptions, includes mentoring, coaching, organisational development, and quality improvement. I also teach on teacher education programmes.

justifying the methodology for this thesis, the background story and purpose for the research needs to be summarised here. In my role as a teacher educator and quality practitioner, I am responsible for teaching on a range of initial teacher training programmes and CPD programmes within a general FE College. This responsibility includes supporting new teachers and coaching experienced teachers who have been referred to the department as requiring improvement in their practice. My passion lies in engaging teachers in collaborative professional learning with the intention to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the FE sector.

Exploring My Beliefs and Values to Inform the Research Methodology

Educational research is full of complexity (Coe *et al.*, 2017) and there has been an ongoing debate between the scientific and philosophical enquiry of different disciplines in the research field. The concept of a research paradigm is essential for any researcher who starts the journey of a research study (Kivunija and Kuyini, 2017).

A research paradigm consists of a range of assumptions, beliefs and values that underpin the philosophical perspective of knowledge which leads to divergent research guiding principles and approaches chosen by the researcher (Coe *et al.*, 2017; Scotland, 2012; Wahyuni, 2012). Defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), a paradigm consists of four components: ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. Each component will be critically discussed to provide the rationale for the philosophical and methodological choices made in this research study. I will

use the following questions underlying the assumptions, which Creswell (1994) identifies, to help develop my discussion of what reality and knowledge is:

- How do I know it is true? – a question of ontology
- What values go into the research? - a question of epistemology
- How do I write about the research? - a question of axiology
- How do I carry out the process of studying the research questions? - a question of methodology.

(Aliyu *et al.*, 2015)

This thesis seeks to investigate and evaluate the experiences of using the collaborative approach of Joint Practice Development. This requires the voices of participants to be heard through accounts, stories or experiences through the use of narrative inquiry as an inclusive interdisciplinary research method. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) claim the following:

'…education is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and other's stories.'

(Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p.2)

Human beings build their own individual stories through social interaction and communication; they tell stories to each other and use their experience to develop their understanding of their own and that of the wider community. In the context of education and educational research, teachers and learners form a community in which dialogues and exchange of 'lived experiences' and stories are built upon to understand each other and reshape interpretations of learning and education (Kim, 2015). Therefore, this study will be positioned in an interpretivist framework which views reality as subjective. Through the interaction between consciousness and relational phenomena in the world, knowledge and meaningful reality are

constructed through the participation of individuals and the researcher (Scotland, 2012). Based on this viewpoint of how reality is understood, I am particularly interested in gaining insights and understanding of the emotions, behaviour, attitudes, impetuses and experiences of my participants.

How Do I Know It Is True? – A Question of Ontology

Ontology is the study of being and seeks answers to what the nature or form of the social world is (Waring, 2017). Ontological phenomenon seeks to understand what reality is by seeing the continuum of realism and constructivism at each end of the ontological position (ibid.). In this thesis, as the researcher, I participate with colleagues in the context of working in a FE college where I have continuity of relationship with the participants. I believe that 'multiple realities are constructed by individuals' (ibid., p.16) and we learn through building our relationships as a foundation, by valuing each other's life stories, experience and the context in which each individual is situated. Therefore, this thesis adopts a constructivist view (Dewey, 1916; Lave and Wenger, 1991) of ontology. Life consists of a series of events and individuals bring their own beliefs and values to shared spaces. It is vital to delve into individuals' experiences and stories to complete the picture.

In this research thesis, my ontological position is based on the idea that the sense of being is both of mind and social connectivity. There is no such thing as separation between mind and the outside world because human beings live in an interactive community. The role of history, communication (dialogue) and human actions all form part of 'being' (Coe *et al.*, 2017; Scott and Usher, 1996). Within my thesis, there is a strong element of 'inclusion of social, cultural and environmental

influences on experiences' (Haydon *et al.*, 2017). Engagement with teachers has to build upon a trusted relationship before honest dialogues can be established.

However, Kim (2015) raises concerns for the possible risks involved for narrative inquirers taking an interpretivist approach because of the domination of the positivist view of the world and the '…many risks and dangers involved in pursuing this manner of research' (Clandinin & Murphy, 2007, quoted in Kim, 2015, p.21). The validity and credibility of the interpretive paradigm often become problematic to policy makers who value research with generalizations of impact from 'hard' data, which are often absent from interpretive research (Gardner *et al.*, 2008). The nominated world view with set standards and quantifiable impact for validity and credibility has been outmoded since Kuhn (1970) argues for a paradigm shift towards diversity of approaches in investigating and understanding social phenomena with concepts such as of truth, authenticity and human experiences being more relevant in interpretative research (Hammersley, 2012). There is also the gap between educational research, educational policy and educational practice which is an ongoing debate (McIntyre, 2005; Biesta,2007; Gardner *et al.*, 2008; Gregson and Spedding, 2018).

Furthermore, Gregson and Nixon (2015) argue that technical-rational approaches to education reforms and policies have become so entrenched that 'soft' indicators, such as 'experience, context and fallibility', are hardly valued (ibid., p.236). The danger of simply using 'hard' indicators to inform any educational policies can result in overlooking complex problems (Gardener *et al.*, 2008). This is not to say that statistical data is less valuable. Rather, it is important to interpret the data beyond

the superficial level of simply looking at numbers, charts and graphs. Thus, the 'softer' data can support and balance what statistics represent with an understanding of different viewpoints. This leads to my reflection and evaluation on my methodological stance and where it is situated.

First of all, study of any social phenomena is never straight forward; one should take caution in claiming the exact methodological assumption (Hemmersley, 2012). In order to justify my theoretical position as a researcher, it is important to define my personal beliefs and values. I entered the teaching profession in 1998 with a humanistic view of education and learning, instilled through my Taiwanese cultural roots and influenced by Confucianism. I believe that human beings are equal and the essence of being a human being is compassion. What this implies in an educational context and practice is that everyone can learn, develop and actualise their own aspirations through personal and social endeavour.

At the same time, I am inspired by the work of John Dewey (1859 – 1952) as well as the work of Abraham Maslow (1908–1970) and Carl Rogers (1902–1987). The humanistic view of education focuses on developing an individual as a 'whole' person. It means that individuals' feelings, emotions and thoughts are equally important in the process of learning. According to Aloni (2007, cited in Khatib *et al.*, 2013), the humanistic view of education believes that,

> *'people's unique dignity remains in their creative imagination, critical reason, moral sensitivity, autonomous will and unique personality, it is crucial for humanistic education to prioritize the value of human dignity over any other economic, religious, nationalistic or ideological set of values.'* (Khatib *et al.*, 2013, p.45)

Therefore, in order to 'nurture' a person, a secure and safe environment is essential to provide 'genuineness (openness and self-disclosure), acceptance

(being seen with unconditional positive regard) and empathy (being listened to and understood)' (McLeod, 2014). In this research, I seek to understand teachers' perceptions about CPD and the barriers and challenges they experience with professional development. I have chosen to focus on a collaborative model of professional development, the Joint Practice Development model, to try out as an intervention to engage teachers in developing aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. I am curious about what differences are made by using this model.

'Education is a development within, by and for experience.'

(Dewey, 1916, p.28)

Drawing upon Dewey's concept of experience in education, it is important to consider the interaction, continuity and situation throughout the study and sensitively recount progression of experiences in personal, professional and organisational contexts (Costley *et al.*, 2010). In this thesis, the participants and the researcher (me) form a partnership with a focus on developing professional knowledge or practice. Personally , the reason for choosing a practitioner-led action research approach through Joint Practice Development is deeply rooted in the belief that professional development and learning should be 'educative in character' and 'concerned with realising educational ideals or achieving educational outcomes' (Hammersley, 2012). In addition, it is a personal quest wanting to understand more deeply about how teachers learn and how a collaborative way of enquiry contributes to professional learning.

What Values Go into the Research? - A Question of Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with 'how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated' (Scotland, 2012, p.9). The questions which relate to epistemology include 'what it means to know and what the nature of the relationship is between the would-be knower and what can be known' *(ibid.).* Methodology relates to 'the strategy or plan of action which lies behind the choice and use of particular methods' (Crotty, cited in Scotland, 2012, p. 9). In epistemology, the Hermeneutic or Interpretive enquiry resonates with my own personal philosophy of 'all human action is meaningful' (Scott and Usher, 1996, p.18) and the holistic view that human beings are able to construct and reconstruct meaning through social interactions. The notion that we as human beings know differently and through dialogues, that we are able to 'make sense' of what we know and what we do not know is central to this thesis. The context, values and beliefs of the knower and participants contribute to the overall understanding of knowledge. They are interwoven and inseparable. My thesis is based on working with teachers to develop their and my professional learning which requires high engagement between teachers and myself as researcher.

Furthermore, the theoretical model at the heart of this thesis is Joint Practice Development, an approach to professional development which shares many of the characteristics of hermeneutic/interpretive ontology and epistemology. These include relationship building, dialogue, collaboration and exchange of personal experience. I place myself and the participants as equal partners in building knowledge together; this collegiality of knowledge sharing, shaping and building is

the essential principle of the JPD model which is the key intervention in this research.

Working in this paradigm provides the right conditions to tease out deeper understandings of why and what teachers find challenging in their professional development and professional learning. Such an approach creates opportunities to construct dialogues based upon their personal, social and cultural beliefs about what professionalism is and the barriers and challenges that may exist in engaging with professional learning in the current context of the English FE sector.

How Do I Write About the Research? - A Question of Axiology

Axiology forms part of a research paradigm and it is concerned with ethics and value systems, that justifies what is believed to be true. The study of axiology should lay the foundation of the researcher's own values throughout each stage of the research process and how the research is written (Creswell ,1994; Patton and Parker, 2017). In this thesis, I seek to understand what participants' experiences and feelings are when partaking in a collaborative model of professional development, at the same time, I seek to understand how my experiences and feelings of engaging with the participants are throughout this study. Situated in an interpretivist paradigm, it is often concluded that ethics of care needs to be thoroughly determined as well as how people should be treated during and after the study (Barnes, 2012; Nodding, 1984). This means that ethical considerations may need to be negotiated and justified through each stage of the study to ensure that participants and myself have opportunities to express any concerns and are treated equally (Hammersley, 2012). Due to my role, it also means that I have access to a lot of information about the

participants' historical and current work-related details, which are confidential and in no circumstances to be shared with anyone. Hammersley (2012, p.22) points out that interpretivists require 'an openness on the part of the researcher in which prior cultural assumptions and attitudes are suspended, and there is a willingness to learn the culture of the people being studied'. Further discussion and justification of ethical considerations and dilemmas are presented in a later section of this chapter.

How Do I Carry Out the Process of Studying the Research Questions? - A Question of Methodology

Based on an interpretivist approach, action research has been deliberately chosen. The term 'action research' first emerged in 1940s and is attributed to Kurt Lewin (1890-1947) and other social scientists in America (Carr,1995). Later, Stenhouse (1975) was the pioneering educational researcher/philosopher in Britain, who advocated research-based teaching and the concept of teacher as researcher. He argued that 'it is not enough that teachers' work should be studied: they need to study it themselves' (Stenhouse, 1975, p.41).

This notion inspired me to undertake this research and it dates back to my very first action research project with my work-based teaching practice mentor in 1999 as a newly qualified teacher. The experience and influence of my mentor to work on researching possible solutions to practical problems in teaching, learning and assessment was very powerful. In 2003, I completed a master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in the UK and benefitted from building my foundation knowledge and skills as a student researcher. However much of the study was from an outsider researcher's perspective with very little consideration of my own philosophy and methodology as a researcher. After settling into teaching in an FE college, I completed three practitioner-led action research

projects between 2012 and 2016. This background is important to me as a teacher as well as a teacher educator because my own beliefs and values in professional development and learning have gradually developed from a passive receiver to situating myself as a more proactive educator through systematic approaches to research, critical analysis and reflexivity (Brookfield, 2017). This process is deepened through internal and external collaboration with colleagues, learners and other practitioner researchers in and outside of my workplace. Consequently, this personal reflection contributes to the reason why practitioner-led action research is chosen as the research approach in this thesis. Immersing myself in the process of writing and reflection, this thesis is not only for my own learning but for me to learn together with colleagues (participants).

Carr (1994) in his article 'Whatever happened to action research?' provides critical questions for action researchers to think carefully about what action research is for. He refers to Winter (1987; 1989) who asks, 'what the nature of action research is; what criteria should be used to judge claims to be engaged in action research; what kind of philosophical insights and conceptual resource are available for establishing its validity' (ibid., p.430). These questions may not be easily responded to and are not in scope for this thesis, but they provide a different level of thinking for me to contemplate and reflect on myself as an educator, a practitioner and as a researcher.

At a practical level, I need a systematic way of starting my collaboration with colleagues in trying out the Joint Practice Development (JPD) model. McNiff (2016) provides detailed information and guidance about how action research should be

planned, delivered and analysed. She emphasises the potential impact of influence and educational influence whilst conducting an action research project, claiming, 'It is through developing a dialogical openness towards others that you learn to become critical yourself, and encourage others to do the same' (ibid, p.83). I need consistent critical evaluation and reflection of my engagement with the participants and how 'dialogical openness' is developed throughout the process.

It is at this stage of planning, organising and making decisions about research methodology that it becomes significant to identify that the approach used in this study is participatory. Due to my positionality as a facilitator and a co-participant to introduce, facilitate and participate in the Joint Practice Development workshops, participatory action research (PAR) is considered a more appropriate and suitable approach to plan and design this study. King *et al.* (2019) alert participatory researchers that the social, cultural and political dimensions of participation can impact on the process of understanding co-constructed knowledge. They argue that there might be 'competing demands of ideology and our ever present more material concerns' (ibid., p.186), as researchers also have to meet the academic requirements set by the academic institutions. They remind participatory action researchers to be constantly 'aware' of their multiple identities and relationships with participants in each stage of the research. King *et al.* (2019) cite Spivak (1988) and Kapoor's (2004) work which suggests that 'hyper-reflexivity' is needed to review our positionality which impacts on our epistemology and ontology.

In November 2018, the British Educational Research Association (BERA) published a report and a statement to provide guidance on 'close-to-practice (CtP) research' which is defined as,

> *'Close-to-practice research focusses on issues defined by practitioners as relevant to their practice, and involves collaboration between people whose main expertise is research, practice, or both.'*
>
> (BERA, 2018, p.34)

Within the CtP research report, it differentiates between poor and high quality CtP with analysis based on two phases (rapid evidence assessment of research and interviews) and three key themes (definitions, quality criteria and BERA's support). As a result of the CtP research report, it recommends that high quality CtP should include a 'full and rigorous' account of methodology, close connections between policy and practice, extended impact and influence beyond local relevance (BERA, 2018). A more concise supplementary definition of high quality CfP research has been defined as,

> *'High quality in close-to-practice research requires the robust use of research design, theory and methods to address clearly defined research questions, through an iterative process of research and application that includes reflections on practice, research and context.'*
>
> (BERA, 2018, p.2)

My study involves substantial collaboration between participants and myself as an insider-researcher and a participatory researcher (Costley *et al.*, 2010; Kemmis *et al.*, 2014), with an intention to focus on aspects of participants' practice. Therefore, key recommendations from the BERA guidance on CtP will be taken into careful consideration in the design of the study and throughout this chapter (BERA, 2018). The following section focuses on how reflection and reflexivity form important elements of my research methodology.

Through Reflection and Reflexivity, We Are Becoming More Fully Human [5]

Central to this thesis is the role of reflexivity and reflection in my practice as a novice researcher and as a co-participant in the process of implementing and evaluating the Joint Practice Development model. 'Reflexive and reflective skills are essential to responsible and ethical practice' (Bolton and Delderfield, 2018, p.20). On the journey to become a 'competent' researcher, it is insufficient to reflect only on practical matters in a technical way, but it is essential to reflect 'on the mental experience which constructs the meaning about practice' (Mortari, 2015, p.1). This is particularly relevant when conducting practitioner-led action research as reflection is part of the collective action of learning.

In education, reflective practice has become an important part of demonstrating one's professionalism and professional learning. This is in part because much of professional knowledge tends to be tacit and is difficult to unravel explicitly. Through reflection, it is possible that such knowledge can be revealed through critical thinking by challenging our assumptions; this then leads to changes in thinking and practice (Moon, 2004). Reflection is an essential part of enquiry in action research. Reflection helps me to establish my own values and identity as well as the shared values and identities of the participants working in collaboration through the JPD model.

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[5] This title is inspired by Paulo Freire (2017)'s work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Four perspectives to reflection are conceptualized by Mortari (2015), based on philosophical approaches; these include pragmatic, critical, hermeneutic, and phenomenological perspectives. The pragmatic perspective of reflection focuses on the increasing effectiveness of action, elaborated by Dewey (1916) and Schön (1987). Dewey (1933) in *How We Think* introduces the concept of reflective thought and defines it as,

> *'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends ... it includes a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality.'*
>
> (ibid., p. 118)

Dewey's notion of 'reflective experience' depends on deliberate cultivation of thoughts which connect between the action and the consequences (Dewey, 1916). Elaborating on Dewey's standpoint, Schön (1983, 1987) introduces the concept of 'reflection-in-action', which can 'enable researchers to function competently in situations where no answers or standard procedures are available to face up to problematic and confusing cases' (Mortari, 2015, p 4). Both Dewey and Schön support the idea that reflection is critical to growth and learning. It is this growth and learning that bring about transformation in knowledge and practice. Nevertheless, some critics argue that Schön's work lacks emphasis on the social and emotional contexts of learning (Eraut, 1994; Thompson and Pascal, 2012).

The critical perspective, derived from critical pedagogical theories (Foucault, 1990; Brookfield, 2017), views reflective thinking more than a cognitive tool but 'a way of life' (Foucault, 1985). Through 'radical reflection', we would uncover 'tacit power' which influence how we think and what we do; this revelation would then lead to

liberty hence improve our life for better (ibid.). Amongst a variety of definitions on critical reflection, Carr and Kemmis provide a useful description, which resonates with me and supports how joint reflection leads to more learning in practice:

> '*Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out.*'
>
> (Carr and Kemmis 1986, p.162)

Carr and Kemmis (1986) contend that critical reflection should lead to 'informed, committed action of praxis' (p.190). Praxis is defined by Kemmis (2008, p.131-132) as 'right conduct in response to a particular situation at a particular time, informed by the agent's knowledge and by recourse to relevant theory and traditions'. Kemmis (2008) and Habermas (1971) address the importance of social and emotional dimensions of learning as critical reflection should happen collaboratively rather than alone. These notions suggest that simply thinking about what has been done and how well or not so well it has been done by oneself is not sufficient for reflection; to take reflection and reflexivity further, it requires evolution of practice through examining and enquiring habitual practice with existing knowledge in a shared and collaborative setting (Kemmis, 2008; Habermas, 1971). Therefore, critical reflection is placed at the centre of this thesis. Through critical reflection with my participants and on my own, we (the participants and I) are able to find opportunities for professional learning and development and to offer insights in answer to the research questions posed in this thesis.

According to Mortari (2015), both pragmatic and critical perspectives of reflection emphasise on improving practice and leading to action and are very often cited in

the contexts of action research. In this thesis, I seek to understand my position as an insider researcher and as a co-participant in implementing the JPD model. Therefore, my self-reflection of the experience and feelings in the process of implementation is equally essential to these of the participants. Practical ways of describing and analysing these experiences and feelings are discussed in Chapter Four.

Advancing Schön's (1983) concept of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, the hermeneutic perspective includes the concepts of reflexivity, which 'suspend the action and concentrate the attentiveness on the thinking while it flows' (Mortari, 2015, p.5). This notion of reflection separates itself from deliberation, which is often based on 'an uncertain situation' or an arising problem (ibid.). To this point, it would be useful to refer to literature which differentiates reflexivity from reflection. Thompson and Pascal (2012, p. 319) defines reflexivity as 'not simply to think, but to reflect as a mirror does.' They continue to explain that reflexive practice is 'a form of practice that looks back on itself, that is premised on self-analysis' (ibid.). There are three aspects of self-analysis:

- *'The professional knowledge base is being used to the full.*
- *Our actions are consistent with the professional value base.*
- *There are opportunities for learning and development being generated.'*

(Thompson and Pascal, 2012, p. 319)

Through self-analysis, values, beliefs and knowledge of individuals are consistently mirrored for critical reflection. These are of importance in this thesis as it is not only learning about my own values and beliefs but also those of my participants'.

Reflexivity is reflecting on reflection with consciousness. It is 'an ability to recognize our own influence' (Fook and Askeland, 2006, cited in Thompson and Pascal, 2012,

p.319). The hermeneutic and phenomenological perspectives of reflection explore the 'cognitive act' in reflection which aims to grasp 'the lived experience or mental processes of consciousness' (Mortari, 2015, p.5). Van Manen (1977, p.207) refers to Schwab when explaining the concept of the practical. Schwab (1969, cited in Van Manen, 1977, p.207) emphasises that, '…in making practical decisions, educators ought to be aware of alternative and conflicting theories, and of the underlying assumptions, principles, and premises of knowledge'. According to Van Menan (1977), this level of critical reflection requires concentration on 'attentiveness on the thinking whilst it flows' rather than only on the 'deliberation' of assessing the situation and actions (Mortari, 2015, p.5). Reflexivity is hence this shift between 'paying attention' from an external and surface level of reflection to an internal 'gaze' of reflection during action (Mortari, 2015, p.6).

As a teacher educator, a lifelong learner and a novice researcher, I believe that continuously developing critical reflection and reflexivity is undoubtedly a drive to professional learning. However, in order 'for professional practice to be emancipatory', Thompson and Pascal (2012, p.322) emphasise that critical reflective practice addresses 'the breadth and depth of criticality and the interrelationships between the two'. 'Depth' refers to 'not taking situations at face value' and should question existing assumptions, whilst 'breadth' is concerned with reflection on broader sociocultural and political contexts and factors such as power relations, discrimination and oppression (ibid., p.321).

Time considerations are also crucial for critical reflective practice. It is a deliberate process and takes effort to engage with. Hence, in this study, it is important to cultivate capacity by establishing suitable time, space and methods to develop my

own reflective practice as well as with the participants with whom I will reflective collectively.

Knowledge, Phrónēsis and Experience

The previous section draws attention to the importance of focusing on what is required to develop reflective practice and how to cultivate the capacity to learn and reflect together. In this section, I consider the relationship between knowledge, phrónēsis and experience and their roles in cultivating and sustaining capacity for FE teachers' professional learning.

The question of 'how do we know what we know?' has been an epistemic concern for many researchers and educators. In recent years, cognitive scientific theories appear to have dominate the discourse in education and caution should be taken with critical evaluation and examination in context. Dunne's (1997) critiques on the rationality or rather irrationality of the behavioural objective model and how such technical rational views of education influences professional practice with 'detachment, explanatory power, universality, and control – of a kind of *theory* to the agent who is involved in practical situations' (ibid., p.9) is relevant here. It is no exception to what has been occurring to FE teachers' professional development and learning. Prescriptive and top down approaches to CPD have slowly eroded teachers' autonomy, professional judgment and creative minds. Dunne (1997) resonates with Schön's concerns over a reductionistic view of professional knowledge that presents '… as the application of scientific theory and technique to the instrumental problems of practice' (ibid., xiii). This view brings me to the question of what we as educators should do to understand what works, why and how in

relation to professional development and learning. Several researchers and educators suggest a return to philosophy particularly Aristotle's distinction between *phrónēsis* (practical wisdom) and *techne* (instrumental knowledge) (Biesta, 2010; Dunne, 1997; Eikeland, 2006).

Aristotle defines phrónēsis as 'a state of grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about what is good or bad for a human being' (Aristotle, trans. 1999, p. 154). The emphasis on 'acting phronetically' requires 'a shift in thinking about both our learners and our pedagogical responsibilities for their professional education' (Hibbert, 2012, p.67). The implication for educators is to value 'practice and professional practice as both an intellectual and a moral enterprise' (ibid., p.65). Returning to the question of 'what works' in practice and professional practice, Biesta (2010) concludes that moral professional judgment is crucial to educational practice. He further argues that Dewey's transactional theory of knowing which concerns understanding of experience would provide a framework to inquire into understanding the role of knowledge in action. It is through the experience of learning about possible relationships between actions and consequences that we learn what works in unique problems (Biesta, 2010). Similar views are presented by Kemmis (2012) who argues that 'our task requires understanding, researching, and working to develop professional practices both 'in the heads' of practitioners and in the settings in which they work, in which their practices are formed and daily re-formed in practice—or, one might say, from the perspective of the one who acts, in praxis' (Kemmis, 2012, p.148).

I have arrived at this position to argue that joint practice development could be an alternative model for teachers to engage with sharing their thinking in action and of action as well as evaluating the progress of their practice. Through JPD, it is possible to cultivate capacity for FE teachers to build relationships, think, reflect and evaluate together. However, the foremost importance is to document these experiences through this thesis.

Where Is It All Happening?

Before proceeding to ethical considerations, it is important to understand where the site of my research study is placed, particularly with the complexity of using practitioner-led action research. The site is a general further education college based in England. The college offers a range of vocational and academic courses to young people and adults. There are over 8,000 students and 800 staff on permanent contracts; more than a quarter of the number being academic staff. The college is one of the major employers in the region and operates on several sites; the main site is equipped with a centre for higher education; one site is specialised in land-based provision; another site is a sports campus with dedicated facilities for sports students; one site is a smaller campus with various vocational provisions. There are also several community venues where varied provision is provided for local employers and communities. The location of the college is identified as a social mobility cold spot (Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, 2017). In line with the national picture there are also issues in recruitment and retention of teachers exacerbated by the local context and the relationship to poor social mobility.

Treading Carefully in the Field: Ethics as an Insider Action Researcher

Ethical considerations are critically important in any study but are particularly complex when the nature of the research centres on personal accounts, identity and attitudes of the people involved. It is essential to ensure safety when carrying out research by being aware of the possibility of harm through careless response and reaction. This discussion will be returned to later in the methods section. Ethical considerations are negotiated throughout this thesis, in agreement with Atkins and Wallace's (2012) suggestion that the most appropriate method to deal with any ethical dilemma is to deal with it 'in a situated and reflexive manner' (Atkins and Wallace, 2012, p.31).

As a research student of the University of Sunderland, the research follows the guidelines and regulations set out by the University and includes on-line ethical approval (Appendix 2).

The research adheres to the ethical code of practice and guidelines published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018), as outlined in Figure 4 on the next page.
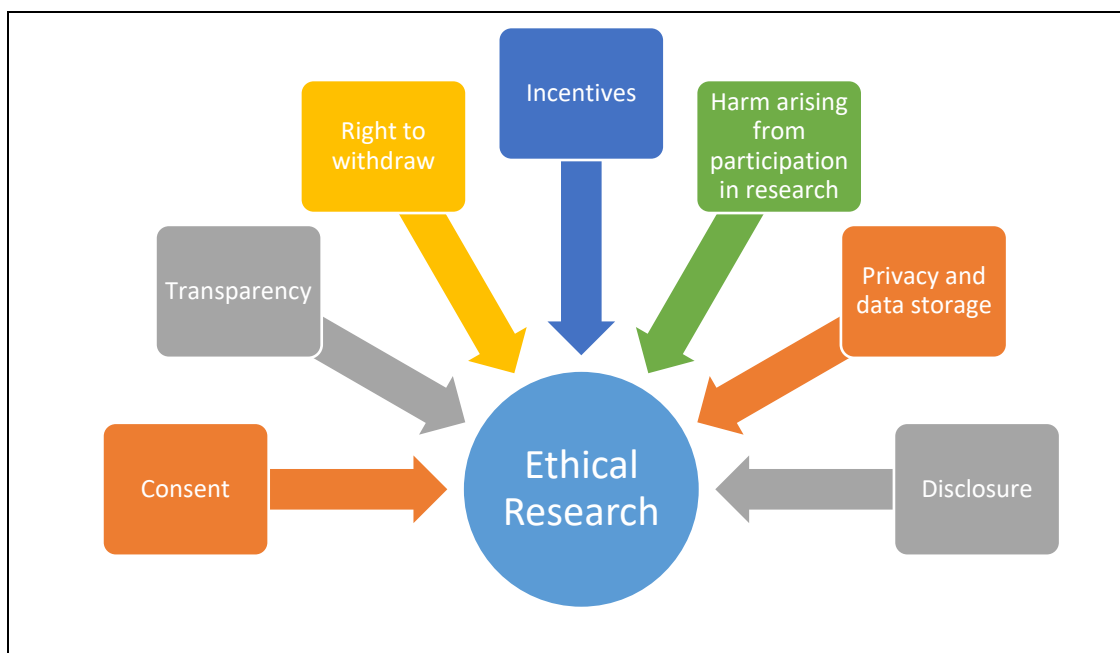
Figure 3.1: BERA Ethical Guidelines (BERA, 2018)

It is important to consider my positionality in the research to establish the work pattern and availability of my participants and relationships with colleagues involved in this study. In 2015, my job role initially involved the delivery of initial teacher training courses, mentoring, staff development and training and cross college observations. During the course of this thesis, due to organisational restructures in 2017 and 2018, my job role has evolved with more quality related responsibilities, specifically working within a curriculum area. In addition to the organisational changes to my job role, there was an external inspection by Ofsted during the period of my study. The organisation was graded with 'requires improvement' at the time when this thesis began. It also coincided with a major event in my personal life when I took eight months of maternity leave and have only just returned to work. Before and during the time of inspection, there had been a series of initiatives and interventions which were implemented to raise standards rapidly in a short timescale. In the context of undergoing an external inspection and organisational restructures, both the progress and development of my thesis were affected. My

post-Ofsted inspection personal reflection initiated my initial inquiry to staff engagement with professional development which then led to the beginning of this thesis.

At the early stage of the research, I intended to engage with in-service teacher trainees but due to limited teaching contact and difficulty in accessing the cohort on a regular basis, I had to change the intended participant group. With the first organisational change in my job role in 2017/2018, I planned and started my pilot study with two teachers. Subsequently one of the participants decided not to continue and the other remained on long term absence after the pilot study ended in the summer of 2017. At the same time, I did not have regular access to this curriculum area after the organisational restructure.

With the second organisational change in my job role in 2018/2019, I decided to engage with teachers from a curriculum area where I have regular contact as a linked person responsible for ensuring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, this led to me moving from an outsider researcher to one of an insider. With my changing job role and insider researcher role, it is important to recognise the presence of power relationships and potential ethical dilemmas between myself, the organisation and the teachers with whom I engage with. In the following section, I critique the benefits and drawbacks of conducting insider research and discuss the management of challenges in relation to ethical dilemmas, power relationships and bias.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, there are two key approaches in the world of research; one is considered more objective, such as study of the natural science, known as the positivist paradigm and the other is more subjective and concerned

with the study of experiences and social phenomena, known as the interpretivist paradigm. There continues to be debate about which approach is the more 'valuable'. Whilst I have justified my position as an interpretivist with a view of how knowledge is constructed, it is also important to consider my situatedness as a researcher with respect to the subject and context researched. In educational research, the researcher's position can be described as an insider or an outsider. Some describe this situatedness as a rigid dichotomy (Olson, 1977) but many believe that the insider and outsider researcher is on a continuum and depending on the time, space, context and subject, it is possible that the researcher may shift on the continuum (Mercer, 2007).

Insider research can be described in many ways, such as work-based research (Costley *et al.*, 2010), practitioner-based enquiry (Murray, 1992), participatory action research (Kemmis et al., 2014; Koo and Lester, 2014) or close-to-practice research (BERA,2018). The main purpose of this type of research is a practical one – to explore a work-based problem or issue. Some argue that this type of research is 'research of the people, by the people, and for the people' (Park, 1997, p.8). Most insider researchers may position themselves as 'researching professionals' who possess *priori* knowledge of an organisation (Merton, 1972), its context and access to colleagues and students within the organisation (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). This type of research has its benefits and dilemmas, which need to be considered at the outset to shape the design of the study and in planning and drafting the ethical considerations.

Having instant and direct access to the workplace and people is the foremost benefit to conducting insider research, with pre-existing relationships and understanding of the context and culture researchers need not invest extra time and budget looking

for suitable settings and participants (Smyth and Holian, 2008). Others claim insider research benefits from more 'in-depth' data due to being part of 'the crowd' with regular contact. Having a trusting relationship means that insider researchers are familiar with 'the language' used by participants and can 'empathise' with the scenarios they are in. Therefore, participants are more willing to share their true stories (Sikes and Potts, 2008 cited in Atkins and Wallace, 2012).

However, there are what Mercer (2007) describes as 'delicate dilemmas' such as 'informant bias, interview reciprocity and research ethics' (ibid., p.7). Conducting insider research in an environment familiar to the researcher means that 'preconceptions may colour accounts, because so much more is already known (or thought to be known) about the interviewer's opinions' (ibid., p.8). Therefore, it is of particular importance to consider these dilemmas thoroughly in the process of planning and engagement with the participants and take considerate steps to ensure credibility and reliability of data in this thesis (Atkins and Wallace,2012).

I am aware of my professional position in working in a department where the majority of my work is to observe and make judgements about teaching, learning and assessment. At the same time, I have responsibilities to support and mentor teachers in the same faculty. Therefore, I need to ensure that I communicate the purpose of my research explicitly with participants who are given time to decide if they want to participate in the research process. It is important to consider what 'informed consent' actually means and how to apply this throughout the research.

On the surface, most researchers would state their participants have given consent to take part in their research by signing a consent form, but 'informed consent' is not always as simple as just signing a piece of paperwork. As an insider researcher,

I have a moral responsibility to ensure that each stage of my research is carefully planned and participants are informed. Consequently, I need to avoid any possible distress or harm to my participants, or even future changes which might have impact on the wider context (Atkins and Wallace, 2012).

Prior to the introduction of the research, permissions were gained from relevant senior managers and middle managers to conduct the research, with an overview of what my research may involve with the participants. I then conducted a formal presentation (see Appendix 3) to potential participants on three occasions, from which participants were recruited. The introductory presentation was carefully drafted and explained because it formed the first stage of the ethical process in research. All participants were provided with detailed information about the purpose and process of the research, in both written and verbal formats (see Appendix 4). Detailed explanation and clear outline of my research thesis at the beginning of the data collection process, in this case, interviews and the implementation of the JPD model was provided. Coghlan and Brannick (2002, 2005) provide a helpful suggestion,

> *'the insider researcher must work to stay in touch with their feelings to ensure that they are not caught in familiar patterns and experiences of organisational life, becoming too close to the processes and unable to rigorously interpret the data.'*
>
> (Coghlan and Brannick, cited in Smyth and Holian, 2008, p.40)

As a worker in the same organisation for over 14 years, I possess a lot of 'pre-understanding', as described by Smyth and Holian (2008, p.39). As an insider, there are many benefits to this understanding, as discussed previously, but equally there are risks of acquiring too many assumptions and preconceptions about the organisation (ibid.). How to manage multiple identities, as a member of staff, a

colleague, a friend, a researcher and a participant, is ultimately one of the challenges faced by an insider researcher due to the multifaceted relationships, ethics and contexts. Greene (2014, p.7) further contends that an insider researcher 'must be able to shift between identities and their dual roles of researcher and the researched, but without causing a noticeable disturbance to the research setting.' Therefore, it is important to consider what techniques and tools can help an insider researcher maintain the balance of viewing different perspectives and opinions with an 'unbiased' lens. Junker's model, as shown in Figure 3.2, represents the positionality of how a researcher adjusts their position between an observer and a participant in the field work. It helps me as an insider researcher to regularly evaluate and reflect my own position in engaging with participants. Recognising that having a 'balanced' relationship with my participants is a challenge. Using Junker's model to evaluate my own position from time to time, helps balance the distance between the participants and myself, within the multiple roles we all possess in the same workplace. It is important to maintain the professional identities which can impact on the trusting relationship and rapport which we all build on (Mahoney, 2007). Additionally, Adler (2004, p.107, cited in Sikes and Potts, 2008, p.7) contends, 'we are always insiders in some contexts and outsiders in other situations'. This neatly sums up the intricate relationship that an insider researcher needs to maintain through sensitivity and reflexivity.
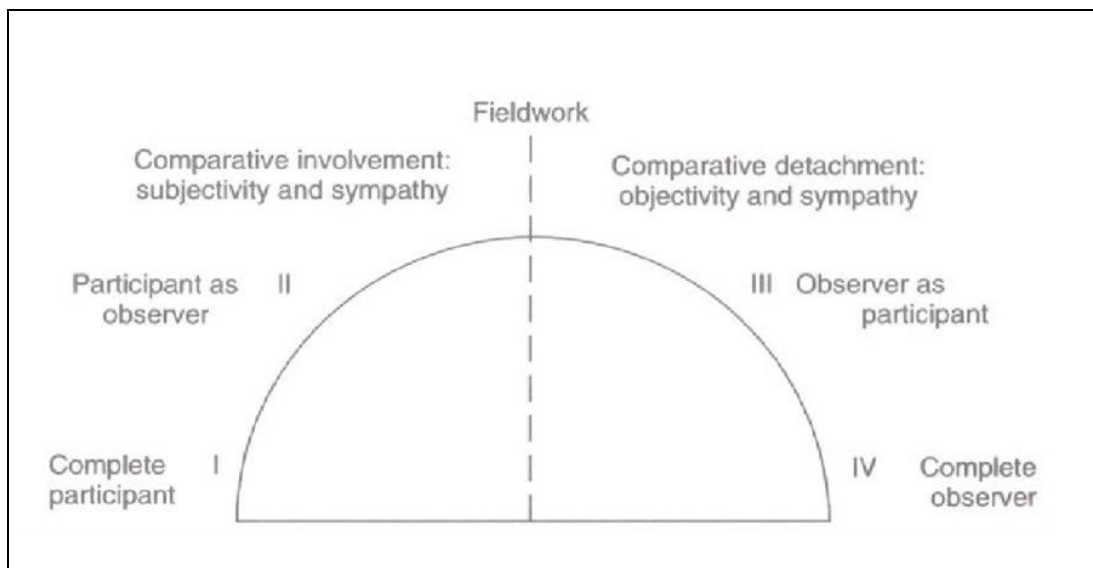
Figure 3.2: Junker's Model of Social Roles for Field Work (Junker, 1960 cited in Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p.104)

The complex issue of balancing different identities between workplace, research and life lead to the power relations between the researcher, the participants and the people who the researcher has direct and indirect contact with. As shown in Figure 3.3, Costley *et al.* (2010) argue that organisational, professional and personal background can influence how research is chosen and undertaken. This includes human relationships. As explained earlier, I am a linked person to a specific curriculum area and part of my research objectives is to engage with teachers in interviews and in the Joint Practice Development (JPD) model of professional development. Consequently, I am involved in the facilitation and participation of the study with participants who are also colleagues. One of the key considerations in conducting such intimate insider research is to be conscious of power issues which can influence these relationships. As Figure 3.3 (Costley *et al.*, 2010) represents, the relationships as an insider researcher are complex and multi-layered. It involves different dynamics between people and contexts which can influence practitioner-based research focus and questions.
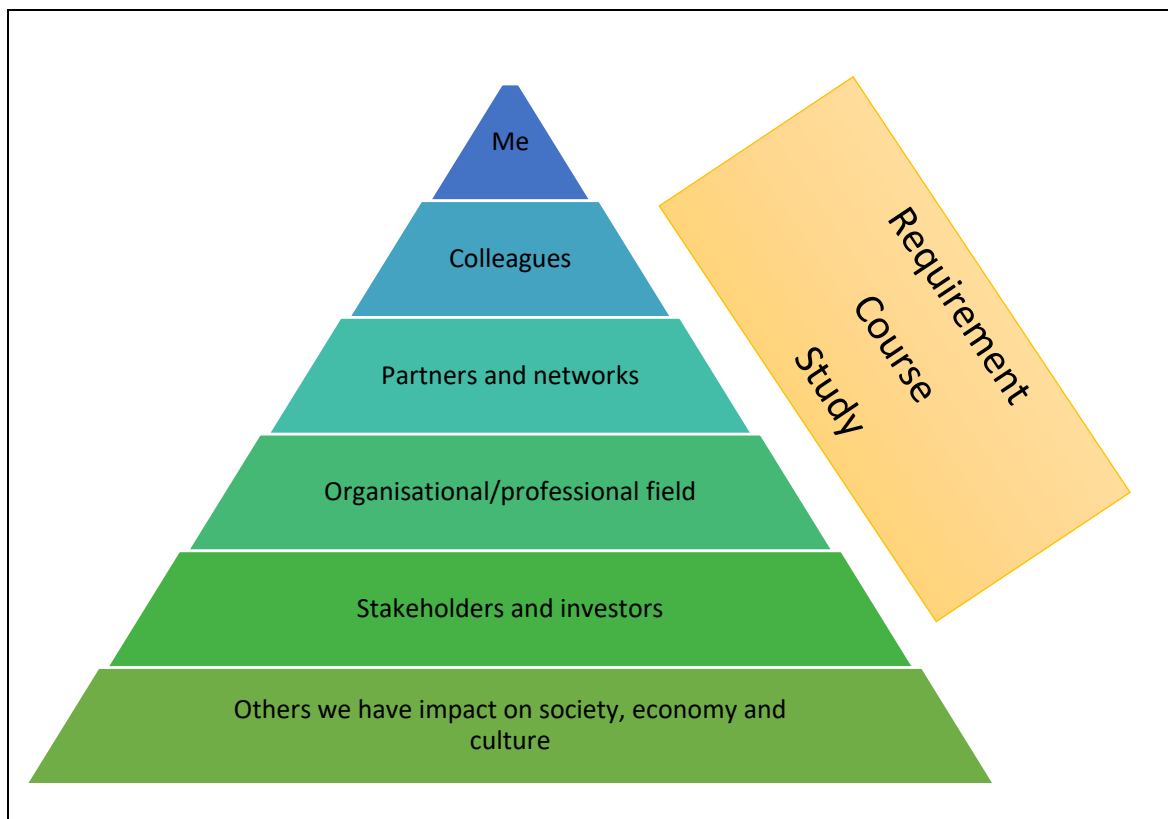
Figure 3.3: The Influences and Contexts Impacting on Work-based Projects (adapted from Costley *et al.*, 2010, p.3)

Smyth and Holian (2008) highlight the possible tensions and delicate relationship between the researcher, the participants and their organisational roles. There may be issues, such as unwanted or unexpected information or events, which can have impact on the trusting relationships which the researcher has built. To manage such conflicts and ethical dilemmas, it is suggested that 'researchers need to be aware of the influence of their organisational role on coercion, compliance and access to privileged information' (ibid., p.39). Equally, participants should be able to contact the researcher to communicate any issues or concerns which may arise during and after the research. Merriam *et al.* (2001, p. 409) reminds the insider-researcher that 'during fieldwork, the research's power is negotiated, not given'. Subsequently, in this research, I started with a clear overview with potential participants through a presentation and written information sheet to ensure participants are fully informed

of the expectations of the research and their and involvement. Regular contact has been maintained with participants through a variety of communication methods to continue transparency of information, such as face to face meetings, email, telephone and regular collections of verbal or written feedback from the participants. Furthermore, a reflective research journal is used to record and reflect on any critical incidents and events to enable a systematic cycle of deep self-evaluation, reflection and future planning of actions (Bolton, 2004). The use of a reflective research journal can help minimise the impact of biases and assumptions which can influence the data.

During the planning stage of research methods and data collection, trustworthiness and rapport between the participants and myself needs to be maintained. I am conscious of the power relations due to my role and interaction with participants. My external academic supervisor is consulted for professional support and advice in relation to this dilemma as I will continue working with the participants after completion of the study (Unluer, 2012). With this in mind, participants are invited individually to review the 'stories' I retell, from interview transcripts, pen portraits, field texts and feedback. Additionally, key readings related to narrative research studies are used to justify my own decision making, with attention to reserving the 'voice' of the participants (King *et al.*, 2019). Several authors suggest it is important to use authentic and precise quotations from the participants; the researcher needs to construct and re-tell the stories of the participants with care (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Creswell, 1994; Kim, 2015; Mercer, 2007). Moreover, Edwards and Furlong (1985, p.33) state that,

'The major criterion of external validity is still the idea of presenting the researcher's account back to the researched. To be valid, an account must have convergence with the experience of the researched.'

The BERA Ethical Guidelines (2018) state that researchers have responsibilities to maintain the privacy of both institutions and individual participants; participants' data should be treated confidentially and anonymously. Confidentiality needs to be maintained by careful management of any disclosure of data, without revealing the identities of individuals and organisations. This can prove challenging due to the nature of conducting insider research (Loxley and Seery, 2008; Mercer, 2007) but there are strategies which can help manage this issue. It is important to communicate with the participants about confidentiality from the very beginning of engagement with them. For example, explaining explicitly in my initial presentation that their identities and information about their participation will not be shared with anyone. Specific information about confidentiality and anonymity is included in the research project debriefing information sheet and in the consent form (see Appendix 4). Details are included about how participants' names will be substituted with pseudonyms and any sensitive information disclosed during the interview and workshops will be kept confidential, with agreement from participants. Artefacts such as images and photographs used in this thesis will be redacted after submission. Participants are also informed of their right to withdraw from the research for any reason at any time (BERA, 2018). Furthermore, careful management of confidential data is communicated with participants, all data is recorded and stored electronically in an encrypted device in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (ICO, 2018). As a teacher educator working in a government funded general further education college, I have completed

training on the GDPR requirements and subsequent updating training to ensure my research study and activities adhere to the requirements.

Providing detailed and clear information to all participants is essential for ensuring transparency, which is a key to maintaining trusting relationships with participants. Multiple ways have been used to communicate with participants, including face to face and digital methods such as emails, telephone calls and video conferencing calls, so that they feel secure and safe to participate in the research study.

'Treading carefully in the field' means that all aspects of potential issues which may arise during the research can be prevented and ultimately it is to ensure that the physical and mental wellbeing of all participants and the researcher are also safeguarded (BERA, 2018). As an action researcher, it is important to recognise that there will be times when things do not go according to plans. An ethic of care is the underpinning principle of how research activities should be planned and undertaken (Barnes, 2012; Nodding, 1984).

Reflection on Ethics

In the previous section, I explain and detail how ethical considerations are navigated and applied in this research study, but this does not mean that ethics were simply 'resolved' and detached from the rest of the thesis. Throughout this thesis, I consciously practise ethics acting ethically both personally and professionally on a daily basis. My ethical practice flows through this thesis by focusing on relational ethics, which means researching from 'our hearts and minds' (Ellis, 2007). Ethical

action was intentionally and explicitly applied in relationship (ibid.). It was certainly not always easy but has been my continuing practice in my professional and personal life. As A Taiwanese national, the influence from my cultural background in Confucianism and Buddhist traditions means that my thinking, saying and doing should be consistent with ethics and morality (Dan, 2020). There were certainly a lot of tensions when practising ethics and morality in different layers of this study. This thesis adopted an action research methodology which meant that I had to consider how my multiple roles, as a researcher, a teacher, a teacher educator and a quality lead, impacted upon colleagues and participants in my research. At times, I struggled to focus on my research due to competing demands of my day-to-day job that required giving my full attention to my students, conduct observations and provide judgements in relation to colleagues' teaching and performance. Standards may be imposed upon colleagues who were asked to 'improve their teaching'. These would often be in conflict with my own values and ethics of care, something I hold in high regards. It has become an important practice for me to be able to slow down to 'pause' and re-examine and reflect on my own values before continuing my research with participants (Ulmer, 2017). This 'pause' was intentional and much needed to ensure that my research continued ethically, especially when participants may be experiencing situations at work or in their personal lives that could impinge upon their thinking, feelings and practice. These are often intertwined and difficult to separate between our personal and professional lives as educators.

Chapter Three Conclusion: Am I ready yet?

Exploring my philosophical and methodological position has been a difficult yet fulfilling task. I found myself challenging assumptions constantly and questioning

the value of my previous research projects. Growing up in Taiwan with deeply rooted influences from Confucianism and Buddhist traditions, it has been a struggle for me to learn about western philosophy which also profoundly impacts and shapes the country, system and culture where I now live and call home. However, through exploring and rediscovering my own beliefs, values and assumptions, I feel empowered to determine the direction of the research and to build resilience in balancing multifaceted roles at work as well as developing my knowledge and skills in research.

The next chapter details the research methods chosen, the data collection processes and the data analysis approach I take to navigate the complexity and messiness of conducting the research study.

Chapter Four: Data Collection and Analysis: How to 'Do' the 'Doing'?

Introduction

This chapter describes the data collection methods and analysis processes used in the study and begins the story of how the Joint Practice Development model can be integrated into practice. By doing so, I aim to present the complexity of the ways in which different methods contribute to the 'whole' narrative developed in this thesis (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) and to give a clear account of how things were done.

Research Methods and Strategies: Working Inside the Field to Dig Deeper and Learn More

The selection of research methods needs to be carefully considered. A strong alignment to the interpretivist paradigm and the research questions are critical ensuring that the design and processes represent rigour and authenticity. The purpose and research questions of this study, as identified at the beginning of this thesis, will be the guiding principles for analysing the experiences of JPD on teachers' professional development. The chosen research methods draw on elements from practitioner-led participatory action research design and a narrative inquiry-based approach. This section includes detailed examinations of why and what research strategies and methods are planned and used in the process of data collection and analysis.

Table 4.1 details the schematic view of the process of how this thesis is structured and conducted. The process is based on the *Research Process, Qualitative Characteristics, and Narrative Research Characteristics* in *Narrative Research Designs,* suggested by Creswell (1994, p.506). Although it may seem rigid to create a schematic process of my study, it helps me, as a researcher, to focus on what is

required to become a researcher and to be able to plan and manage a research project in a logical sequence.

Table 4.1: Schematic Overview of the Research Design

Research Title	Working and Learning Together: The Lived Experiences of FE Teachers Engaging with Joint Practice Development as a Model of Collaborative Enquiry for Professional Learning
Background study	Literature review on models of CPD and Joint Practice Development/ Enablers and barriers on professional learning/ Methodology and methods
Ethical approval	Ethical approval submitted to the University of Sunderland Gain access to research sites Research briefing sheet and consent form to participants
Paradigms and Methodology	Social Constructivism / Subjectivity / Interpretive Hermeneutic / Qualitative
Research methods and approaches	**Practitioner-led participatory action research and narrative inquiry**
	A pilot study completed in 2018
	Phase 1: Semi-structured pre-workshop interviews about perception and experience on CPD Phase 2: JPD workshops Phase 3: Semi-structured post- workshop interviews about experience in JPD workshops Total participants: 6 (one group of 2, and 4 individuals)
Discussion of Findings, Limitations and Contribution to Knowledge	Stories of experiences – my story based on my critical reflective and reflexive journal, participants' stories with pen portraits and interviews, our stories with workshop field notes and images. Ten learning threads are woven into discussion of findings. Limitations and contribution to knowledge are discussed.
Dissemination	Local meetings with senior managers and governors/Internal and external conferences, workshops, interviews and podcast and publication
Recommendations	Practice/Policy/Research

Reflective journals and field texts/images/workshop notes

Qualitative research methods are used both as means to engage with the participants and to collect data. As seen in Figure 4.1 below, the research methods include pre-workshop semi-structured interviews; a series of Joint Practice Development (JPD) workshops with individuals and groups; post-workshop interviews; observation notes, artefacts (images and photographs) and feedback during the workshops; a collection of research reflective journals are kept for the duration of the research.
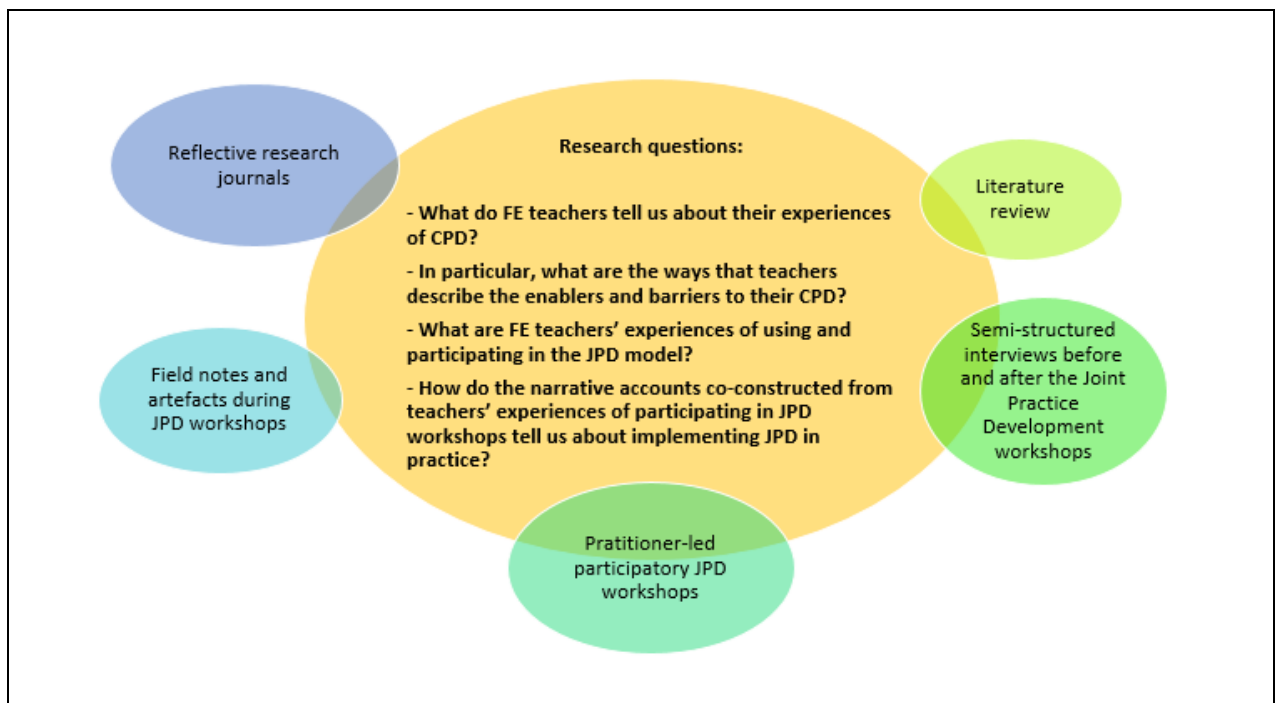
Figure 4.1: A Visual Representation of Data Sources

Figure 4.2 on the next page outlines the sequence of when planned research methods are conducted and analysed; it also represents what data will be used for interpretation to provide the final data for this thesis.
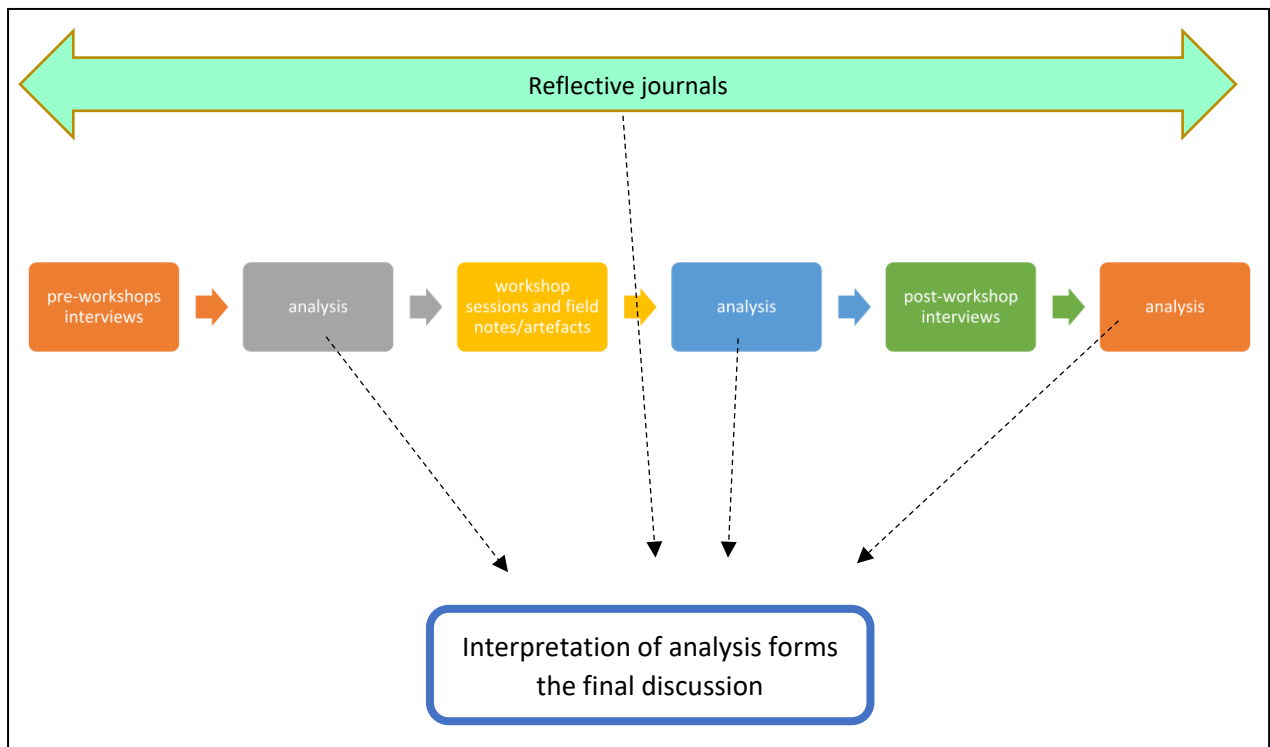
Figure 4.2: The Sequence of Research Data Collection and Analysis in this Study

Aligned to my philosophical stance as an interpretivist researcher, the experiences and unfolding thoughts of participants and myself as a researcher are collected and analysed. The research methods chosen are based on narrative research characteristics (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Creswell, 1994) which focus on engagement with participants and the experiences and feelings of their participation throughout the research. Initially, questionnaires were considered for collecting pre-workshop information from the participants. However, I decided against this method because my participants are collaborators right from the start of this study and using questionnaires does not provide the necessary interaction essential to this research and one of the key ingredients to build trust and rapport with participants.

Semi-structured Interviews Prior to and After JPD Workshops

Interviews are commonly used as one of the main research methods for collecting qualitative data (King *et al.*,2019). It is a useful method to engage with research participants at a more personal level as participants can have face to face dialogues which encourages interaction with the researcher and vice versa (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). They provide flexibility and adaptability for the interviewer to observe non-verbal body language and facial expressions, so any uncertainty of responses or questions can be elaborated and clarified during the interview (Clough and Nutbrown, 2012). This thesis aims to explore the experiences of participants in relation to professional development and learning as well as participation in the Joint Practice Development workshops. Conducting interviews allows for more in-depth discussions and interaction between participants and myself. Kim (2015, p.157) summarises that 'undergirding the use of the interview is the premise that the individual person is an important source of knowledge'. This illustrates how interviews are not just a one-way process of gaining information from the participants, they are also a means to building communication and knowledge from both interviewer and interviewee (Kim, 2015).

Atkins and Wallace (2012) point out that one of the disadvantages of interviews is the transcription and analysis of data, which can be time consuming and laborious. With modern technology, there is a range of software which can help with transcription and analysis but it always remains the researcher's task to interpret the data presented; this depends on the researcher's understanding, experience and ability to unfold the meanings and present sound argument. Digital devices and applications were trialled and used to record and transcribe interviews because of efficiency and time saving for both pre- and post-workshops interviews. However,

're-transcribing' and 'retelling' stories from the raw transcripts myself have been used so the time spent on reading and listening to messages and meanings would provide in-depth knowledge of my participants and their experiences. The process of 'retelling stories', as described by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), helps the researcher gain better awareness of intricacies in the narratives, something technology cannot substitute for. It helps strengthen long-term relationships with the participants who have engaged with me and will perhaps continue to engage with me even after the study comes to an end.

> *'… in the construction of narratives of experience, there is a reflexive relationship between living a life story, telling a life story, retelling a life story, and reliving a life story.'*
> (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p.71)

My positionality as an insider researcher values 'lived and living experiences' which involve colleagues and myself. The research provides a systematic way and platform for telling and retelling stories of my participants and myself in co-constructing our reality. The ability to tell and retell stories of this research journey helps me as a reflexive researcher to become a better person through 'learning and unlearning' (Palaganas *et al.*, 2017).

The ethical concerns and dilemmas around this thesis have been discussed previously. However, it is important to consider the practical techniques for interviews and how to put them into practice ethically. In order to make interviewees feel at ease during interviews, it is important for the researcher to provide clear information to them before and throughout the research process. Due to my job role, professional relationships were already established with some of my participants before the study began. It is recommended that 'prolonged engagement' helps credibility in research as one of the techniques suggested by Guba (1981) and

Greene (2014). Due to various changes to my job role, I eventually settled in with one curriculum area. I waited for 8 months before introducing my research study and intentions for taking it forward. The purpose of this prolonged engagement is for potential participants to adjust to my presence and to build 'optimal' rapport so that participants feel at ease. Kim (2015, p.162) cautions against 'over-rapport' which may bring 'greater bias in the interview, obscuring the purpose of the interview'. With this in mind, I need to allow time and space for myself to reflect and practise reflexivity, a reflective research diary supports the process and practice of critical reflection and reflexivity. Further discussion on keeping a reflective research diary is in the latter part of the chapter.

Additionally, longer time means learning more about the context and culture of this curriculum area and for me to reflect on my engagement with participants, which needs to be in a careful balance. At times, I have been worried about the timescale of my research and concerned that the schedule for interviews and workshops may be delayed due to this period of long engagement. However, this 'investment of sufficient time', justified by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.301, cited in Greene,2014, p.7), helps build trust and actually supports easier and quicker access to the participants' consent to participate in my research.

The interviews conducted in this study are semi-structured with pre-planned *open-ended* questions which help me stay focused on the research questions. Equally, it is important for participants to have their 'voice' heard through providing flexibility for them to give more insightful stories. The pre-prepared questions are all open which encourages participants to give their own accounts when answering and freedom to talk openly about their thoughts and feelings (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). Follow-on questions are used to help participants if they find it difficult to respond to

the initial question. It is important to make sure that there are no *leading questions* which can influence the participants and create bias. To avoid this issue, a pilot interview was conducted with a colleague who is an experienced researcher; the pilot interview helped to refine questions and prepare myself with using recording devices and checking timing.

Based on feedback from my pilot interview and my own reflection, my interview questions were finalised, and potential participants approached by email and face to face communication. Records of schedules and timetables were kept ensuring effective management when collecting interview data and arranging workshop sessions. A separate sheet of interview questions (see Appendix 5) was given to participants prior to the interview and was provided when they were interviewed to ensure they had time to read and think about their answers.

The locations of interviews were agreed with participants at a familiar place near to their usual workplace to support them to feel comfortable and at ease during the interviews. It also helped participants with timing of teaching schedules as some of them participate in the workshops between teaching sessions. The rooms were carefully chosen to ensure privacy and suitability for quality of interview recording essential for transcription and analysis.

Participants were provided with time to read the research briefing information and consent form again as well as opportunities to ask questions before the interviews commenced. Time was allocated at the end of the interviews for further questions and for participants to discuss JPD workshops arrangements. I emphasised the importance of communication ensuring participants could contact me via emails,

telephone, digital tools or face to face if they needed to exchange any thoughts or express any concerns in relation to the research participation.

The interviews were recorded digitally with encrypted devices, which was communicated to participants in the research briefing sheet (Appendix 4) and at the start of the interviews. During interviews, I reiterated that recordings and participants' identities would be kept confidential and anonymised. Using a digital recorder helped me to concentrate on participant's narratives as well as observe changes in their body language and facial expressions.

> *'A good interview is by necessity also a participant observer. That is, the interviewer is participating in the life experience of a given respondent and is observing that person's report of himself, or herself, during the interview conversation.'*
>
> (Denzin, cited in Sikes and Potts, 2008, p. 165)

After interviews were completed, I explained that interpretation and analysis of the interview recordings would be shared with them to ensure accuracy of the interpretation and to maintain trusting relationships (Edwards and Furlong, 1985). It is important to maintain the 'mannerism', such as showing respect and using appropriate language, throughout the process of this thesis in reference to the philosophical underpinnings of myself as researcher, and participants and myself as collaborators. Therefore, I ensured participants were thanked for their time and willingness to participate in the study and followed this up with an email requesting agreement for their continuation with the workshop sessions at the exit of the pre-workshop interviews.

Participatory Joint Practice Development Design

In the previous chapter, I explore and examine my experience and philosophical position which situates my study in a social constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology. This research invites participants to be co-creators of experience in implementing JPD and therefore participatory action research offers a strong rationale as the most relevant and key methodological choice for this thesis. Participatory action research is supported by elements of the narrative inquiry approach (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) which is discussed in more detail in the next chapter. A spiral shaped action research cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting acts as the basis for the implementation of the JPD intervention. The cycle of the JPD model accords coherently with the action research cycle. I have further developed a specific framework for this thesis to show how the JPD model blends and is implemented into the cycle of action research (see Figure 4.3).
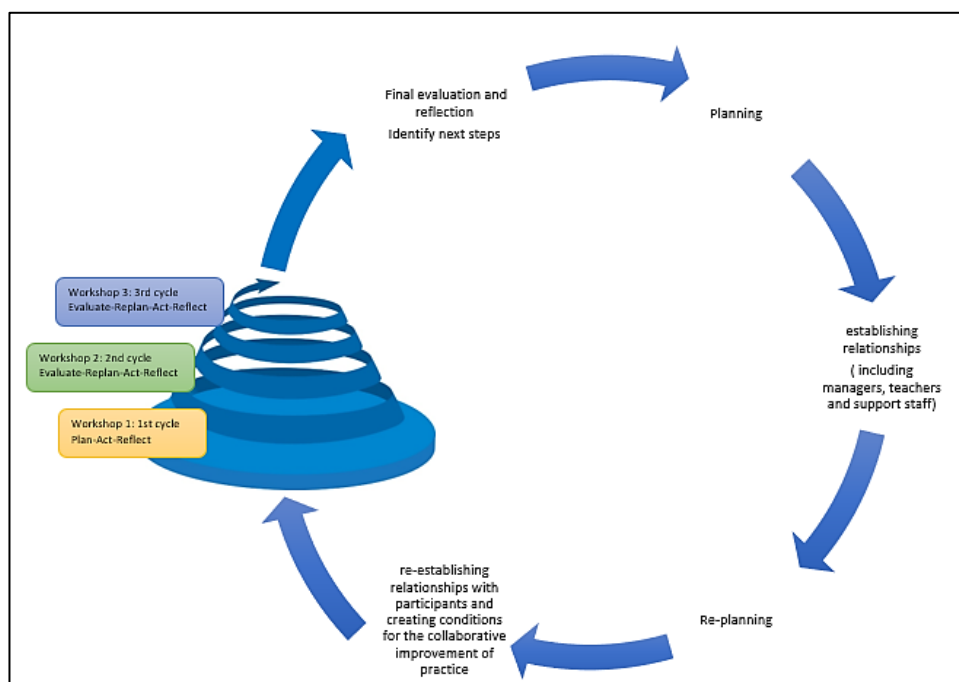
Figure 4.3: Practitioner-led Action Research Framework (Adapted from the Joint Practice Development cycle by *Gregson et al*. (2015b) and Lewin's action-reflection model by McNiff (2016))

Figure 4.3 illustrates how the first stage of the JPD model is concerned with building relationships and creating conditions for improvement in collaborative ways. It had taken much longer than anticipated at this stage due to organisational structural changes as well as external inspections which happened at the start of the thesis. Therefore, re-planning of the research actions was much needed whilst simultaneously establishing relationships with the teachers in curriculum area I was assigned to. Despite the challenges of unforeseen changes and 'interruptions' to mine and other colleagues' job roles, a much more consistent relationship has eventually been established. During this stage, I focused mainly on the literature review and exploring my philosophical position as a researcher. During this time, I was able to reflect on my own practice and had time to learn more about my colleagues in the curriculum area where I was engaging with mentoring, coaching and support. Ladkin (2004, p.478) emphasises that action researchers need to be 'sensitive to issues of power' and take account of 'emotional, social, spiritual and political dimensions' when interacting with research participants. Hence, the ability to interpret multilayers of relations, meanings and feelings is important to participatory action researchers throughout the entire research process.

The next stage of the cycle is engaging with voluntary participants who I have existing relationships with through my job role. I recognised the need to re-establish relationships with the participants due to my multiple roles, as a colleague, an advanced practitioner, a quality linked person and a researcher. The pre-workshop interviews were an opportunity to reiterate the purpose of the research and to learn more about the participants including their background, perceptions and experiences of professional development and learning.

One of the greatest challenges in research is time. Whilst it was relatively straightforward to find voluntary participants due to the 'prolonged engagement' (Guba, 1981 and Greene, 2014), it became clear how difficult it was to locate a time when all participants could meet up for the workshops. My initial plan was to engage all or the majority of participants in the workshops at the same time, but I soon realised that this was not possible. Although permission from the curriculum managers to access staff and negotiate times had been gained, my plans still had to change. My initial plan of working as one group was abandoned in favour of working with pairs and individuals. My personal experience and the process of engaging voluntary participants are detailed in the following chapter.

The planned workshops consisted of a minimum of three separate sessions. Throughout the workshop sessions, I positioned myself as a facilitator in the process of practitioner-led action research and used the guiding principles by Gregson *et al.* (2013). The first session focused on understanding the concept and purpose of Joint Practice Development with supporting literature from Gregson *et al.* (2016). Participant(s) discussed current context and experiences in teaching, learning and assessment and identified one or two improvement priorities. Between the first and second session, participant(s) and myself then discussed, researched and considered possible resources or methods to support the improvement priorities. The second session focused on sharing what we found and agreed on one method, concept or resource to try out in practice. We agreed on what and how to measure impact and collect feedback. By using the article by Gregson *et al.* (2016), myself and participants explored and selected from the suggested list of 'hard' and 'soft' indicators for reflection and evaluation. In the final session, we planned to bring in

evidence, such as feedback or examples of work, to evaluate impact based on the indicators agreed in previous workshop and decide what was required next.

In each workshop session, written notes or images of artefacts were taken and participants were invited to describe their experiences and feelings with key words or phrases. Initially, keeping a joint reflective journal was explored with the participants but was rejected as a method for data collection due to participants' concerns over workload. We had to compromise with verbal reflective accounts which were recorded in note form by me. Examples of the workshop notes and collective reflective notes can be found below and next page in Images 4.1.

L2 → 9:15
L1 → 9:00 / Staggering timetables agreed   25/11/2019

Changing environment → a bit messy
learners take charge of their environment (a cubicle)
→ ownership
really happy to tidy up their own workshop space.
Right from the start
Getting involved → confidence

A long period of time
projects

indicators *Student motivation/morale
Learners → A lot of pride in themselves + working environment
Feedback from centre manager, good ambassador on Facebook
praise cards

staff attitude/motivation.

Local Chapel
Heritage Fund

Images 4.1: Examples of the JPD workshop notes and collective reflective notes

Immediately after each workshop, my reflexive accounts were word processed and saved in the encrypted drive and laptop (BERA, 2018). An example from my account can be found below in Table 4.2. Further discussion on reflection and reflexivity is included later in this chapter.

Table 4.2: An Example of My Reflective and Reflexive Account

Date: 02nd October 2019
• **What happened: describe the event, experience, situation, or new knowledge**   Due to issues around IQA and EQA, the faculty I am a linked person with is under support to improve, which means that there is a focus on ensuring that assessment planning, tracking and schemes of learning, anything relevant to teaching, learning and assessment are in place. The plan includes speaking with course directors and learners about their experience. As part of my job, I have been assigned to assist with the 'review' / 'investigation' which involves with sampling paperwork, e.g. course files, schemes, assessment/IQA plans etc.   I spoke to managers about some aspects of the paperwork and was asked to support some course directors. However, there seems to be issues around communication as there wasn't clear communication about what support to improve means and certainly has not filtered down to the teachers.
• **Feelings/reactions: what I felt about it, how I reacted**   I felt that my role in staff development and teacher education is in total conflicts with this review. I also felt that the timing of this task has impact on teachers because teachers at this time of the year are already stressed out about learners and at the same time try to grasp what learners' needs are. One of the teachers emailed me, due to support to him about course files, this teacher said (by email)

> *The only problem is all these extra meetings with every one including parents is eating into a lot of my time, remember I'm only part time Lecturer, Some things got to give, I feel the learners are losing out at the moment, the other part time TSO can't drive so I'm having to arrange the cars most days, I'm also mentoring him at the moment, it's all getting a bit too much to be honest, would it be possible to meet next Tuesday after the meeting? I'll have more time then.*

I felt awful because on the one hand I need to support him with what he thinks as priorities but on the other hand I felt that I was giving him more pressure. At the end, I agreed to change time for our workshop and I have also reflected on how best to support him. I decided not to comment too much as the email tells me how frustrated he already is.

- **Evaluation: what's good/useful, what's bad/not so useful**

I think it is useful to know that this teacher is frustrated but also appreciate that he tells me his honest thoughts about his work at the moment.

- **Analysis: what can I do with this information? What might I keep, use or bear in mind? What might I disregard?**

Definitely confidentiality and may need to follow up what will happen in the meeting.

- **Conclusion: is there anything I might have done differently with this event / experience / situation / new knowledge? Is there anything I've missed? Is there more I need to do**?

I would have tried to speak to him instead of emailing him. Although I did try to speak him, he was teaching then. Time is definitely an issue when teachers already have a very full timetable and yet the intention for me is to support teachers. I sometimes feel that taking teachers out of their teaching or preparation time can be a barrier therefore I tend to ask teachers when they are available rather than to suit my own convenience.

- **Action step: are there any practical action steps that flow from this?**
I am planning to see how best I can use golden hour to provide support or help to teachers. I may offer my time to sit in their office for anyone to chat and ask questions. I will consult the programme managers first.

Due to the scope of the research, I needed to be realistic about the length of the data collection period. All three workshop sessions were designed with one- to two-week gaps to minimise the impact on participants' workloads as they were using their preparation time to volunteer for my research project. All schedules of interviews and workshops were organised and agreed with participants at the start of the research. This is particularly important because reliance on commitment from participants as well as my commitment to the research is vital.

At each stage of the workshops, notes were taken by myself and copies were kept confidential and shared only with the participants. Each workshop started with

dialogue focusing on how our week(s) had been and we would revisit what we had discussed, followed by evaluating progress on what had been agreed. At the same time, I was conscious of the working patterns of our organisation. What this implies is that I needed to discuss and negotiate any possible change of direction to our existing dialogues or actions as it is part of our daily practice when problems and issues may arise and when we need to focus on the current matters in real life. Therefore, participants and I are 'situated' in the learning experience through JPD workshops (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Stein, 1998).

The final stage of the cycle is for individual participants to reflect and evaluate their experiences and feelings of taking part in the JPD workshops. Individual participants were re-interviewed, following the same protocols as the pre-workshop interview.

The Role of the Researcher and Critical Reflective Journals

In Chapter Three, key literature on critical reflectivity and reflexivity and how they relate to this thesis were explored and justified. This section includes discussion of the practical matters and challenges which may occur during the process of research and the writing up of the thesis.

One of the recommended tools to support credibility and rigour of qualitative research practices is to keep a reflective journal systematically (Smyth and Holian, 2008; Atkins and Wallace, 2012). During the study, a journal has been kept and used as a means for my own learning and the development of critical reflective practice (Moon, 2002). Entries in the journal include the wider context of my workplace as well as personal incidents which relate to this thesis. A major part of the journal includes my reflection and reflexivity of conducting the JPD workshops with details about engagement,

feedback from participants and my role as a facilitator and as a researcher. The data also consists of semi-structured interview recordings and transcriptions, which occur before and after the JPD workshops. During the workshop sessions, email exchange, notes and images were collected to form part of the data. The role of the researcher in the process of narrative inquiry often plays an essential position and can sometimes find themselves in 'nested set of stories' (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000, p.63).

In the process of reflection, the researcher will ask questions about their own assumptions and behaviour which can lead to further clarification on their 'positionality' in the research process (Atkins and Wallace, 2012). Riessman (2008, p.191) emphasises the importance of keeping a log or a diary of any decisions and inferences, which 'encourages methodological awareness' and 'fosters ongoing reflexivity – critical self-awareness about how the research was done and the impact of critical decisions made along the way.'

By the systematic use of a critical reflective journal, I provide the time and space to develop impartiality (Sikes and Potts, 2008). The importance of critical reflection and reflexivity has been discussed in other parts of this thesis but how and when reflection and reflexivity should take place is a challenging one. There is no doubt that time needs to be determined as to when reflection and reflexivity should happen but equally the mental capacity to think and to think critically is crucial to the quality of the actual experience of reflection and reflexivity.

> '*As an insider-researcher, you are going through a learning process. Reflection upon current practice, evaluation of your research work against university criteria and the adoption of a reflexive approach to your work are crucial aspects of the learning of work-based projects.*'
> (Costley *et al.*, 2010, p.4)

As discussed in Chapter Three, my role is multifaceted throughout this thesis. Balancing my roles and how I think, and act is a challenging task. My primary method of recording thoughts and feelings is through a digital reflective diary. There are two parts to this method; the first is to write down my immediate thoughts and feelings and the second is to revisit my entries, keep my original journal entries and add on further comments. The purpose of this process is to capture my immediate 'moments' of reflection and through revisiting my journal entries, I hope to develop my own knowledge and practice on the 'depth' and 'breadth' of reflection and reflexivity (Mortari, 2016; Thompson and Pascal, 2012). To allow time and space for reflection and reflexivity, I can observe (gaze) how consistent my actions are in relation to my values and beliefs; this can also support with social and emotional aspects of learning particularly with participants. It is also important to recognise and reflect on any potential personal bias and imbalance of power relations with participants during the project (Gregory, 2017). Through reading and adding further thoughts and feelings to my own reflective journals, it supports my learning processes in being an action researcher and a JPD workshop facilitator.

The Role of Supervision and Critical Friends

Another helpful approach to enhance the criticality of one's own reflection is to 'seek external supervision' which may provide a different voice to challenge any prejudice (Smyth and Holian, 2008). My supervisor and I have regular tutorials, contacting each other via emails, phone calls, virtual and face to face meetings. The supervision has provided essential professional guidance to ensure my thesis meets academic requirements; equally, my supervisor poses critical questions to challenge and support

me along the journey of research. Apart from my University supervisor, I have critical friends with whom I exchange ideas and feelings, posing questions and providing essential support when our research becomes 'stuck'. 'Reflexivity can be supported by using the perspectives of others' (Atkins and Wallace, 2012, p.127). These are all practical strategies which have been beneficial to supporting my 'becoming' an early career researcher and developing my own voice.

How Do I Analyse Data?: Theory and Practice

This section explains the process and methods of how data is analysed in relation to the research questions which are:

- What do FE teachers tell us about their experiences of CPD?

- In particular, what are the ways that teachers describe the enablers and barriers to their CPD?

- What are FE teachers' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model?

- How do the narrative accounts co-constructed from teachers' experiences of participating in JPD workshops tell us about implementing JPD in practice?

When designing how data is collected and analysed, my methodological position is taken into consideration in conjunction with my beliefs and values. Being a novice researcher, I believe it is important to 'learn to walk' first, hence the process and tools chosen, reflect my learning of research practice. The theory and framework used for data collection is primarily based on practitioner-led participatory action research (Costley *et al.*, 2010; Kemmis *et al.*, 2014) and the adoption of narrative-based inquiry approach, informed by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), Creswell (2012), Kim (2015) and Riessman (2008). The data analysis process has been conducted by using the thematic analysis approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006; King *et al.*, 2019) with the three-

dimensional narrative inquiry framework (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) for the structure and presentation of the analysis.

Data Analytical Tools and Methods

Prior to starting the analysis, I explored a number of ways to organise data, including technological tools such as NVivo. However, I decided against using these tools preferring to 'be close to the data and have a hands-on feel for it without the intrusion of a machine' (Creswell, 2012, p.240). By manually reading, re-reading and categorising texts, notes and transcriptions into themes, the whole process provides a 'rich' experience, immersing myself in appreciation of what has been observed, expressed, discussed and reflected.

During the data collection and analysis stage, a substantial amount of time is spent reading and re-reading field texts and transcriptions. As was shown in Figure 4.2, analysis happens at different phases with no definite start and end to each phase, as emerging findings and themes are interrelated between phases. By going through this process, researchers 'will engage in a detailed description of what they discover from the analysis, classify the information for the reader (discussing emergent themes), and provide an interpretation of the findings in light of the literature and their theoretical perspectives' (Kim, 2015, p.188).

Whilst reading and interpreting field texts and transcriptions require time and patience, this process is undertaken at different points in time. As Connelly and Clandinin (2000) note,

> 'the move from field texts to research texts is layered in complexity in still other ways…we return to them again and again, bringing our own restoried lives as inquirers, bringing new research puzzles, and re-searching the texts.'

(Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p.13)

Turning field texts into research texts can be a challenging and a complicated process. Connelly and Clandinin (2000) provide three sets of considerations for the narrative inquirer. These are theoretical considerations, practical field text-oriented considerations and interpretive-analytic considerations. All three considerations are used as guiding principles for analysis of findings and final thematic discussions.

The Data Analytical Framework

This study focuses on developing a narrative account of the lived experiences of FE teachers through implementing JPD as an approach to professional development. The in-depth and rich experiences collected throughout the study mean that there is a vast amount of data presented for interpretation and analysis. A systematic method of analysis is required to read, select, organise, interpret and thematise from narratives (Kim, 2015). The inductive thematic analysis approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2012) has been adopted to identify emergent themes from an individual level representing each participant's voice to collective themes of the shared stories.

Coding is a commonly used approach during data analysis. Creswell (2012) suggests that several steps are taken when coding data. These steps include an initial reading of all field data to 'get a sense of the whole' with preliminary memos written alongside the data; selecting texts which draw most attention and write down key words; start using codes to interpret and label text segments; group similar codes and reduce the number of codes in order to identify themes; re-read field data and find any new emerging codes; the final stage is to identify overarching themes which respond to

and support research questions (Creswell, 2012). I have attached examples of memos and coding in this thesis on the next page in Images 4. 2.

Images 4.2: Examples of memos and coding

Saldana (2013) advises that 'First cycle coding are those processes that happen during the initial coding of data…Second cycle methods are a bit more challenging because they require such analytic skills as classifying, prioritizing, integrating, synthesizing, abstracting, conceptualizing and theory building' (Saldana, 2013, p.58). This process is also described as an inductive process, which 'refers to a data

analysis process whereby the researcher reads and interprets raw textual data to develop concepts, themes or a process model through interpretations based on data' (Chandra and Shang, 2019, p.91).

The practical approach I take is to manually write memos whilst reading and re-reading the field data (personal reflective diary, transcriptions of interviews and JPD workshop field notes and images); the memos along with direct quotations are then organised into a spreadsheet. These memos were allocated descriptive codes which were then reduced to 6-8 codes. I then re-read the field data at least twice to see if my interpretation remained consistent with further exploration of emerging codes different from previous analysis. At the final stage of analysis, themes were identified and constructed for final discussion (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Literature from previous chapters has been used to support the analysis and discussion. During each stage of analysis, my interpretation of stories (words from interviews, notes and images) was sent to participants for confirmation and comments. The final analysis was shared with participants via an encrypted document. Feedback was welcomed to ensure the accuracy and credibility of my interpretation.

In this section, I explain the process of how the rich data collected, from interviews, workshops, field notes, artefacts and reflexive journals, was analysed, structured and organised. It was a messy and complex process due to the amount of in-depth narrative accounts and texts that were often overlapped and interwoven at different points of time and from individual participants and myself. It was a real challenge to sew individual pieces of analysis into one coherent narrative to provide a complete tapestry. I needed a framework to help me structure the full narrative account in a logical and natural way. I found the three-dimensional narrative inquiry framework by

Connelly and Clandinin (2000) to be very useful and this was adapted and used for the construction of findings and final discussion (see Table 4.3 on the next page). The sequence of analysis started with my personal reflection (my stories), individual participant's pre-workshop interviews (their stories) and then the findings from JPD workshops and post-workshop interviews (our stories).

Firstly, I analysed the data from my reflexive journals to enable an understanding of my positionality and the conditions from my personal experience and the unique context of the 'research site'. I then analysed and established the spatiality and temporality (situation, time, space and past experience) of individual participants in the study. This was narrated in the style of individual pen portraits that each participant was introduced through and invited to enter the study. The data from the pre-workshop interviews was analysed using the thematic analysis approach devised by Braun and Clarke (2006) which enabled a deeper understanding of each other's identity, perceptions and experience of professional development and learning. The interaction, in return, developed our partnerships in co-constructing our stories together with JPD workshops and post-workshop interviews.

In the second phase, the workshop field notes, artefacts and joint reflexive accounts from participants and myself were analysed and organised in a chronological order, attempting to present our experiences and narratives in a coherent sequence. The details from each workshop were deliberately presented in lengths to show the interaction and continuity of our experience and the complexity of relationship between practice, theory, action, reflection (in action research and JPD cycle) and research. This process of analysis included my continuing reflexivity and the analysis of my reflection which was interwoven with participant's narratives, collective reflective notes and artefacts in the JPD workshops.

The final phase focused on the analysis of post-workshop interviews that were constructed by considering the social interaction at present and the personal and organisational context for the future. The thematic analytical approach was used to present the overarching themes from the interview data and my personal reflexive accounts.

Table 4.3: The Three-dimensional Narrative Inquiry Framework in this Thesis(Adapted from Connelly and Clandinin, 2000)

Interaction			Temporality / Continuity			Spatiality
Personal	Social	cultural	Past	Present	Future	Situation/space/ environment
Look inward to internal conditions, feelings, hopes, aesthetic reaction, moral dispositions	Look outward to existential conditions in the environment with other people and their intentions, purposes, assumptions, and points of view.	The community where participants are situated	Look backward to remembered stories and experiences from earlier times	Look at current stories and experiences relating to actions of an event.	Look forward to implied and possible experience and plot lines	Look at context, time, and place situated in a physical landscape or in a setting bounded by characters' intentions, purposes, and different points of view.
From insider researcher and JPD facilitator's perspective and from participants' perspective before, during and after JPD workshops	*Between insider researcher and participants during JPD workshops*	*The institution and the programme area and the local team where participants are working*	*Individual participant's background story on entering the teaching career and experience* *Their experience and perception on CPD*	*Experience and stories whilst taking part in JPD workshops*	*After participating in JPD workshops, their experience and thoughts about the future in relation to professional development and learning*	*The wider FE context* *The institutional context* *The local context where participants are* *The participants' personal context and their own personal belief and values*

'Validity' of Narrative Inquiry?

An exploration of experiences inevitably involves personal narrative accounts. The notion of narration has been debatable in relation to truth and trustworthiness in the

research world particularly in social sciences (Riessman, 2008). Connelly and Clandinin (1999) argue that 'like other qualitative methods, narrative relies on criteria other than validity, reliability, and generalizability. The language and criteria for narrative inquiry are under development' (p.7). They continue to identify apparency, verisimilitude, transferability, authenticity, adequacy, and plausibility. Such criteria are still very much pertinent to narrative inquiry research today.

Meanwhile, Heikkinen *et al.*(2012) question if the concept of 'validity' is still required in qualitative research due to its quantitative and post-positivistic paradigmatic connotations. They continue to develop five guiding principles (See Appendix 7) which are helpful for consideration. Riessman's advice about the validity of research is helpful, she suggests, '…the validity of a project should be assessed from within the situated perspective and traditions that frame it'. Researchers have to make arguments for 'the trustworthiness of their work from within their situated perspectives that, in turn, will inform the ethical parameters of the inquiry'(Riessman, 2008, p. 185). Therefore, in this thesis, I chose to detail and document the processes used to collect and interpret data, as well as practising reflexivity so that ethical considerations flow throughout the thesis to truthfully narrate the experiences of the participants and me with authenticity.

Chapter Four Conclusion: Looking back, Looking Forward

This chapter provides a discussion of the practice and processes involved in the methods chosen to collect and analyse data. My journey of learning in this study has progressed immensely from reflecting on my own story of being a teacher, an educator and a novice researcher, exploring my philosophical and methodological positionality to understanding 'how' to conduct qualitative research and designed the ways in which

my participatory action research study will be carried out and analysed. Chapter Five will follow the three-dimensional narrative inquiry framework (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) in three phases to illustrate and analyse the experiences of participants and myself prior to, during and after engagement in Joint Practice Development becoming the narrative or story of this thesis. It is important at this stage to explain the rationale behind the construction of the data analysis chapter. Qualitative research can generate vast amounts of data and this study is no exception! All three phases of data analysis are presented in the next chapter. The nature of the study requires the presentation of many direct narratives to support the authenticity of the stories and to demonstrate the transition between field texts and research texts as a narrative inquirer. This does mean that Chapter Five appears heavy in wordage but as described above, this reflects the large number of direct quotes from participants deemed necessary to authenticate and truthfully tell the stories of lived experience.

Chapter Five: From Telling My Story, to Telling Our Stories Together

Preamble

This extensive chapter aims to narrate the story of practitioner-led action research study with the Joint Practice Development (JPD) model trialled as an intervention in professional development and learning. The story starts with my own reflection as an advanced practitioner and teacher educator. I tell of how the meandering paths of challenges and opportunities impact upon this story, sharing how and why creating the right conditions for learning has been a long and difficult process. During the implementation of the JPD model, the stories of participants have become intrinsically related to mine through joint critical reflection and reflexivity. Dialogues grow into relationships built on trust and contribute to emancipation in professional practice. The process of linking and interpreting different vignettes of data, including personal critical reflective journal entries, interview transcriptions, workshop notes, and images, helps my learning to 'become a researcher ' and 'our' learning between participants and myself sheds light on the impact of the JPD model. The final interviews with individual participants do not simply signal the ending of my thesis but a new leaf in the story. Through narrative inquiry, telling and retelling the interweaving of different stories helps me consider the quality and truthfulness of my research (Polkinghorne, 1991) and to respond to the research questions set out at the beginning of this thesis.

A Difficult Start - It's Not Straightforward at All to Creating Conditions for Collaboration (Personal/Temporal Past/Personal and Institutional Context)

In the Methodology chapter, the background story of the local context of this research, an external inspection and internal organisational restructure and changes in my job

role, was told. The thesis begins with my feelings in response to an external inspection on returning to work after maternity leave. It was a turning point in my personal and professional life as I started to feel more 'confident' as an advanced practitioner and teacher educator after two years in the quality department, as well as becoming a parent. Although these two roles are different, I feel even more strongly about the importance of education and the role of teachers in driving the quality of education through building and sustaining a strong professional community (Coffield, 2017).

> *'I have been working in the same college since 2006 and felt strongly about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the FE Sector. I have felt that the current circumstances stated in the Ofsted report and outcomes have impacted on the lecturing staff. The overall morale is low from the conversations I had with lecturers. Within my job role, I engage with academic staff for professional learning and teacher education. I feel that there is a need to investigate different ways of working with lecturers.'*
> (I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 20 November 2017)

This personal reflection prompted me to search for a model of professional development which would encourage reciprocal engagement of learning between teachers and myself. Although the study and review of literature took a substantial amount of time, the journey has become the foundation of my own understanding of professional learning and development. At one of the Master of Philosophy research development workshops (SUNCETT) in 2018, all participants had to present a short summary of their thesis. During this presentation, I recalled the transformative effect on my practice of conducting three practitioner-led action research projects facilitated through the JPD model. Surprisingly, I did not realise then that it was always my intention to cultivate a community of professional learning through the JPD model over the years. It was only when this thesis started, the timing was right to systematically trial the JPD model because of my job role involving wider responsibilities for

professional development and teacher education across the organisation. This journal entry recounts how,

> *'This process of exploring, searching, thinking and building confidence in using research literature to inform my practice has taken quite a few years to emerge and consolidate (it's still work in progress), despite the fact that I thought I had gone through several years of formal teacher training in Taiwan and in the UK and should have learnt the knowledge of teaching theories and skills.'*

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 10 December 2017)</div>

This extract rings true throughout the whole process of this thesis when it emerged that I did not try to learn or understand what professional development and learning is and what 'makes' or 'develops' a teacher educator, when I first started my new job role. This feeling of inadequacy was real, despite having an excellent track record of teaching observation grades, feedback and receiving awards in teaching in my previous job roles. The eagerness to learn and to learn with others became the central motivation to start this thesis. As I explore my rationale and positionality in the methodology chapter, my values, assumptions and beliefs of what professional learning means to me, has an impact on the decision to use practitioner-led participatory action research method. However, it has not always been straightforward even when recruiting participants to my study.

Pilot Study: Getting a Feel for It

Prior to commencing this thesis, my initial plan was to engage with initial teacher trainees as my participants. However, due to limited direct teaching hours and contact with trainees, this idea had to be abandoned as access to resources (participants and time) is one of the key factors to professional learning (Eraut, 2004; Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Gregson *et al.*, 2015a). This was the beginning of 2018 and due to the

outcomes of the external inspection and feedback from the 'Support and Challenge[6]' days (Ofsted, 2015), there were numerous changes to internal processes and procedures to ensure that overall improvement in all categories of the inspection framework before the re-inspection happened. Being in the quality department, we were then assigned to deliver training sessions focussing on the 'requires improvement' areas in teaching, learning and assessment. I wrote down the following reflection,

> *'So, we had the Ofsted inspection last year … Because of the results of the Ofsted report, I started thinking about what had not been working with staff development and why and how rarely do we know if these sessions have had an impact on teaching, learning and assessment (TLA).'*

> (I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 20 January 2018)

This reflection prompted me to consider and research the enablers and barriers to professional development and learning; this led to my pilot study of using the Joint Practice Development model. The pilot study was initially set up with one teacher, who approached me after a training session I delivered in 2018.

The pilot study was jointly planned with this teacher, and we agreed pre-arranged meetings. At this stage, my experience of using the JPD model was still immature, but I saw this as an opportunity to put the model into practice. The foremost issue arising from the pilot study was agreeing communal times to meet regularly as the participant was on a part-time contract with teaching responsibilities across two campuses. During the research process, there was continual 'negotiation and re-negotiation of access' (Blaxter *et al.*, 2010, p. 156-159) and what Connelly and Clandinin describe as 'constantly negotiating, constantly re-evaluating, and maintaining flexibility and

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[6] Support and Challenge days are days allocated to inspection and inspection teams to providers that are found to require improvement (Ofsted, 2015).

openness to an ever-changing landscape' (2000, p. 71-76). Careful consideration had to be taken into account in response to the unpredictability of work times and relationship with the research participant.

Despite both being keen on working with each other, we had to resort to email and telephone conversations to communicate. The pilot study involved researching and discussing strategies for developing level three students' critical writing skills. The process involved joint delivery of a workshop session with students taught by the participant. However, the final evaluation and reflection of the pilot JPD workshops did not take place due to sickness absence of the participant. We did resume our evaluation and reflection after the teacher returned to work but the whole process took nearly a whole year. My personal reflection below highlights some of the key factors which might contribute to starting open and trustworthy relationships with colleagues in building dialogues about professional learning and development.

> *'Based on the analysis from the narratives and feedback from interviews and email communication, it shows that the continuity and the initial establishment of relationship is one of the key factors to encourage professional development. Although it is hard to identify or measure 'trust' and 'respect', I believe that the collaboration and openness about negotiation on methods and resources between the participating teacher and myself is another key factor to positively engage with staff in this research. The trust from the teacher has enabled me to enter the 'space' of the course the teacher was teaching hence the access to the students…I believe that the continuous trusting relationship of engaging with teachers in professional development is valuable and particularly illuminating from this research. Although it is hard to measure how this can impact on professional development in a long term, it has provided a snapshot of how this collaborative way of working can potentially lead to a community of learning with more teachers.'*
>
> (I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 27 July 2018)

Following the pilot study, I had a brief window of time to evaluate and re-evaluate the process of using the JPD model in professional learning and development. Upon reflection, it would have been helpful to introduce the pilot project to more teachers in

the same programme area so that a wider community of teachers and students have opportunities to take; it also would help build my experience of facilitating the workshops. This reflection has helped effective and better planning and organisation of the main cycles of the JPD workshops. Moreover, the following reflection further strengthens my intention to continue the JPD model with teachers at my workplace,

> *'The key aspect of the research I would like to change if I were to repeat the study is the timeframe of this study. I feel that the intervention could have been implemented earlier in the first academic term, which would then enable the volunteer teacher and myself to set up further workshop sessions as that we initially would like to do. However, there is an intention to continue this study with the same teacher and cohort as well as engage with other teachers and students in the next academic year. Although this is a very small-scale study, I believe that the impact of this study benefits our organisational improvement because this collaborative way of working with staff contributes to the overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The long-term benefit of this model of working contributes to the cultivation of a community of learning. Coffield (2008, p. 24) argues that "CPD is a responsibility for all professionals but it is also a right. If 'personalised' learning is the new government aim for all students, then it should apply equally to staff, who have their own learning needs, gaps and aspirations." As I discussed previously, I would like to continue this collaborative model of working with teachers, but I am conscious that I also need to master my own skills of facilitating and developing others.'*

<div align="right">(I. Chen, ATS Research Report, 27 July 2018)</div>

From the pilot study, several emerging factors impacting on the study are described here. Due to institutional restructure at my workplace, I was unable to continue the JPD intervention in the same curriculum area as previously planned. Since September 2018, with new responsibilities working with a different curriculum area I had had to invest time in building new relationships with the management and lecturing teams. At the same time, there were monitoring visits and a full inspection by Ofsted. These experiences are very typical of the ever-changing landscape and nature of employment in FE colleges in the current context (Ball, 2018; Gregson and Spedding, 2018; Hardy and Rönnerman, 2011).

As previously discussed, the pilot study ended shortly before an internal organisational restructure as the college continued to face financial challenges. The outcomes of the pilot study formed part of my Advanced Teacher Status portfolio evidence. Following the restructure, I was assigned to a specific faculty of curriculum; with responsibilities to provide mentoring, coaching, conducting learning walks[7] and delivering sessions relevant to teaching, learning and assessment.

Emerging Themes from the Pilot Study and the Early Stage of JPD Implementation with Participants

After the pilot study and based on my evaluation, I continued to use the JPD model in engaging with staff who I supported and continued my critical reflection, particularly in relation to my role as a facilitator and researcher. Through this process, I slowly developed my confidence in mentoring and coaching staff as well as using acquired knowledge and experience to engage with participants in the implementation stage of this study.

There was an overlapping period between the pilot study and the beginning of engaging teachers in the new curriculum area I was assigned to. Some emerging themes illuminating participating teachers' experience and feedback from the pilot study and the early stage of implementing the main cycle of JPD include:

Emerging Theme 1: Prior Relationships and Shared Trust

Teachers attending the professional development sessions I delivered previously found the 'mutual respect' and exchange of conversations developed in those sessions particularly engaging. Participants commented on feeling 'trusted',

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[7] A form of observation which is unannounced and lasts between 15 to 30 minutes. The Learning Walks model 'was created by the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning (IfL) based on research by Professor Resnick' (National College for School Leadership, 2012, p.6).

'respected' and 'listened to' in the process of decision making whilst taking part in the research. Relational trust is one of the key characteristics in contributing to establishing a professional learning community (Day, 2017). It requires strong commitments from individuals and leaders to nurture and sustain trusting relationships leading to a collegial culture of care and collaboration (Day, 2017; Kemmis *et al.*, 2014).

Emerging Theme 2: Time and Flexibility

The informal interviews and regular contact were also considered to be key to professional development and learning. Time was negotiated and guided by the participants who work different contractual hours and have a limited time for interviews and discussions. At the start of the main research project, mutual agreement on timings and methods of communication were discussed with heads of faculties and participants' managers. This helped participants to plan and allocate time for inclusion of the workshops within their teaching timetable. As discussed in the literature review chapter, the complexity of different contracts and demands on teachers' time are a real challenge and barrier to establishing professional learning communities. This is exacerbated by financial strains and accountability measures that impact on teachers' conditions of work (Eraut 1994; Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Gregson *et al.*, 2020).

Emerging Theme 3: Joint Development, Personalised Professional Learning and Modelling

During the pilot stage, discussion about the intervention workshops, delivery methods and resources revealed that the teacher from the pilot study required more development on how critical writing skills could be contextualized to her Level three students. This meant that materials and methods had to be 'tailored' and 'personalised'

to meet the needs of the teacher and the students. The outcome of the discussion led to my direct modelling in the workshop and materials. It proved to be really helpful to her because she was able to observe how the workshop session was delivered and was able to contribute to the session with more confidence in relation to supporting students with their critical writing skills. This way of working demonstrated how two experienced teachers exchanged expertise and knowledge with students and put their learning at the heart of the process, which is the aim of using the JPD model in professional learning (Coffield, 2017). Reflective dialogues between participants and myself occurred formally and informally. As Carr and Kemmis (1986) observe, with action research, reflection is more critical when it happens collaboratively to inform practice and enhance learning of teachers and students.

Unpredicted Events and Encouragement

Although these emerging themes suggest some positive effect on the participants, more participants were needed to co-construct the experiences of professional development with JPD. The situation with uncertainty at work brought much pressure on rethinking how I could continue my research study with more participants. Whilst feeling desperate and anxious, a comment, cited below, from one of the participants provided encouragement to work with more teachers in using the JPD model to professional learning,

> *"I have worked closely with Joyce for several months now, her support has been professional and her technical input has been easy to understand and put into practice. Joyce has a natural way with people and this makes her very easy to work with, this in fact leads to her method of support, enthusiasm and work ethic being of the highest quality, Joyce uses real time target setting, which was spot on to my delivery area, her obvious enthusiasm for work shows, as she is completely happy to learn about my area of teaching in order to improve her own delivery, her grasp of technical information outside of her comfort zone is quite remarkable and*

a breath of fresh air for technology lecturers. Joyce has been very active in helping me develop a teaching resource… the feedback she gives is very strong and immediately of practical use, I was able to implement improvements instantly in lots of cases, following a session with her. Thank you Joyce."

(Email communication, 19 December 2019)

Reports from external consultants contracted by The Association of Colleges (AoC), who were invited to revisit and conduct a review on overall college progress and impact at the end of October 2018, show improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The specific report about the faculty, where I am the key linked person, emphasised that,

> *'staff have positive attitudes and want the best for their students. They are often keen to improve. Evidence that the college has supported staff to follow individual professional development leading to a member of the TLA team (the department where I work) being a link to STEM for further improvement a positive feature.'*

(External consultant anonymised, 2018)

Comments from these reports provided much needed motivation to continue my study. Meanwhile, it helped instil confidence in gaining access to the research site (specific curriculum areas) and gatekeepers (managers of the site) (Creswell, 2012).

In the new year of 2019, we had a full external re-inspection which resulted in an overall 'good' grading. Although it seemed a huge relief to everyone at the time, I reflected on the general observation of post inspection experience,

> *'What a gruelling week! We have only just come back from Christmas and New Year's holidays and received a phone call the day before we were due back to work! I could not believe that inspection happened straight after holidays. However, I am glad that it was over. I was involved in a number of meetings and observations with inspectors. It was the first time I was involved in a full inspection, so I was really anxious because I wanted the College to return to good or better. I was surprised by the fact that*

inspectors were quite down to earth but I was not so sure I trusted them…
I spoke to many colleagues during and after the inspection, they were
exhausted and stressed out. I really felt for them.'

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 12 January 2019)</div>

When everything seemed to 'improve' and return to 'normality', another organisational restructure was proposed, at the beginning of the summer term in 2019. This critical event impacted again on my initial plan for recruiting participants, particularly managers and teachers from the faculty, who I have linked responsibility with, but were now affected by the restructuring proposal. My job role and description also changed as a result of restructure. Whilst there is an anticipation with 'unexpected' events in life, there was a real urgency and concern for me about when the JPD workshop participants' recruitment would commence. During this time, I was preoccupied with trying to contribute to consultation of changes in my job role and description. I could not help feeling 'demotivated' by this constant change in circumstances. This matter further aggravated the existing difficulties in recruitment, when potential participants and managers were in the restructure proposal; this meant that they might be made redundant. The initial plan had to be put on hold again.

Despite all the challenges, my focus returned to reading further literature and developing research methods and tools for engaging with participants. The duration of the summer holidays offered a precious opportunity to recuperate and allow time and space for reflection and reflexivity. Equally, it is important to ensure the wellbeing of the researcher (BERA, 2018).

In Chapter Three, I describe the process of how my research intention was introduced with the JPD model through a formal presentation to the programme areas which I work closely with. This happened just before the organisational restructure. Emails were sent out to teachers who attended the presentation, together with an attachment

of my presentation slides and an article by Gregson *et al.* (2016). Replies were received from ten teachers who registered their interest. Due to the restructure and consultation period, my plan to arrange meetings with these voluntary participants was postponed. Subsequently, I emailed the voluntary participants informing them they would be contacted after the summer holidays, based on the outcome of the restructure.

In September 2019, the official recruitment of participants for the JPD workshops eventually started. Emails were sent out and followed by face to face informal discussions; the ten voluntary participants confirmed their willingness to take part in the research study. The purpose of follow up with emails and informal discussions was to ensure that participants had the opportunity to ask questions about my study; equally, I wanted to ensure our commitment to work jointly in this study. Copies of the research briefing sheet and consent form was attached to emails sent to participants to ensure transparency and clear communication about my research (see Appendix 5).

Unfortunately, two participants had to withdraw, due to changed work commitments following the restructure. Whilst being really pleased to start the actual 'action' of arranging and conducting initial interviews and JPD workshops, a critical incident occurred just before initial interviews started.

Critical incident: One Step Forward Two Steps Back, a Lesson Learned

Aligned with my ethical consideration not to specify details about the individual teacher, this incident happened whilst conducting my 'other' role at work. A new initiative was introduced to encourage teachers to experiment with innovative teaching, learning and assessment approaches. Comments were emailed to me by a

teacher in relation to this initiative. This person initially registered interest in participating in my study and I thought we had built good working relationships. Following this incident, I reflected on why and how conducting insider research can be a real challenge and a complex one,

> *'I initially was enthusiastic about engaging with this colleague as he had experience of studying social science and conducting research himself. Based on my experience of working with him, I thought he would be very keen on engaging with the project. However, there has been a series of events which had an impact on our existing professional relationship. Upon reflection, I felt that sometimes even the person I thought I could trust and rely on does not always appear to be. It could also be the pressure and workload which this teacher is feeling. It is difficult to unpick what has been going on. I thought I had to respond to him in an assertive but professional tone to address the inappropriateness of what this teacher described and made judgement about my work. I feel the struggle and uncertainty of not being able to talk to this colleague openly since this critical incidence. This teacher decided that his work pressure is too much so that he is not able to participate in my research project. How trust can be so difficult to build yet so fragile and easy to break*!'

(I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 15 November 2019)

Despite my efforts to communicate with him, two (including this teacher) out of the remaining eight participants withdrew their agreement to participate citing pressure of work within the department they were both based. Increasing workloads is discussed in detail in Chapter One (Ball, 2003; Bloom, 2018b; Steward, 2018). This critical incidence challenged my own beliefs, values and assumptions as a researcher because of the need to maintain professional relationships with teachers who decided not to participate in the study. I felt disappointed but this incidence undoubtedly forced me to 'gaze' into my deeper self in maintaining strong ethical values throughout this study.

This left six participants in the study, six semi-structured interviews prior to JPD workshops were completed before the end of September 2019 followed by three intensive months of organised JPD workshops. Just before the end of 2019, the

evaluative post-workshop interviews with individual participants were completed. My diary entry on the day when the final interview was completed illustrates my emotional thoughts,

> '*I got really panicked! I thought I would never get to even starting my interviews and let alone the workshops. I thought to myself: what should I do if I could not finish my workshops? Should I give up on my thesis? …*'

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 18 December 2019)</div>

Later, I revisited this entry and added on,

> '*It took a very long time for me to judge if it was the right time and condition to start my actual action to introduce my research and engage with participants. I could have just started my engagement earlier, but felt that my inner voice was telling me that it was immoral and unethical to engage with them (participants) when they were going through so many changes (at work) and potentially losing their jobs. I would not volunteer for more work myself if I were in the same position.*'

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 23 December 2019)</div>

The emotional aspects of learning cannot be underestimated (Brockbank and McGill, 2012; Day, 2017; Illeris, 2017). My personal reflection and reflexivity during this research have been both onerous and transformative processes. It also demonstrates my emancipatory change and growth at personal, social and cultural levels.

Their stories: Getting to know more about each other (Personal/Temporal/Past/Personal and local context)

The first phase of data collection focused on listening to experiences of individual participant's backgrounds, journeys into teaching in the further education sector and their perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development (CPD). Their experiences were collected, and audio recorded through one-to-one interviews. The interviews were interpreted and summarised as pen portraits to bring the stories

of individual practitioners to life in this thesis. Pen portraits were shared with individual participants to corroborate my interpretation and seek their agreement to contribute to the thesis.

Phase One: Building Relationship and Rapport Through Pre-JPD Workshop Interviews

A story cannot start without its characters, plots and actions. Through self-narrative, personal identity may be explored in temporal events and memories (Polkinghorne, 1991). In this part of storying, narratives from each participant who shared their motivation and reasons for entering teaching and their perceptions and experience of continuing professional development are analysed. This section begins with six pen portraits introducing the participants. Pseudonyms are used, and each portrait includes an accentuated vignette of narrative from the interview. Following this, a thematic analysis of perceptions and experiences of CPD and barriers and enablers to CPD are summarised from their perspectives.

> '*Reciprocity implies give-and-take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power. It operates at two primary points in emancipatory empirical research: the junctures between researcher and researched, and between data and theory.*'
>
> (Lather, 1986, p. 263 cited in Robertson, 2000,
>
> p.311)

Interpretation and analysis are shared with participants to ensure that my reading of events is close to their own and validated by them which in turn strengthens the 'warrant' of the findings. This is an important element of data analysis, reciprocity needs to be taken seriously and ensures a sound ethical basis is adhered to throughout the thesis.

The Participants

All six participants are teachers from a particular curriculum area, who teach at least one of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. In order to protect their identity, caution needs to be taken to give specific details of the subjects they teach therefore they are not disclosed in the pen portraits. They all have many years of experience working in industry and have been teaching for at least six years. They may appear to be from a homogenous group with similar characteristics, for example, they are identified as male, white and over the age of forty. Their individual pathway to teaching and their experience from the past illuminates the depth and minor differences which are apparent throughout our professional learning enquiry and JPD journey. They are all willing to devote time to participate in this research with enthusiasm and motivation for professional development and learning (Cassell *et al.*, 2017). As discussed in Chapter Four, the decision to locate voluntary participants for this study was a pragmatic one due to changes in my job role. This decision provided a valuable opportunity enabling me to get to know them from the very beginning of the study without any prior knowledge or relationship with them. More importantly, I wanted to establish and develop an equal relationship between myself and participants. The following pen portraits provide some information about the six participants and their stories about why they began teaching in FE.

Pen Portrait 1: Sean

Sean is a senior teacher with a Level Five teaching qualification. He has worked in the education and training sector for over thirteen years. Initially he was an apprentice when he first started as an engineer and later in his working experience he had responsibility to train new apprentices, he realised that he enjoyed training and teaching. This experience with apprentices prompted him apply for a teaching role at the college where he still teaches now.

Coming Full Circle
Sean was an apprentice at the same college where he now works as a teacher. He spoke of the joy and happiness from the tutors who taught him and saw him return to the college wanting to be a teacher. He also described this as one of the reasons why he decided to pursue a teaching career in order to teach and train more students with essential skills and knowledge. He described this experience as 'coming full circle'.

Pen Portrait 2: Mathew

Mathew has a Level Four teaching qualification. He was always interested in talking to young people when he used to run his own shop. He realised that he would love to work with young people therefore he joined the local college as a teaching support officer. During this time, He found that he enjoyed working with students. Soon after one year, he became a skills tutor at first and then became a teacher in construction. He has been teaching since 2009.

From Selling Sweets to Educating Young People
Mathew talked about his experience with children and young people when he used to run his own convenience store. He encouraged children or young people to calculate the amount of change they should be given when they paid for the sweets they bought. He found that children or young people seemed to listen to him. This led to his motivation and passion for educating young people and adults.

Pen Portrait 3: Martin

Martin has a Level Five teaching qualification. Prior to working at the college, he had been working in industry for thirty years. He felt that the apprentices he was supporting did not receive sufficient training and experience to do their jobs well. Therefore, he decided to apply for a job at the college to educate young people. He started off as a technician and then became a skills tutor. He has been working at the college for twelve years becoming a teacher six years ago after completing his teaching qualification.

Being a Humanistic Educator
Martin talked passionately about how much he has been influenced by Carl Rogers, a humanistic psychologist. He talked about his passion for supporting students and trying to understand students' needs from their perspectives. He believes that it is important to have empathy with students because he went through a same learning journey to his students. He also emphasised that education is about developing a person.

Pen Portrait 4: Scott

Scott is a senior teacher with a Level Five teaching qualification. He has been working in the education and training sector for over ten years and has worked in different settings, e.g. prison and FE colleges. He has business management and engineering background. He used to run his own business and felt that it would be really helpful to train and support apprentices. This led to an opportunity for him to become a teacher at a local college.

The Hat Boy
Scott told me a story of a student who he taught many years ago. This student used to wear a hat in the classroom and refused to take it off. Teaching staff including Scott used to call him 'the hat boy'. This student did not progress with his studies after completing one year of the programme. Several years later, Scott saw him in a shop and had a conversation about how much this student has matured and grown into an independent person. This student described how much he benefitted from the year he was at the College even though he did not continue to progress with his study. This story still stayed with Scott vividly until today and reminded him of why he came into the teaching profession in the first place.

Pen Portrait 5: Tom

Tom has a Level Four teaching qualification. He started off as an apprentice after leaving school at sixteen. He worked in industry for twenty-seven years before applying for a teaching job at the college. Tom and Sean used to work together with Sean becoming a teacher first. Afterwards, Sean encouraged Tom to become a teacher and with Sean's support, he applied for a teaching job and has been teaching for six years. Currently, Tom and Sean are colleagues in the same department.

A Life Story to Students
Tom described his first teaching experience as '*could have cried on the first day 'cause I didn't know what to do'*. He made the decision to come into teaching because of his experience in training apprentices at work. The only regret, as he talked openly, was not completing his higher national certificate in engineering due to redundancy at work. He often used this life story as an example to encourage his students that they should cherish their opportunities to learn and gain qualifications when they can.

Pen Portrait 6: Keith

Keith is a senior teacher with a Level Five teaching qualification. Prior to entering the education and training sector, he ran his own painting and decorating business. At the age of forty-five, he felt that it would be better for him to retrain for a different job which was less reliant on physical work. Since then, he has been working in the education and training sector for fifteen years and has worked in a variety of settings, e.g. training providers, prison and FE colleges. He has also taken on various roles including management and advisory as well as training and teaching roles. He really enjoys what he is doing.

Thrown into the Deep End
Keith started his first teaching job for a training provider. He was not given any guidance or had any prior qualification in teaching. He was 'thrown into the deep end'. However, he was able to learn how to organise a class and plan a session very quickly by himself. He continued to teach and was promoted as a centre manager but again was 'thrown into the deep end' without any educational management training. He has worked in various settings but for now would like to continue teaching in his current college for longer.

Thematic Analysis: Perceptions and Experiences of CPD

Following the pre-JPD workshop interviews, data relating to participants' perceptions and experiences of CPD was transcribed, interpreted, reinterpreted and analysed into five overarching themes. These themes have been shared and agreed by participants.

Professionalism clearly emerges as core running through the thesis at every stage of our joint work. All participants valued dual professionalism and agreed that updating skills and knowledge in their subject specialism as well as teaching, learning and assessment, plays an important role in professionalism. All want to do a good job for their students and to get better at what they do (Sennett, 2008). Through JPD workshops, every participant dedicated their time and effort to participate in this research project and my thesis. They have shown their commitment by sharing their practice and experiences with their students candidly. Everyday problems have been shared and discussed by thinking and exploring strategies and ideas to solve these problems and improve their practice.

Theme 1: Dual Professionalism but Different Weighting

A common theme centred on prioritisation of subject specialist knowledge and skills over their general pedagogical knowledge and skills (Hanley *et al*., 2018). Updating knowledge in industrial standards, new technologies, software, materials and equipment are identified as essential CPD to all the participants.

Sean explained,

> *'I see the CPD as, because the industry that we teach is always evolving. New technologies are coming through, new machinery et cetera and things like that coming through. So a lot of the time I see CPD as making sure that I'm keeping up with industry and keeping up with the technology and the technical changes and, and the changes in technology and that.'*

He gave an example of a piece of specialist software he had to use and teach to his apprentices. He had to spend a lot of his own time looking for training programmes or video clips to upskill his own knowledge and skills. He always tried to stay one step ahead of what was coming up.

Sean's perception and experience of CPD was equally shared and illustrated by Mathew and Tom. They all gave priority to keeping up to date with their subject specialist knowledge and practice, very often using their own time to do so through researching online, reading, watching videos and doing private practical projects. Tom expressed his passion and enthusiasm for updating his own subject knowledge by saying that,

> '… (*you've got to) keep on top of things. You've got to keep current. You've got to keep it up with modern technology, especially in the areas (engineering) where we are.*'

There is an expectation to return to industry for a short period of time for upskilling or updating subject knowledge. Martin summarised how keeping up to date with changes in how his industry progresses in his subject area is essential. He talked about his experience,

> '*I went into a company that, to look at how they plan their maintenance and how you deal with issues that come up every day, break downs and things that are unexpected and how you deal with delegation stuff through skills and time and shifts and stuff like that…Maintenance is much more planned now. We used to call it firefighting on those things. If something goes wrong, you're rushed to put the fire out, lot of literal fire, but that kind of thing. Whereas now we have planned maintenance and timed maintenance and so instead of a machine breaking and you can anticipate who and the period of year is when something's gonna go wrong, purely by being a random machine, you are testing the machinery on a regular basis.*'

He later associated his experience to how students need guidance and to be taught differently because of the changing nature of the industry through technology and new

machinery. It is crucial to bridge the gap between what students learn at college and in the workplace.

However, Mathew had a different experience to others, as he did not always have opportunities to go on site for professional development or secondment. When questioned about whether he could request or find out about any opportunities to complete some professional development on site, he made the following comments,

'If I put it through to [the manager], it'll just get pushed onto one side.'

Scott mentioned various technological tools that are essential in his subject specialist area and are particularly required by employers. Many of these tools require external training or trainers to deliver how to use them. However, these training courses and trainers tend to charge high prices; with limited funding, it is impossible to arrange this type of CPD. If some of the subject specific skills existed within the team, they would often rely on training or helping each other. This is in itself a type of JPD.

This common theme prompted me to revisit literature related to vocational pedagogy and its growing significance in FE teachers' professional development and learning needs (Hanley *et al.*, 2018). With the recent development and introduction of T Levels, subject specific pedagogy and practice becomes an increasingly important area for further research and study. Although the main focus of this thesis does not centre directly on vocational pedagogy development, an increasing demand for subject specific learning opportunities and joint professional learning communities is becoming apparent and illustrated through the stories of these participants.

Theme 2: Organisational CPD – A Balancing Act Between Administrative and Personal needs

Whole college training days and Golden Hours (allocated one-hour team meetings to hold professional discussion or training on teaching, learning and assessment) were identified as key organisational CPD opportunities.

Apart from Martin who expressed very different views on organisational CPD and will be presented in the next theme, other participants described many of the activities as a 'tick box' exercise. For example, Sean described,

> *'…mainly the college, the college CPD are the college training days that they put on, um, a lot of them are either based around, just the way I see it, They've based around inspections from Ofsted and things like that. So if there's an issue with inspection and it's around teaching and learning and then they base a lot of the CPD training around that. The sort of like departmental training that is normally based around the SAR (self-assessment report) and things like that. So if anything comes up from the SAR, which again comes from, learning walks (a type of observation, which is unannounced short or long observations) and that sort of thing, that is where most of the departmental training is brought up. So, for example, we do the golden hours (team meetings to discuss teaching, learning and assessment)…a lot of the golden hours to introduce us to new technologies or new software to allow us to do that. And a lot of it is mainly around either teaching and learning or, it will be to doing health and safety if there's something that's needed that has changed or so legislation and regulations changed and they'll base CPD round that.'*

He later described internal training events as tending to focus on teaching and learning and this led to our discussion on his experience of CPD. On several occasions, he used '*nothing seems to close the loop*' to describe how CPD events were not evaluated or followed up in relation to impact. Sean expressed his frustration,

> *'I see a lot at the time that CPD is just a tick box that a lot of them, they've ticked the, I've done the 30 hours and stuff like that and it's not evaluated properly to see what the impact is.'*

This clearly illustrates Sean's frustration who positions himself as a dedicated teacher, developing himself in order to develop his students. However, the wider organisational

context does not seem to support individuals in identifying needs and making changes. There is a clear conflict between personal professional needs and organisational administrative needs (Hargreaves, 1994; Löfgren and Karlsson, 2016).

Keith shared similar views and used 'a tick box' to describe some of the mandatory training sessions, such as safeguarding and health and safety training, because they were self-directed study online and you could pass the tests without really reading through the content in detail. He commented that useful sessions tended to be more interactive and engaging for participants.

In some of the training day sessions, Tom felt there was little differentiation of the levels and subjects across what teachers teach. He found it frustrating because time and effort were already invested in the period of time which could not be returned.

Mathew mentioned sharing good practice as part of CPD, which sometimes occurred in team meetings or training days. However, some practices can be considered 'one size fits all'. He argued that,

> '*We are a further education college. There's an A level English teacher, won't want to know the same information as a level one construction worker, or level one construction worker doesn't need to have the same level as level three construction worker. So as some of the CPD that we get taught isn't right and we'd get little dribs and drabs of it.*

Scott shared similar views, commenting on how CPD events did not always model what was expected of teachers,

> *'We all have different needs and I don't think they are met on a full scale sort of training and planning sort of thing. It seems to be like one sort of brush. Everything that we, everything we were told not to do with our students as a college. We do in things like training days and CPD and how that we just get one big old rush and we just swipe it across and go, that's what you're going to have to do. Yet, hold on a minute. Where's the differentiation for the members of staff? You know, where is that difference? It's not, is it? You know, and I know we were away from that sort of 30 hours thing (used to be a mandatory requirement to record 30 hours of CPD). we have moved*

away but genuinely your CPD is logged here and then you must do this and you must do that and this must be the case and you've got to put this on your development log and you've got to do, some people will do that and see that as what I've put that on there and a lot of it is rubbish. I will tell you for now a lot of people will either regurgitate what they found three four years ago or it will be somebody else's like it's not seen, I don't think is what it should be.'

Scott positioned himself as a professional teacher who took pride in what he accomplished with a strong work ethic. There was a genuine sense of frustration and anger in the way he talked about some of the CPD tasks he had completed in the past.

Mathew talked extensively about training days. He explained,

'Once or twice a year we have training days when we get shown new things. As far as I can work out, in one year we'll get shown eight new things. We'll never go back to those eight new things and ask how they got on or how did you find you went with those. You just get a taste of eight new things. Then you get the rest of your work to do so you then find yourself don't have much time [to revisit and develop these new ideas or skills].'

An analogy was used by Mathew to describe how CPD is organised at his workplace.

'… you have a dartboard and a target, for instance triple twenty. And you have just one board but you've got lots of arrows. And then you get all those arrows and throw them at the dart board, and you're further at the dart board. Some of them are sticking in the right numbers. Some of them will get in the right places, but they're not aimed and guided and then practised on... To get that triple 20 (score), takes practice. Yeah. You can do it with one dart. You'd have to do it with 10 darts.'

Repeatedly, Mathew indicated there were too many initiatives and ideas, often driven by the hierarchy in the organisation. With insufficient time and support, these initiatives and ideas do not fulfil the initial objectives and impact envisioned by the organisation (Ball, 2018; Spedding, 2020).

On several occasions, he described the content of training delivered by the organisation as 'too much' even though he appreciated the importance of training, stating,

> '…sometimes it seems to be a lack of communication between different departments on what we might want to do and what we've already done in terms of support and things.'

Instead of having more of the same training in teaching, learning and assessment, he would love to focus on continuous development in a specific area or more subject specific to the industry. He said,

> '..It has a detrimental effect on the quality when we do a little bit and then we leave it. And we move on to something else. You know, you don't get that continued development.'

This demonstrates his view on professionalism and his desire to do his job well (Coffield, 2017; Sennett, 2008).

Theme 3: A Different View

When discussing CPD over the years, Martin presents a different view to other participants. He felt that there had been many positive changes and more focus on teaching nowadays, with CPD activities shifting from 'one size fits all' to more subject specific offers. He expressed that '*there is a genuine wish amongst senior management and FE college to* [work on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment]'.

Martin talked enthusiastically about his shift in perception and experience of CPD over the years. He said,

> '…Well, why would I change now? There might be I have developed but the CPD activities haven't. I think it's a more open culture and we're

looking further afield to ideas. Why outside the box? So that as a, as a member of the engineering team, I seem, I do believe I've seemed to be able to mix and communicate more with people from other side, part of the college because we get that opportunity. Our training days are much more mixed with activities and more diverse. We're expecting our students to come from all walks of life and sit in a classroom, being in a workshop and do very similar things and very strict conditions. So how can we expect our staff not to do similar things?'

His view on CPD presents a different voice to other participants. This difference is important as every participant has varied experiences and pathways to entering the teaching profession which may influence their perceptions of CPD. As a practitioner-led action researcher and a narrative inquirer, it is important to 'respect the complexity and stratification of reality in his/her research report, she/he must be willing to highlight this stratification of social reality' (Heikkinen *et al.*, 2012). Relatedly, Martin works on a different site to the other participants which may contribute to his different perceptions and experiences of CPD. It is a perilous path to generalise views from participants and ignore dissonant voices (ibid.).

Theme 4: Reflection

Scott spoke a lot about reflection. Focusing on his preference for knowing why a tool, an idea or an activity works and the underpinning knowledge and purpose of these ideas before he proceeds with them. He said,

> *'I would like to know why a quiz works. I don't care what the quiz is, I'll let you know why the quiz works. What, what is it doing? So if my Kahoot! (an online quiz) or my whatever Triptico (an online tool) thing don't work. What's the reason behind that? It can't be the quiz itself. That's the underlying thing.'*

He later described himself as '*a bit of a thinker*' but felt that he could have spent more time on reading, thinking and reflecting. He continuously talked about how it is knowing

the 'why' I need to do, which helps justify the many tasks teachers have to do these days with high stake accountability in education (Ball, 2003; Coffield *et al.*, 2014; Dennis; 2016; Petrie, 2015a; 2015b). Here is an extract from Scott to support his viewpoint:

> '…but for me as an individual, if somebody wants me to do something, I think if you can explain it to me first, then there's a fair chance that I'll be doing it...'

Keith spoke differently about CPD in his definition. He gave examples of seeking advice from peers and liaising with awarding organisations regarding assessment practice and procedures. He included organisational training days, Golden Hours and mandatory requirements as part of CPD, and summarised that some were interesting and useful whereas others were boring and pointless.

He noted how some teachers had very different views on professional development. He talked avidly about colleagues he worked with and his observation on how they engage with professional development,

> '…There are people who do, there are people who are enthusiastic all their lives and it's just their personalities. But a lot of the people here, we're, they're from vocational backgrounds. They all started off in for vocational backgrounds, whether they're engineers, mechanics, painting, decorating, brick layers. They started off in industry and then they came into teaching later. And some of their old habits stayed with them for a long time. And then they did their old habits for a long time. And they won't do anything. They don't have to do.'

Describing how some teachers may be too comfortable 'in their own shoes' and whose performance 'fell back' and forgot the basics, he talked about how having regular training sessions is a way to maintain professionalism,

> '…But what they [some teachers] forget is that sometimes you need reinforcing things…They don't progress. They don't, they don't. And actually things can go backwards, and I've seen it where things go backwards. And they forget about things like the student that's not making a noise is left in the corner, the one that's making a noise and being a nuisance. You're giving them more time and you have to

remember that when you do this training and it reminds you to look after that student as well because he might be going backwards where he was really good and he's going backwards.'

Theme 5: Enablers and Barriers to CPD

In this theme, an analysis of participant's views on what supports or hinders their continuing professional development and learning is organised individually as the divergent life experiences and routes into teaching make it difficult to generalise.

Sean's View

Sean described how when he first started teaching , he was able to shadow a senior teacher for a long period of time before taking up the main role. He was supported financially and provided with study time by the workplace for his teaching qualifications and degree.

He suggested that time and money used to be available to support CPD but are now scarce in the sector. He further commented that,

> *'So we always at the event, any CPD that we do, so whether that is cross college training or whether that's departmental training, they always do, either an evaluation at the end of the session or they will put out a survey where you go and evaluate it. So they aren't capturing these because I think everyone you talked to pretty much says the same thing where there's too many things thrown at us and some of them are really brilliant and some of them you think, Oh, that's too low level. That's not aimed at more known as there's no way I could use that sort of thing. Um, so we do, when we do the evaluations, we do put the information down and we do put it in the surveys. But the problem is… is there's never this closed loop. We never get any feedback back from either the trainers or from the managers to say, Oh, we've read your feedback and this is what we're going to do next time.'*

He raised how too many different tools and ideas are often introduced at the same time with little time to consolidate learning and to apply them effectively in practice. He explained how teachers want to learn and develop their own practice for the benefit of

students, but when little time and support is given, it is challenging to follow through new learning whilst balancing daily demands at work.

One major contributor to CPD, according to Sean, is the team of colleagues he works with. They have known each other for a while and have the same passion for their subjects. They often share ideas and are open to each other even when they disagree. He describes this support,

> *'… we're always helping developing each other. For example, when I started here I was really just a machinist and designer. And now like I do, I do fabrication and I do mechanical maintenance and that because, um, at the time when I first started here, [a colleague] was the fabricator. I spent some time with him and he taught me the knowledge of fabrication. So now I can fabricate it just as well as he did. Same with mechanical. When [a colleague] came in, he was a mechanical maintenance guy. He's taught me the maintenance and vice versa. I've now taught [colleagues] how to do the cut design and stuff like that. So you are increasing your CPD without actually doing the training course is because you're helping each other and things.'*

What Sean describes above represents a local community of practice which is based on trust and openness towards one another and sharing similar goals to support each other's and their students' learning (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Fielding *et al.*, 2005).

Mathew's View

Two key positive contributors to CPD are highlighted by Mathew. Firstly, his own motivation as the main driver for his own professional development. He often conducts research and invests his own time reading subject specific journals and watching video clips to update and upskill his knowledge. Secondly, he finds it helpful and stimulating to attend training sessions delivered by external specialists. He explained that sometimes external speakers provide different perspectives to challenge his own thinking and learning.

Three main barriers to CPD, explains Mathew, include workload, time and the overall organisation of CPD, particularly training days. In relation to workload he gave this current example,

> '…I've got the workload at the moment…I'm coming out of one area that I'm a course director for, going into another area I'm a course director for. At this moment, was responsible for both areas. So that they come up at the same time. And so the workload is with two lecturers short at the moment. So I'm taking onboard all of those and because I have the passion to help the students, you take it on and I need to get them learning in a group …'

He further explained with a sense of frustration that there is too much duplication in paperwork across the organisation, which impacts on workload. It takes precious time to complete paperwork rather than focus time and efforts on his own development, students and their learning (Hart, 2018).

As Mathew indicates, insufficient time is allowed for developing and mastering knowledge and skills introduced on training days. There are too many ideas with too little time to practise. Furthermore, he criticised that information for training events is often unclear with little differentiation in subjects, levels and environment (practical workshops or classrooms) to audience.

Martin's View

Martin highlights that people at 'the same level' are one of the key enablers to CPD. He explains that instead of managers, training sessions delivered by other teachers doing similar jobs, are most valuable. He emphasised that,

> 'I think that's the biggest, the biggest change to me happened about seven years ago when I started to go into training days and training activities. And I knew the person standing in front of me is someone who had met someone, who's in the same level as me or not a person that you think, Ooh, that's Doctor so and so or Professor this. Or, you know, an expert in whatever. These are people who are doing the same job

every day, that I do, but they have a great idea. And that's part of secret. That's the part that CPD has made the biggest difference.'

Another key factor supporting CPD was having dedicated CPD facilitators who are interested in the subject areas and understand the needs of teachers and departmental priorities.

> *'We've had an hour to a weekly or two weekly golden hours as we call it. So we have as a period of an hour. So when the team gets together and someone delivers something to us that's completely, absolutely useful to us and might be tailor to our in our area individually. Liked the work you've done with us, to have someone from the learning practice on our side, if you know what I mean with us and learning from us so that you understand our unique needs because there are unique needs and unique department. I think that makes a lot of difference to the golden hours that have been good.'*

He briefly mentioned that management support is another key factor to support CPD but was hesitant to comment on this further. He only stated that managerial support is much better than before.

He did say that time and staffing issues are the major barriers to CPD. At the time of our interview, one of his colleagues was leaving whilst he was trying to take on what this colleague was teaching. It was a specific subject area Martin was not familiar with. There were already existing staffing issues in this programme area, yet very little time was available to enable Martin to upskill his subject knowledge.

Scott's View

Issues with funding was highlighted as one of the barriers to CPD, in both local and national contexts. However, Scott gave examples of how he explored ideas to draw income to the college. The result was disappointing as these ideas were not fully supported by management.

Another major issue was constant organisational restructures. He expressed his view passionately,

> '…so sometimes I think nobody, nobody likes being worried about their job. So we have this constant restructure thing. I don't think that helps. But as soon as we can, the other side of that is there's not a lot we can do about it. I know it's, it's disappointing for people there if you're involved in that. And there's all the stress involved in, in restructures, but we're a business and that's the thing. I don't think people quite realize. And that's the thing I keep saying to people, we're not an edgy, we're an educational business…'

During our discussion, Scott felt strongly about how colleges should be managed like a business but too many challenges, particularly financial difficulties, often constrain what can be provided to teachers' CPD needs.

> 'The problem is we've never normally got enough money. So if it was, you know, there's potentially, there could be loads of courses that we could go on, but they're always very expensive. So you know, all these things of what you gonna put on your CPD, what you didn't want your CPD, you know, as an individual.'

During the interview, 'ticking boxes' were used on many occasions to describe tasks or training sessions Scott felt teachers had to complete. He commented that he could 'tick all the boxes' but deep down he would rather do what would be of benefit to colleagues and students. As a reflective thinker, he would like to be consulted before decisions are made and would appreciate explanation of the purpose of completing certain tasks.

One key enabler Scott found really helpful to support CPD is external specialists delivering specific training. Many of the internally delivered CPD sessions have become stagnant over the years. Having external speakers, according to Scott, 'seems to carry more weight because they are the professionals.'

Moreover, he emphasised that it would be helpful to follow up any training sessions and allow time for discussing how ideas from these sessions could be used in his subject area.

Tom's View

Tom highlighted that one of the most helpful factors contributing to his own development was timetabling at work. He gave an example of having a block of three hours of non-teaching time for planning and development one year. He was able to develop elements of his practice consistently. However, this was due to another member of staff who was short of teaching hours therefore Tom was able to reduce his hours for that year.

He also talked about the difficulties of attending off-site training events or courses due to the nature of the teaching profession, which usually expects teachers to be on site at all times. He gave an example of a membership organisation in his subject specialism that regularly held seminars and training events on a specific day of the week when he had commitment to teaching apprentices who only attended on that day. He said,

> *'…It's very difficult because somebody's got to cover you or they've [college managers] got to get a temporary or something. So, you know, I think it's quite difficult.'*

However, he made use of his entitlement study days which he felt were really useful to his own development and used them for online courses.

Another key driver for his CPD is the team he works with. He talked fondly about his colleagues and their relationships at work.

> '*We've got a good rapport. We've got similar sense of humor. We knew each other previously. We cover each other in terms of if somebody is off sick…we all understand where we need to be, what*

> *we need to do, where the students need to be, what they need to do
> and where they're going…'*

Tom described the site where the team works like a community. He talked passionately about what made CPD work,

> *'…It's the secret to recruit a good team. And linking to CPD, you can
> help each other more than it really does.'*

In addition to time, Tom mentioned that money was a major barrier because many subject specific courses were expensive and felt that it was not always in the organisation's best interests to invest money in such courses, unless they could be ticked in the box by the organisation.

Keith's View

When Keith talked about the main source of support and barriers to CPD, he was a little hesitant because he had not been working in the organisation for very long. He mentioned how he was unaware of his entitlement to study leave, which allows academic staff to take additional time off for industrial work experience, research or developing curriculum. This information was only communicated to him informally through his colleagues. On several occasions, ineffectiveness in communication was highlighted as a barrier, citing incidences when he was not informed of details of students or groups, he was due to teach. One example related to when he first started teaching as a permanent teacher and how shocked he was when he only found out about the students, he was due to teach on the first day,

> *'…so it was really strange because it was like you felt completely
> unsupported and you had to go searching for help rather than it being
> said, Oh, by the way, you're having this, this is what they do and stuff*

like, so I had to find out and create. So basically you, I've created the course.'

Despite some challenges, Keith focused on finding resources and ideas for his students and remained positive about teaching. He talked about his colleagues who were a key source of professional development support. This highlights the importance of communities of practice who share, support and nurture everyone in the communities they belong to.

Time and resources were highlighted by Keith as major barriers due to the constantly changing context in demands, e.g. student numbers were different every year. He gave an example of how it was challenging to allocate and balance resources because twenty-five students were taught as one group instead of the sixteen students initially planned for. Due to staffing shortages, the group could not be split into two and many students had emotional or specific learning needs and individual support was not always available.

Phase Two: From their stories to our stories - learning and reflecting together through the Joint Practice Development workshops (Social/cultural/present/personal situation and local context)

In this section of data analysis, summaries of what happened and joint reflection between participants and myself from each workshop are compared and thematically analysed. Three workshops were designed and implemented (see Figure 4.3 in Chapter Four) as part of an adapted version of the Joint Practice Development cycle (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b). Each workshop has a different focus detailed below. Due to participants' and my own working patterns, they volunteered to take part in the workshops during their 'preparation time' and a maximum of one hour for each workshop was agreed upon. The key challenge associated with using the JPD

approach to professional development and learning is time, which was identified previously in Chapter Two (Fielding *et al*, 2005; Hargraves, 2012; Gregson *et al*., 2015b).

From the three workshops, key commonalities and any critical events are narrated, analysed and presented in real time. The process of bringing all data together into one coherent piece of research analysis has not been straight forward and demonstrates the challenges, complexities and messiness of conducting practitioner-led action research. In order to help readers, tables are used to help connect recurring actions and stories together.

Workshop 1 : What Is Happening Now in Teaching, Learning and Assessment? Exploring a Focus for Development

In Workshop 1, the purpose of the research and explanation of the concept of JPD was communicated in further detail with participants. When I first approached potential participants, they were provided with basic information and an article about JPD from Gregson *et al*. (2016). Later, I approached participants informally in order to make sure that they could ask questions before agreeing to participate in the study. This enabled further opportunities to build rapport and show my commitment to working with them.

The focus of development was on aspects of teaching, learning and assessment therefore much of the discussion focused on the local context of subject, level and an overview of students (See Table 5.1). During the workshop, notes and images were taken instead of audio or video recording as agreed by all participants.

Table 5.1: Workshop 1 - A Table of Key Points of Local Context and Concerns; Summative Key Phrases and Words for Reflection and Reflexivity

Participants	Looking outward: Local context (subjects, levels, students relevant to teaching, learning and assessment) Identified focus (in red)	Looking inward: Reflection and reflexivity (key words and phrases to describe own experience in participation)
Sean and Tom	Issues with shortage in specific subject specialism – skills matrix Conflicting views on the use of tutor-led lectures Use of peer support and peer learning (buddy system)	• Interesting concept of working • Conscious thinking about teaching • Openness
Mathew	Level 1 students with complex needs and often present low motivation and engagement with formal learning Behaviour management – how to encourage calmer and more positive reaction with students (Mindfulness)	• Raising self-awareness: The more I talk the more I realise how much pressure I put myself on. • Balance of sharing and advice
Scott	Issues with English and maths attendance and retainment Differentiation in teaching higher level maths to a mixed-level group	• Unsure
Keith	Mixed levels of students in practical workshops How to manage and deliver practical sessions with mixed levels of students with limited resources and shortage of support (teaching support officers and learning support officers)	• Sharing • Freer to talk • Be able to express fears/anxiety, a relief
Martin	Level 2 students with some who present low motivation and engagement How to motivate students and develop their resilience by energising learning environment (classroom)	• Enamoured • Passionate • Buzz up • Appreciate doing things together • Rapport • Methodical

Sean and Tom worked together and agreed to participate in JPD workshops together. Initially they were expecting Scott, who also works in the same subject area, to join the workshops at the same time. Scott explained that the scheduled workshop time did not form part of his working pattern and he would normally finish work early for other commitments. I was disappointed when the three of them would not be able to attend the workshops at the same time but later realised that Scott had a very different focus and views from Sean and Tom in relation to what he would like to develop. Another reason for Scott not taking part in the workshops at the same time as Sean and Tom was revealed in the post-workshop interview. In brief, it was about his initial trust in me, who possesses complex roles and responsibilities in the organisation as discussed in Chapter Two; this finding provides valuable insights about the experience of facilitating and conducting the JPD model and will be discussed in Part C of this chapter.

During the first workshop, I facilitated discussion with a set of questions:

- What subjects, levels and content are you teaching currently?

- Tell me about your students.

- What has been going well and what has not been going so well with teaching, learning and assessment?

- Currently, what are your main concerns or issues in teaching, learning and assessment? Why?

During facilitation, my contribution was minimised with the key focus on active listening to encourage equality of dialogue (Day, 2017) as discussed in Chapter Two and taking notes which were shared with participants; any suggestions or corrections were invited. However, at times, I found myself struggling to avoid giving advice to participants. Balancing personal unconscious bias and power relations is an ongoing conscious act during workshops (Gregory, 2017). The challenges of positionality of

an insider researcher were discussed in Chapter Four. This is considered as ongoing learning for me as a facilitator.

Following discussion of what has and has not been working well with teaching, learning and assessment, I invited participants to reduce their foci down to one or two aspects they would like to work on. At this stage, due to constraints on time for each workshop (one hour), we agreed to spend time thinking and researching ideas or strategies in advance of workshop two.

Before the end of each workshop, participants were invited to reflect on and describe their feelings during the workshop by providing short phrases or key words. This approach was intended to explore the 'internal conditions, such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions' which participants experienced during and straight after each workshop (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p.50). I kept notes of these phrases and key words, which were referred to in discussion in the second and third workshop as well as the post-workshop interview. By revisiting feelings and immediate thoughts, participants and I could practise joint reflection and reflexivity alongside the temporal issues and strategies we explored. This is an essential part of practitioner-led action research because the process is not only to come up with actionable strategies but also to explore internal conditions which we often have to deal with on our own. The JPD article by Gregson *et al.* (2016) was given to all participants again encouraging them to read this before workshop two.

I discovered that most participants were keen on sharing what they knew about their students and issues they were facing. I noticed in workshop one, Sean was quite quiet and let Tom do most of the talking. Being aware of this situation during the workshop,

I made sure that Sean was invited to share his thoughts. Later, I noticed significant differences between Tom and Sean's characters when discussing ideas and thoughts. Tom was straight forward and quick to respond but Sean would take more time to think and give different perspectives to discussion. This contrast of characters helped create stimulating ideas and healthy debate in our joint development workshops.

Scott really surprised me because in the first workshop, I felt under scrutiny by some of the questions he posed. There was a strong feeling of self-preservation from Scott. In my own reflection, I wrote,

> '*I was too eager to "get down to business". I felt that Scott did not really want to 'develop' anything. He started talking a lot about English and maths attendance and ideas of how retention may improve. I was not sure where this conversation was going and there were times when I felt like disrupting his conversation. However, I didn't. I had to listen, listen hard and try to understand why he would like to talk about this issue because he does not even teach GCSE or Functional Skills English and maths. This was when I realised that he was willing to share his real thinking and his frustration about not being heard and not being consulted by [the College].*'

> (I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 14 November 2019)

I felt obliged to explain to Scott in detail the reasons behind my research and what JPD means. This was not an intention for this workshop but without building good rapport, it would be a challenge to continue the remaining workshops. As a facilitator, being mutual and open minded are essential to building trust and rapport. Therefore, the decision was made in the moment not to force the conversation about JPD straight away but rather to stay 'silent' and listen to Scott carefully. The ability to learn how to be silent and use it effectively in a community of practice is powerful (Wenger, 1998). Listening to participants' voices and their viewpoints is ultimately the gateway to building trust in each other.

Another unexpected experience occurred when I met Mathew who was keen to show me the digital tools he used with students. This exchange of knowledge helped strengthen our relationship as we were able to learn from each other on an equal footing exploring strategies together in the JPD workshops. He appeared proud and enthusiastic about sharing his knowledge (Sennett, 2008).

After the first workshop, images of notes on flipchart papers and post-it notes were taken and saved digitally on an encrypted device. As seen in Table 5.1, a two-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) was used to collate and analyse sets of data from the first workshop. All participants' experiences occurred in their personal and specific contexts. They shared the subjects and levels they were teaching and importantly shared details about how their students were engaging with their learning. This interaction between them and their students can be described as 'sociality' (Clandinin, 2013). 'These social conditions are understood, in part, in terms of cultural, social, institutional, familial and linguistic narratives' (ibid., p.40). In this workshop, my position as a researcher and a co-participant was challenging. The participants' shared personal and social experiences had in turn become part of my experience and vice versa. Researching experience, as Connelly and Clandinin (2000) describe, places the researcher in a two-dimensional space with temporal matters and personal and social interaction.

Workshop 2: What Is Happening with the Agreed Focus?

In workshop two, notes from workshop one were reviewed at the beginning to remind participants and myself what we had discussed. We focused on the agreed aspect that participants would like to develop. Possible strategies and ideas from participants

were then explored together. These strategies and ideas were discussed and finalised with details as to what interventions to use.

Possible indicators of impact were discussed and agreed. We knew we had to be realistic about the time frame and complexity of teaching patterns which could influence the impact of intervention.

All participants read the article by Gregson *et al.* (2016) distributed to them at workshop one. We agreed on one or two indicators (see Table 5 below) which we used as a guide for discussing impact . References relevant to their focused strategies and ideas were researched and included in our discussion as part of my role as a facilitator to enhance critical thinking and analysis.

Sean and Tom were both keen on promoting peer learning in their practice. Sean chose to focus on higher level mathematics teaching and Tom on practical workshops. We agreed on using self-reported observation and feedback on student motivation and morale as ways to measure impact of using peer learning. As facilitator, I was consulted for further ideas on the use of peer learning and referred them to peer tutoring literature in Petty (1998) to support their ideas. This was regarded as useful especially with teaching Level 3 students needing to develop independent learning skills.

Mathew found it challenging at times to deal with negative student behaviour, especially when students were easily distracted leading to disruption in sessions. He had previously had behaviour management training delivered by an independent trainer. We agreed on using one strategy from the training, which uses positive language when dealing with disruptive behaviour. Rather than reinforcing unwanted behaviour, we agreed to focus on recognising positive behaviour, e.g. 'Thank you for

paying attention'. We agreed to use self-reported observation and feedback on student motivation and morale as well as staff (Mathew's) motivation and morale.

The second workshop with Scott was rescheduled due to covering sessions for another member of staff at the last minute. When we eventually met, Scott seemed to be much more relaxed than in the first workshop and started illustrating a particular group of students in his mathematics sessions. However, I felt the workshop could have gone better. Later, I reflected on the session,

> '*I met with Scott today. He was telling me about this group of students with a wide range of abilities and he found it really challenging to teach. He shared how he managed teaching three different levels in one class and how he struggled with the more advanced and middle groups. He seemed to expect me to provide better strategies. I felt challenged by him and at that moment I fell back to my other role as a teacher educator and felt that I should have lots of brilliant ideas to share and felt inadequate when I failed to do so.*'

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 01 December 2019)</div>

This reflection made me feel as if I was experiencing the so-called 'the Impostor Phenomenon' that 'individuals experience intense feelings that their achievements are undeserved and worry that they are likely to be exposed as a fraud' (Sakulku and Alexander, 2011). This critical reflection triggered many self doubts. Although painful for me to learn about this different perspective of myself, I recognised that it was not about knowing a lot but recognising the importance of the process of JPD being about exploring, sharing and experimenting ideas together (Fielding *et al.*, 2005; Gregson *et al.*, 2013). This experience helped strengthen my personal growth and learning, as discussed in the methodology chapter (Dewey,1916; Mortari, 2015; Schön, 1983, 1987).

Later speaking to Scott, we discussed that both of us could research ideas and try them whilst recognising that not everything would always work in practice. Scott appreciated my honesty and agreed to try some of the ideas we discussed.

Keith shared his progress with positivity. He talked about how ideas we discussed in workshop one prompted him to start communicating with learning support officers more. His students seemed to be engaging better with practical tasks. He reflected that it suddenly made more sense that he used resources effectively, e.g. learning support officers. There was a sense of pride and achievement in Keith's tone (Sennett, 2008).

Prior to the workshops, Martin had been thinking about how to motivate his students. As a course leader he had pastoral responsibilities such as tutorial sessions. He explained how the idea had grown out of recent observation feedback as an area for development. In workshop two, we discussed how display boards in a learning environment could be used to encourage growth mindset based on Carol Dweck's theories (2017). We both agreed to research and find useful quotations before our next workshop with Martin suggesting asking his students to share any inspirational quotations they had.

In the second workshop, reflexive comments from participants, when describing their experience of participation in the JPD workshops, provided insights into how they questioned their professional judgment, decision making and challenging their own assumptions. One outstanding aspect of reflection from most participants was how they described being able to express themselves and be listened to. The sharing of tacit knowledge led to thinking, exploring ideas and reflecting together, the very foundation of building a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Workshop two and three were a minimum of one week apart as agreed focus and strategies needed time to implement and bring differences to the fore to have any level of impact. At the same time, I stayed in contact with all participants informally.

Prior to the final workshop, participants were reminded of the purpose of the workshop which was to evaluate and share the impact of their chosen strategies. The table below documents these key foci, outcomes and impact.

Table 5.2: Workshop 2 - A Table of Agreed Focus and Strategies/Ideas; Possible Outcomes or Impact; Summative Key Phrases and Words for Reflection and Reflexivity

Participants	Agreed focus and strategies/ideas (in red) Reference(s) used for supporting strategies and ideas	Possible indicators to impact, based on Gregson *et al.* (2016)	Reflection and reflexivity (key words and phrases to describe own experience in participation)
Sean and Tom	Use of peer support and peer learning (buddy system) Sean: using peer support in delivering maths Tom: using a buddy system in practical workshops Reference: Peer tutoring in Petty (1998)	Student motivation/morale	• Conscious thinking about teaching • Openness • Realisation and reconfirmation of own ideas
Mathew	Behaviour management – how to encourage calmer and more positive reaction with students (Mindfulness) Reference: ©Pivotal training (2019) -Time to talk and think -Using positive language when dealing with disruptive behaviour, e.g. thank you for focusing on your task.	Student engagement and motivation Staff attitude and morale	• Raising self-awareness: The more I talk the more I realise how much pressure I put myself on. • Balance of sharing and advice • Respect • Comfortable • Different • Who understands the struggle of being a teacher • Reflection
Scott	Differentiation in teaching higher level maths to a mixed-level group	We did not have sufficient time to discuss indicators	• Able to share ideas and time for reflection

	Reference: training event delivered by an external consultant about flipped learning and deep learning (flippedlearning.org, 2019).		
Keith	How to manage and deliver practical sessions with mixed levels of students with limited resources and shortage of support (teaching support officers and learning support officers) Reference: Learning Support Assistants in Further Education and Training Guidance for Leaders and Managers (Education and Training foundation, 2019b)	Student motivation and morale Staff attitude and motivation	• Become involved • Positive • Motivated
Martin	How to motivate students and develop their resilience. Energise learning environment (classroom). Reference: Mindset (Dweck, 2017)	Student motivation Staff attitude and motivation	• Empathy

Workshop 3: What Is Happening with Agreed Focus and Emerging Evidence and Feedback?

In the final workshop, all participants shared their progress, reflections and any

emerging impact in relation to their chosen strategy or idea (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Workshop 3 - A Table of Progress on Agreed Focus and Strategies/Ideas; Interim Evaluation of Outcomes or Impact; Summative Key Phrases and Words for Reflection and Reflexivity

Participants	Progress on agreed focus and strategies/ideas	Interim evaluation of indicators to impact	Reflection and reflexivity
Sean and Tom	Continue to encourage peer support and buddy system. Some students started to support peers without tutor intervention.	Student motivation/morale has a slight increase.	• Conscious thinking about teaching • Openness

			• Realisation and reconfirmation of own ideas
Mathew	Teacher felt calmer to deal with student behaviour. Students seemed to be less reactive and a bit calmer.	Student engagement and motivation - early days to make judgment Staff attitude and morale – feel motivated to stay calm when dealing with disruptive behaviour	• Respect • Comfortable • Different • Who understands the struggle of being a teacher • Reflection
Scott	English and maths attendance and retainment Differentiation in teaching higher level maths to a mixed-level group Critical incident: student issue – disengagement after intervention	Staff motivation and attitude in engaging in CPD	• Reflective • Able to share experience openly • Relaxed • Relationship • Getting used to (Familiarity)
Keith	Students were given responsibilities and seemed more engaging in practical tasks.	Student motivation and morale – Staff attitude and motivation	• Become involved • Positive • Motivated
Martin	Some student took interest in the display with motivational quotations and would engage in tutor and peer discussion about mindset. Other teachers and students who used the same classroom expressed their interests and shared their thoughts with Martin in person.	Student motivation – some had slightly more engaged Staff attitude and motivation – an increase in motivation to engage with professional development	• Empathy

At this stage, all participants appeared really relaxed and talked openly about their thoughts and feelings. Due to the timing of the third workshop which occurred just before Christmas break, some explained that focusing on summative assessment tasks and marking had hindered the progress they had anticipated with the agreed

strategies. However, most were still keen on continuing these strategies feeling that their students would benefit from them.

All participants expressed feelings of motivation to engage with professional development of this type and format. They became well acquainted with the term Joint Practice Development in our dialogues. The word 'reflection' was used in several conversations during workshop three with some explaining how they could talk openly with me rather than other colleagues and managers. Whilst appreciating their honesty, sensitivity was taken seriously when discussing matters related to power relationships and ethical dilemmas, issues which were brought to the fore in Chapter Three and Four (Costley *et al.* ,2010; Smyth and Holian, 2008). Further analysis of the overall experience is discussed in the final section of the chapter alongside analysis of post-workshop interview data.

Keith invited me to his workshop and was very proud to show me his students' work. After gaining permission from both Keith and his students, photographs of their practical work were taken, as shown in Images 5.1 on the next page. Keith explained the challenges of teaching mixed levels/abilities in practical workshops but following his efforts to engage with learning support officers and careful resource management he was really pleased that his students had produced such good work. This work even extended to a local community project which involved Keith's students painting and decorating a care home. He later shared the results of his students' work and a heart-warming thank you email from the manager of the care home. When discussing the progress of his students, it was evident that they had showed an increase in motivation and engagement.

[REDACTED]
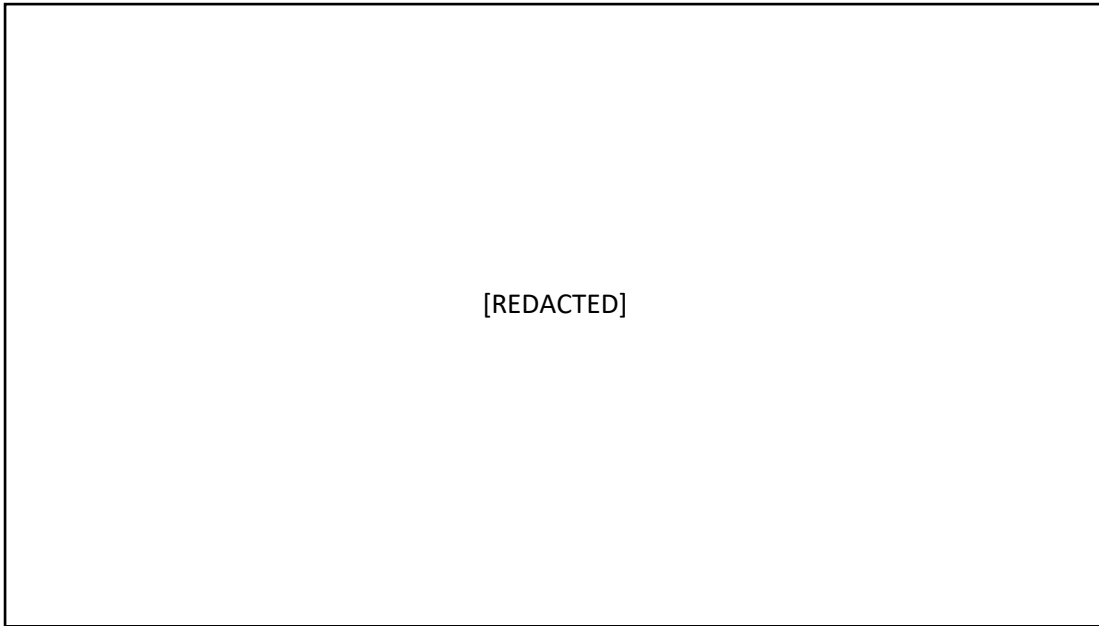
Images 5.1: Practical work produced by Keith's students[8]

Martin also invited me to see the progress of the display boards he had invested time in creating and developing resources in relation to growth mindset was evident (see Images 5.2 on the next page). In the final workshop, he expressed endless excitement about progress as some of his students started noticing resources and sharing their thoughts about growth mindset. He also received positive comments and interests from teachers and students from other curriculum areas who used the same classroom space. Moreover, personal thank-yous from his students expressing their appreciation of his efforts were made. He shared how he now felt strongly motivated to continue this idea in the longer term.

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[8] The images are redacted for publication.

[REDACTED]
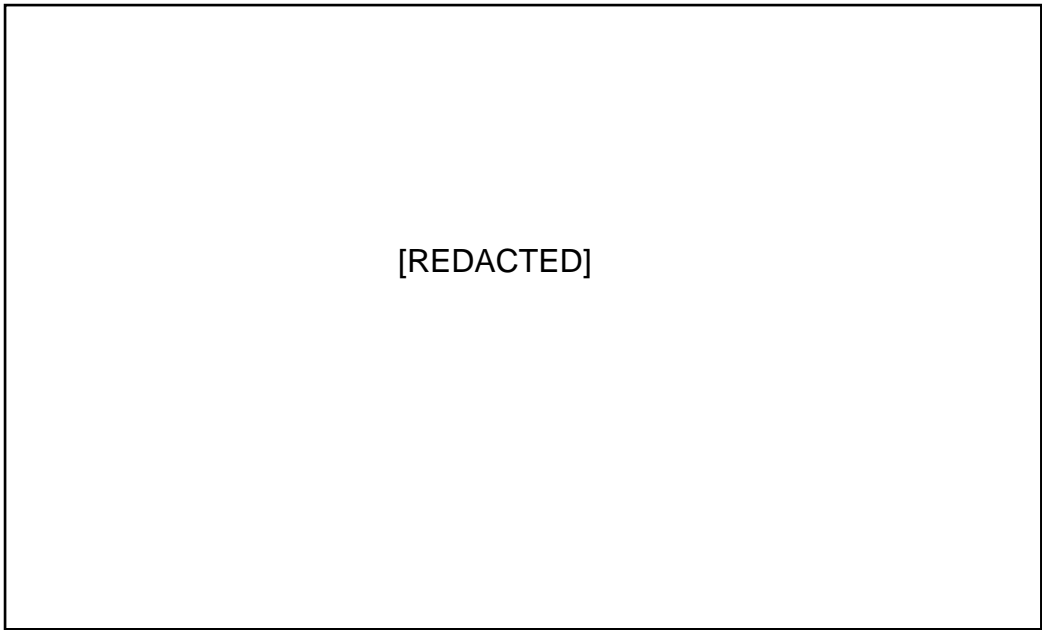
Images 5.2: Display boards and resources produced by Martin[9]

Day (2017) points to affective factors influencing teachers' motivation to develop professional learning. During JPD workshops, emotional connectedness between participants and their colleagues, students and myself stands out as one of the key motivators to open dialogues and reflection. This contributes to the overall themes of the implementation and impact of JPD workshops, which will be further explored at the end of this chapter.

A notable dialogue occurred with Scott who now appeared more open about his thoughts and feelings. He came to workshop three with an urge to share what happened to his mixed-level mathematics group when he tried to use differentiation strategies we explored and agreed. According to him, one of the 'considered to be higher level' students apparently was totally disengaged after he suggested a task with an intention to help extend his knowledge. This critical incidence prompted Scott to share and reflect on why and what could have been done differently. Upon reflection,

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[9] The images are redacted for publication.

he felt he should have explained the purpose to the student and maybe invited him to contribute to ideas. I wrote the following account after this workshop,

> '*I was really amazed by Scott's transformation. I thought he might say to me that this strategy didn't work and it totally messed my session up. Instead, he really was trying to figure out why and how this could have been done differently. He also came up with ideas to take forward. He truly cares about his students. This is a sign of ownership and leadership of his own learning.*'

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 12 December 2019)</div>

The above extract led to re-examining literature on what contributes to teachers' professional development and learning. Wiliam (2016, p.239) contends that,

> '*When all teachers embrace the idea that they can improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better, this creates a natural collegiality that supports all teachers in embracing the need for continuous improvement.*'

In workshop three, there is a definite emerging collegiality with all participants who expressed how they benefitted from receipt of emotional support, sharing of knowledge, time and space to think and reflect individually and collectively. However, there were some conflicts between organisational expectations in relation to accountability and collegial relations (Datnow, 2011; Löfgren and Karlsson, 2016); some of the conflicts were already identified in the pre-JPD workshop interviews. This finding contributes to the overall themes arising from the different sets of data in this study and will be further investigated in the last section of this chapter.

Phase Three: Our Stories: Post-JPD Workshop Interviews (social/ present and future/personal and organisational context)

After the cycle of JPD workshops was completed, each participant agreed to be interviewed individually again. The interviews were all audio recorded. A list of

questions (see Appendix 6) was designed and distributed to participants to support their thinking and to discuss, reflect and evaluate the process and experience of JPD workshops.

This section summarises the major themes drawn from all of the data sets, pre-workshop interviews, JPD workshops and post-workshop interviews. These themes contribute to answering the following research question which was set out at the start of the thesis:

- What are FE teachers' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model?

- How do the narrative accounts co-constructed from teachers' experiences of participating in JPD workshops tell us about implementing JPD in practice?

The interrelated themes are constructed with consideration of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry framework by Connelly and Clandinin (2000), including the social interaction, temporality at present and future as well as personal and institutional contexts. This provides a framework to systematically analyse and summarise the experience of participating in JPD.

Theme 1: Emotional Connectedness Based on Relational Trust and Trustworthiness

This thesis begins with my own reflection of engaging with teachers in professional development and learning. The most significant finding from participating in the JPD workshops is the increase in emotional connectedness which supports the cultivation of small but dynamic communities of practice.

In the post-workshop interviews, 'feeling comfortable', 'feeling positive', 'open', 'honest' and 'relaxed' appeared most frequently when participants described their experiences of the interviews and workshops. These key phrases highlight personal

emotional factors which contribute to starting a welcoming professional learning environment. This finding is not at all novel, but I am amazed by the unanimous positive feedback from participants describing their overall experience of taking part in JPD workshops. It is also important to note the deliberation in play through using reflective and reflexive practice to detail tacit knowledge of participants' emotions and of me as a colleague, researcher and facilitator (Brockbank and McGill, 2012; Day, 2017; Illeris, 2017).

In recent years, research studies on emotions and teaching are on the increase. In Zembylas's (2003) article *Caring for Teacher Emotion: Reflections on Teacher Self-development*, he reviews key research on teacher emotion and emphasises the need to develop an awareness about the role of emotions in teaching beyond psychological and sociological perspectives. He suggests discourse as emotion through feminist and poststructuralist lens to examine and question the emotional/rational and personal/political dichotomies in the context of teaching. He believes that teachers' emotions are empowering mechanisms for dealing with visible and invisible challenges in professional lives and identities.

> *'…Central to developing such pedagogies are ideas that account for the political aspects of emotions. On the basis of this notion, teachers' emotions cannot be regarded only in their interpersonal aspects; instead they need to be regarded as the very location of the capacity to embrace, revise, or reject discursive practices of whatever kind.'*
>
> (Zembylas, 2003, p.114)

Furthermore, he believes that,

> *'Power relations, cultural principles and rules of behavior, together with intentions others seek to implement, structure how people experience themselves as both emotional and social beings and how they understand and talk about emotions.'*
>
> (ibid., 2003, p.117)

The sharing of emotions was not natural at first but slowly became more visible through cultivation of relationships and ensuring ethical research built through openness and honesty from everyone in the community (BERA, 2018). It took time. As discussed at the start of this chapter, the prolonged period of relationship building and direct access to participants helped significantly with gaining trust and commitment from everyone. Day (2017) summarises key themes which influence teacher quality and its retention; amongst them, trust is identified as an essential capital to nurture and support teachers' growth. However, gaining trust is not at all a quick step but a slow and equal investment of openness, trustworthiness, care, empathy, time and space. It also builds on uncertainty and doubt.

In post-workshop interviews, participants reviewed and shared their overall experience of JPD workshops. The following is an extract from Scott who initially appeared to be 'unsure' of JPD workshops described at the beginning of this chapter. He shared the following right at the start of the post-workshop interview,

> *'…I thought initially I was a little bit guarded or not guarded but a little bit, sort of wary of how, how much, I think we have discussed how much time it was going to take. That initial time of chatting is one thing. But then what was going to come out with that and I was very wary of I want it to help you cause obviously you said you know, can, can you, can you be part of this thing that I'm doing? But I was very aware of not giving myself more work to do and what I did like. So as I was a little bit … if I was a little bit wary of how much of the time, but after that I liked the fact that it didn't have an actual aim in a way. We just, we just sat and chatted about some stuff and just made me think a little bit and I, and we had quite long conversation about reflection.'*

This revelation explains why he initially decided to work separately with me rather than with Sean and Tom, who he had been working closely together. This honest conversation reveals the challenges and importance of balancing my multiple roles as a colleague, an advanced practitioner, a co-participant and an action researcher. It presents the dilemma of how long it takes to build initial trust and how delicate it is to

nurture and maintain this trust through balancing the distance between my participants and me and my role on the continuum between an insider and an outsider (Mahoney, 2007; Sikes and Potts, 2008).

Looking back, I realised that I adjusted my position and pace with Scott. Although eager to start the cycle of JPD, I learnt to pay careful attention to listening and getting to know Scott as a priority. Personally, this emotional experience becomes part of my professional learning along with other stories illustrated by participants.

An extract from Tom supports the importance of emotional connectedness at work.

> *'…I think if you are together with people that you understand and who understand you and you get on, you have a rapport, then it works a lot more smoothly.'*

Similar comments were also made by other participants who reaffirmed their feelings of being supported and motivated. In Phase Two, their reflexive accounts were described by using key words to explain their emotions and feelings at the end of each workshop (see Tables 4, 5 and 6). It is worth noting that trust and trustworthiness are subjective but by sharing interpretations with participants, trust and trustworthiness are authenticated by their responses and agreement of interpretations of their stories and narratives (Edwards and Furlong, 1985; Kim, 2015; Unluer, 2012).

In order to ensure and strengthen the warrant of the findings, I keep regular contact with all participants to keep up to date with my progress and their work and life, especially during the COVID-19 lock down period which coincided with my final write-up stage. I emailed all participants with extracts of interpretations relevant to individual participant's interviews and notes (see Appendix 8 for an example of the email sent to participants). They all replied and confirmed agreement as to their accuracy. Some

even responded with positive comments including feeling proud to take part in the study and appreciating the opportunity to work together. Following receipt of the replies, I reflected how,

> *'I was really nervous about sending out my interpretations of their individual contributions. I was worried that they would disagree with what I wrote. This was also a pivotal moment for me, as a novice narrative inquirer and researcher, to learn if I have been developing and mastering my skills well enough. I was over the moon to receive their feedback so quickly and their comments made me feel valued and touched. They agreed with my interpretations and some even told me how much they appreciated the work we did together.'*

<div align="right">(I. Chen, Reflective Journal, 01 April 2020)</div>

Balancing my multiple roles and identities has certainly been an emotional and professional challenge throughout the study. The support and encouragement from the participants certainly nurture our relationship and lay the foundation to building trust.

Theme 2: Teachers' Voices through Shared Professional Identities

In the first chapter, the wider and local context of vocational education and training were explored. In an age of hyper-accountability and performativity, teachers' professionalism is compromised by the technical-rational perspective of education (Ball,2003; Bennett and Smith, 2018; Spedding, 2020). FE teachers' priorities are often driven by internal and external requirements and standards set out by government ministers, politicians, inspectors, managers and stakeholders (Coffield, 2008; Coffield and Williamson, 2012; Coffield, 2017; Daley, 2001; Orr, 2020). Teachers' voices are often silenced and for some, they simply stop expressing themselves or others leave the profession all together.

A key focus of this thesis is reporting upon participants' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model as an alternative way of working with teachers in

professional development and learning. The whole experience and journey from the start to end of this thesis is long and winding, many describe it as messy. A key theme emerging from the JPD workshops is how much teachers value their voices being heard through sharing their experiences, discussing the local context of their work, students and their ideas to help students develop skills and knowledge for life.

From the pilot study to the completion of a cycle of JPD workshops, participants have shared their unique stories of 'becoming' a teacher in the FE sector. They have shared individual views and thoughts about continuing professional development experiences. During the JPD workshops, we discussed concerns and problems; we researched ideas and shared our thoughts; we tried out our ideas and reflected on progress; we explored the unexpected outcomes and shared our emotions throughout these workshops. We were working and learning together to better ourselves and support our students. We engaged with each other and involved others in what we were passionate about, even when there were differing views or disagreement. This transformation starts when individuals listen to each other and respect each other with shared identities.

Kaur (2018) defines that professional identity as,

> *'an ongoing process of interpretations and reinterpretation of experiences (Kerby, 1991), a notion that corresponds with the idea that teacher development never stops and can be best seen as a process of lifelong learning (i.e., Day, 1999; Graham & Young, 1998).'*
> (Kaur, 2018, p.720)

She continues to suggest three features of teachers' identities; the first being identities are 'fluid processes' which are about what teachers are 'becoming' rather than fixated status; the second is that the process of becoming involves 'a negotiation between the person and an understanding of the contexts'; the final feature involves 'human

agency' (Kaur, 2018, p.721). These are all salient features which remind us of that teachers' identities are built on different realities personally and professionally that include contact with others and the wider communities.

In a time of political, educational and global changes and uncertainties, 'identity must be forever re-established and negotiated' (Sachs, 2001, p.155). Both Sachs (2001) and Day (2017) refer to Wenger (1998)'s five dimensions of identity for further considerations in relation to teachers' professional identities. The five dimensions suggested by Wenger (1998, p.149) include:

> (*1) identity as negotiated experiences where we define who we are by the ways we experience our selves through participation as well as the way we and others reify our selves. (2) identity as community membership where we define who we are by the familiar and the unfamiliar; (3) identity as learning trajectory where we define who we are by where we have been and where are going; (4) identity as nexus of multi membership where we define who we are by the ways we reconcile our various forms of identity into one identity; and (5) identity as a relation between the local and the global where we define who we are by negotiating local ways of belonging to broader constellations and manifesting broader styles and discourses.*
>
> (Cited in Sachs, 2001, p.154; also cited in Day, 2017, p.26)

The implication of considering what forms teachers' professional identities is important because it helps me as a researcher and a co-participant to appreciate that the experiences we co-construct in this thesis contribute to the participants' and my identity, even though it was only for a short period of time. Furthermore, it is believed that identity and practice are closely related. Wenger (1998, p.149) in Communities of Practice contends,

> `*there is a profound connection between identity and practice. Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants'*
>
> (Cited in Sachs, 2001, p. 154)

One example to highlight this theme comes from Tom:

> *'I think everybody would be willing to give it [Joint Practice Development workshop] a go and probably see benefits from it [Joint Practice Development workshop] because you know, we will probably feel that we're being heard again rather than just do this and having that shift in your face.'*

Another quotation is from Keith who explained why his experience of taking part in the workshops was helpful and positive:

> *'I would say it's really good to [take part], the good part about it [the JPD workshops] is it's being able to express what's on your mind sometimes as well. And what the thing is that there are things that bother you and that we don't express what bothers us. Sometimes we just don't get it out. And sometimes we don't do it to colleagues or with colleagues. It's a bit like showing weakness.'* (Keith)

This is a particularly interesting point when Keith mentions being able to discuss and talk with colleagues about their thoughts and perhaps feelings could be seen as 'showing weakness'. Due to the scope of this thesis, there is insufficient time to engage with more participants to explore whether the locality or ecological/cultural dynamics of teachers from different sites have interrelated impact on the formation of communities of practice and teachers' attitudes and behaviour towards the professional communities they belong to. However, the above quotation and many other similar thoughts from participants affirm the importance of having space and time to share and express our own views with openness and honesty (Coffield, 2017; Eraut, 2004; Gregson *et al.*, 2013).

For the duration of this thesis, an external inspection, three organisational restructures and an ongoing global pandemic have taken place. The impact of these events is undoubtedly significant in affecting teachers' emotions, morale and attrition (Day,

2017; Day and Gu, 2007). An honest and powerful view was expressed by Scott who said,

> *'…I think a lot of people worry though about the jobs, to be honest with you. I think for the changes that we've had in the last two, three years and before, you know, we've had Ofsted, we've had sort of restructures and that sort of thing. I think a lot of people now look at the college and don't see it as a long term thing and I don't think they get settled in. I don't think they really put everything into it at times because they know potentially that I might not be here next time.'*
> *(Scott)*

Teachers can feel vulnerable when there is uncertainty in job security. This does not mean that their professionalism is by any means compromised; what this implies is the importance of balancing personal, professional and situated capacity which contribute to teachers' professional identities (Day and Kington, 2008; Loo, 2010). As explored in the first and second chapter, FE teachers often experience tensions which stem from external and internal demands (Spedding, 2020). According to Gleeson and Shain (1999), FE teachers respond to performative demands in three ways: they become resistant and despondent, compliant or become strategically compliant. These responses indicate that teachers' identities are fluid and changeable (Gleeson and Shain, 1999).

Loo (2010) reviewed literature on teacher identities and based on a small-scale survey, he proposed a typology of five spectra of social contexts which affect teachers' identities: positive and negative aspects; concept/theory and reality/practice; internal and external factors; double life and multi-identities; and on-going iconography. Although teachers' identities are not the direct focus of this thesis, they have direct impact on teachers' professionalism and professional learning. Sachs (2016) contends that teachers' professionalism would be limited if they are seen as 'technicians and

implementers of purely technical knowledge' (Sachs, 2016, p.419). Further argument is presented to differentiate between organizational/managerial professionalism with its focus on performance and accountability and occupational/democratic professionalism which focuses on collegiality and collaboration.

The findings from the JPD workshops and interviews indicate a chasm between the types of professional development and learning participants value and see as important and those which organisations and management desire and expect of teachers. This conflict of expectations leads to an important question: is there an alternative model to teacher professional development and learning which can balance the demands of organisational expectations and needs with those of teachers?

> *'…professionalism should be underpinned by a set of values and that these include social justice, equality, democracy, sustainability, well-being and creativity. There is nothing wrong with checking how well teachers enable their students to learn, and having a set of expectations of the ways in which they do so. The difficulty is that it is hard to establish an overarching, agreed standard that is flexible enough to enhance their work in a developmental and democratic way.'*
>
> (Hillier, 2015, p.166)

The findings from the post-JPD workshop interviews suggest that participants responded positively to the Joint Practice Development model. They valued the time and safe space to discuss practice and explore evidence-based strategies. A distinctive difference to what is described as 'tick box' types of training days or CPD events. JPD provides a more personalised professional learning experience with realistic objectives for teachers to develop and master elements of their practice.

Theme 3: Having Time and 'Safe' Space for Reflection and Reflexivity

> *'…when the craftsman can pause in the work and reflect on what he or she is doing. These pauses need not diminish pride in the work; instead, because the person is judging while doing, the result can be more ethically satisfying.'*   (Sennett, 2008, p. 296)

In the methodology chapter, the role of reflexivity and reflection forms a central cognitive process to rationalise the starting point of this thesis and how research is conducted. Time and safe space for reflection and reflexivity is crucial in the cycle of JPD. The verb 'do' or 'doing' often appears ubiquitously in practitioner-led participatory research, but this verb merely simplifies the extent to what is actually involved in this type of research. The above quote from Sennett amplifies the importance of 'pause' as a reflective term that comprises thinking, judging and evaluating whilst doing. Reflective practice needs not be in isolation. In fact, an increasing number of studies supports the benefits of joint reflection and reflexivity (Bjørnsrud & Nilsen, 2019; Chang, 2019; Gutzan, S. & Tuckermann, 2019; Lin *et al.*, 2013).

The third key theme emerged from the post-workshop interviews pertains to the value of having time and 'safe' space for reflection and reflexivity. All participants commented on how much they appreciated having dedicated time in their busy schedule to pause and reflect on their professional practice.

Keith described the process of participating in the workshops as '*opening up doors in my mind so I can see there's other things to do*'. He particularly found the facilitation of the process valuable because '*having the process of making me think more about things. How can we do this? How can we do that? And then realizing that there's more to it than just me and the students*'. He further explained that it can be challenging to discuss teaching practice with colleagues and managers as '*they have their own issues and when you talk to them, there is never any feedback or very rarely*'. This narrative reaffirms the tenacious problem of having time and space to discuss practice and share reflective thoughts on current matters (Fielding *et al.*, 2005).

Notwithstanding these issues, Keith's account accentuates the importance of relational trust and trustworthiness as discussed in the first theme.

The following extract from Tom further illustrates the differences between traditional training events and JPD workshops:

> *'…I think there's a good rapport. We all understand each other, we know each other a lot and it's just very relaxed. You go to some meetings , and you can feel a little bit say intimidated, but sometimes you just feel a bit sort of, do you know what I mean? I'm sometimes scared to say what you feel.'*

This clearly suggests that feeling 'safe' to talk and share is one of the key factors contributing to building the right conditions for collaborative professional learning. When enquiring why and what may influence relationship building, Tom commented,

> *'Well, I think a lot of it has to do with, say you, your personality, the way you come across, so you're approachable. There's other members of staff that when you're in discussion with them, sometimes they all that they're prying that looking for something or that they're trying to catch you out or something. But with you, I personally, I think I speak for the majority, the office probably. We feel you're very open, you're very honest, and you would tell us if there was something not right.'*

This extract alludes to another factor contributing to developing reciprocal relationships, which is the role of JPD facilitator(s). In the literature review chapter, the necessary quality and skills required by the facilitators are highlighted to support JPD workshops (Gregson *et al.*, 2020; Kennedy, 2005; 2014b; Timperley, 2007; 2011; Wiliam, 2007). Holme (2021, p.3) argues that 'when coupled with a chance for discussion and debate, **in a safe space** (i.e. without the regular hierarchical controls), this may encourage more collaborative professionalism to gradually diffuse throughout the teaching sector'.

Moving beyond mere professional collaboration, several comments from participants also divulge the value of having 'demanding dialogues' and receiving 'candid but constructive feedback', which Hargreaves and O'Connor (2018) contend, sustain professional collaboration and shape collaborative professionalism. The comment below endorses such value:

> '[JPD] benefits in so many ways because there was a variety of things discussed, but you could mind map them and pin point them down to areas that you saw weaknesses in or you saw strengths in and you could then combine them together, which works really well. I've gained a lot from it and even thought it's a lot of is it reflective practice, just being able to talk to somebody and they can observe from outside your bubble or search different views…' (Mathew)

Another participant Sean evaluated his experience in participating in the JPD workshops. He explained,

> 'You don't realise that you are actually using some of the strategies to help your students until you sit down and reflect and discuss things that you do. With the [JPD] workshops, all of the a sudden, you realise that you can reflect on it…and you have conversations with colleagues to discuss how things are and how to develop them' (Sean)

The theme of being able to reflect and express views freely recurs throughout the dataset on evaluation of JPD workshops, including my own research notes and reflexive journals. Rossman and Rallis (2010, p.379) describe 'research as praxis and the researcher as practitioner' that involves complex everyday ethical issues beyond completing the procedural ethical consent. For me, the experience of co-constructing this research with participants can be described as 'praxis as research, practitioner as researcher' reverted from the phrase by Rossman and Rallis (ibid.). Part of the praxis

throughout this thesis is to practise critical reflection collectively by cultivating collaboration through the JPD cycle, which facilitates our 'joint work' (Little,1990).

Having time and a 'safe' space for reflection and reflexivity not only nurtures existing trusting relationships, it also helps create the right conditions to initiate critical dialogues that nourishes professional learning which benefits student learning. A more recent study by Hargreaves and O'Connor (2018) supports such implications for cultivating collaborative professional relationships that 'positively influence student learning need better tools and deeper trust, clearer structures and stronger cultures, expertise and enthusiasm, knowing what to do and how to be with each other — both solidity and solidarity' (Hargreaves and O'Connor, 2018, p.21).

Theme 4: Growing Professional Agency

The final theme emerging from the evaluative interview data illuminates personal and professional growth amongst participants and myself. More specifically, there is a nascent increase in professional agency and leadership in personal and collective development and learning.

The concept of agency has been explored and theorized in different disciplines from philosophy, sociology to economics but it is a much contested term that has not been critically conceptualised with a clear definition in education, particularly teacher agency. To support my analysis of the fourth theme, it is paramount to provide a clear understanding of what agency means and its meaning in the context of the teaching profession.

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) conceptualize agency by viewing the process of achieving agency as 'temporal' and 'relational'. They describe this process in three dimensions:

> '*a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its "iterational" or habitual aspect) but also oriented toward the future (as a "projective" capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a "practical-evaluative" capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment*)'
>
> (Emirbayer and Mische,1998, p.962)

The three-dimensional approach to theorise agency helps us understand that agency shifts continually in different contexts and times therefore agency should be interpreted in situ.

A critical review from a multidisciplinary stance by Eteläpelto *et al.* (2013) extends conceptualisation of agency from workplace to lives outside the workplace. They propose a subject-centred socio-cultural approach to agency where 'adult learners and workers as individuals who not only learn the new knowledge and skills needed in their work, but also act as feeling and willing subjects who actively prioritize, choose, and consider what is important and worth aspiring in their life and future, and thus practise agency in their life' (Biesta, 2010 cited in Eteläpelto *et al.*, 2013, p.62). This approach provides a different dimension with breadth and depth to theorising agency from a lifecourse perspective.

Built on Emirbayer and Mische (1998)'s work, Priestley *et al.* (2015) identify a three pronged conceptualisation including, agency as variable (set against structure), agency as capacity (innate capacity of human) and agency as phenomenon (interplay of personal and environmental capacity). They argue that in most of the literature agency is commonly viewed as individual capacity to act based on attributes which suggests that agency is exercised in solitude. A much more plausible definition, which expands agency from individualistic to a socio-cultural perspective, is to view agency as 'emergent phenomenon - something that is achieved by individuals, through the

interplay of personal capacities and the resources, affordances and constraints of the environment by means of which individuals act' (Priestley *et al.*, 2015, p. 19). This perspective views agency in an ecological lens that emphasises 'the capacity to shape our responsiveness to the situations we encounter in our lives' (Biesta and Tedder, 2007, p.146). The ecological concepts of agency provide a useful basis for interpreting and analysing narratives that are encapsulated in engagement with participants in the JPD workshops as well as in the interviews.

In the context of education, there have been emerging interests and debates about teacher agency in recent years but limited empirical research can be found on teachers' professional agency. It is suggested that teacher agency is an important capability in supporting student learning but also for driving the professional learning of teachers and organisational development (Toom *et al.*, 2015). Most literature about teacher agency is based in schools rather than post compulsory education such as further education colleges. Nevertheless, to be able to analyse the fourth theme in relation to teacher agency, it is important to understand teacher agency and its role in teacher professionalism.

Whilst there is limited conceptualisation and empirical studies of teacher agency in the further education settings, the following extended definition by Pyhältö *et al. (*2014) provides one way of understanding teacher agency from a sociocultural perspective:

> *'Teachers' professional agency is considered a capacity that prepares the way for the intentional and responsible management of new learning, both at an individual and community level. This concept includes using others intentionally as a resource for learning and, equally, serving as a support for them. Accordingly, teachers' professional agency is not a fixed disposition of an individual teacher, but is highly relational and thus embedded in professional interactions between teachers,*

> *pupils and their parents, as well as with other members of*
> *the school community.'* *(*Pyhältö *et al.*, 2014, p.306-307)

A similar view is shared by Priestley *et al.* (2015) who uses an ecological conception to describe teacher agency as a situated achievement drawn from iterational (life and professional histories), practical-evaluative (cultural, structural and material resources) and projective (short and long term objectives, values and aspirations) dimensions.

Based on these authors' theorisation of teachers' agency, a different concept emerges with the notion of 'relational agency' (Edwards, 2005) or 'collective agency' (Dutaut and Rycroft-Smith, 2018). This suggests the notion of professional agency as 'the personal capacity to draw upon social capital (relational resources) and the extent to which such resources exit in the first place' (Priestley *et al.*, 2015, p. 29). This is particularly pertinent in the context of further education.

With increasing demands from centralised curriculum reforms and accountability systems in public services particularly in the further education sector (Lucas and Crowther, 2016), teacher agency is often constrained by institutional and external standards and agendas (Simpson *et al.*, 2018). Collective teacher agency is even harder to foster and achieve. However, findings from the engagement with participants throughout this thesis have revealed a sense of personal and professional growth amongst participants and myself as a co-participant and a JPD facilitator. The following reflective account is one example to illustrate how personal agency could be encouraged by mutual respect and trusting relationships:

> *'You have definitely helped. You've allowed me to grow.*
> *You've facilitated the way I've grown in my role, but also as a*
> *person I've changed as a person and I think that with your*
> *support and also the things that you've introduced me to the*

> *thoughts if you like, and the ways of looking at things. You are*
> *not an instructional person because you don't say, well we*
> *need to look at this here and that's what we're going to do.*
> *You've said to me, right, this is an area that I've found*
> *interesting. Let me know what you think. So again, that's the*
> *way you do something that's makes a difference to me.'*
> *(Martin)*

Martin explains that very often 'good ideas' have been forced upon him by 'being told' to implement them without any pre-understanding of his subject, level and students. The major difference he felt empowered from the process of engaging with JPD workshops is 'being treated equal and being asked about his thoughts'. He also appreciated my contribution of expertise in sharing teaching and learning theories that supported him in exploring and identifying what actions were needed to motivate his students. According to Edwards (2015), relational expertise and agency involve 'being explicit about what matters to you as a professional, revealing your professional motives, i.e. commitments, and being able to align your motives with those of other' (ibid., p.784).

Another account strongly suggests how personal agency could be fostered through working collectively with JPD:

> *'There's definitely an impact for myself and the students.*
> *Myself, I look at certain teaching methods in a totally different*
> *light and I react to it in a better said, better situation than I*
> *would have done some time ago. Just certain aspects and the*
> *students react better to my change.' (Mathew)*

Mathew's reflection supports Priestley *et al.*'s (2015) notion of relational resources which nurture personal agency to think for themselves and solve practical problems that may arise in their own context. Through using Joint Practice Development, it encourages the development of the professional community 'by generating new ideas

and forms of implementation, coordinating and testing the ideas with one another, and monitoring the proceedings of their collaborative efforts' (Pyhältö *et al.*, 2014, p.307).

What surprises me from the findings is my own growth of professional agency, both personally and collectively. The following extract is one of many reflexive entries that illustrate how reciprocal relationships play a significant role in enabling own agency personally and professionally.

> *'When looking back at all the workshops, I realise that I never view myself as more superior or knowledgeable than participants I have been working with. They are all experienced members of staff who have own past experiences and expertise in their own area. We are all working together to support each other and want the best for our students. I feel that my own professional confidence has grown because of the process of engaging with colleagues in JPD workshops. I feel braver in voicing my thoughts when feeling something is injustice.'*

<div align="center">

(I. Chen, *Reflective Journal*, 11 January 2020*)*

</div>

Progressing through this thesis, I have gradually been developing my voice and identity as a researcher who cares about and cares for her participants. Personal and professional agency also builds on daily ethical decision making because 'ethics and reflexivity are related, and relate first and foremost to the relations between the people who partake in a research project. Research ethics needs to be based on caring reflexivity, which is defined as caring relationships based on recognizing and respecting the participants in their specific contexts' (Heikkinen *et al.*, 2012, p.17).

I find myself becoming more conscious of potential interpersonal impact on the participants during our inquiry and joint reflection throughout the workshops (Rossman and Rallies, 2010). What this implies is the fact that 'the network wasn't so productive and well designed from the start. It evolves over time, moving in zigzag fashion rather than in a straight line' (Hargreaves and O'Connor, 2018, p.22).

Chapter Five Conclusion: What a Journey! It's Only the Start.

This penultimate chapter began with my story of multiple roles, identities and competing priorities found in my life. It continued to illustrate the development of professional relationships with Sean, Mathew, Martin, Scott, Tom and Keith. Our story progressed and was co-constructed together with the ways in which how JPD was integrated in practice at each phase. Most important of all, this chapter illustrates how communities of practice and inquiry emerge and consolidate. The story running through this chapter and the key themes emerging from the final phase of post JPD workshop interviews have responded to the research questions of:

- What are FE teachers' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model?

- How do the narrative accounts co-constructed from teachers' experiences of participating in JPD workshops tell us about implementing JPD in practice?

In this all-embracing chapter, I have presented the life events and experiences of our inquiry by using the three-dimensional narrative inquiry framework (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000). As I interpreted and reinterpreted data, I have shown the complexity and depth of this research. This chapter has portrayed how the process of research is not linear and straightforward. It exemplifies the ways in which relationships, purposes and transition between field texts to research texts have been negotiated and re-negotiated (Connolly and Clandinin, 2000). The narratives, artefacts and reflexive accounts have been developed and interpreted through thematic analysis; these themes become research texts intertwined with theory. Given my positionality as an interpretivist researcher and my ontological and epistemological beliefs, I hope this chapter illuminates how an integrated JPD model might contribute to creating open

and honest spaces which build positive relationships with trust, equal thinking, dialogical inquiry and increase capacity to critical reflective and reflexive practice collaboratively. It is not the end but only the beginning.

In the next and final chapter, I discuss the trajectory of the whole thesis by revisiting my first five chapters and key theories that influence my thinking and the whole research process. I weave the learning threads from each step of this research experience to the final tapestry which concludes the full story.

Chapter Six: Making Meaning: Discussion of Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

Introduction – Weaving the threads together

This thesis is completed post BREXIT and in the middle of a global pandemic with COVID-19. The uncertainty of whether we will be able to return to normality in life and the ways in which teachers and students work together presents a lot of questions, challenges and perhaps even some opportunities. Although the main data in the study was collected prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, the elapse of time since has helped create much needed head space for me to return to the researcher's position of making meaning of all the field texts, transcriptions, artefacts and my reflexive accounts which were gradually woven into research texts (Connolly and Clandinin, 2000). Presenting the data analysis holistically in the previous chapter allows me to narrate the zigzag journey through interpretation and reinterpretation of data from both the participants' and the researcher's perspective.

This small-scale qualitative research study examined the lived experiences of using a Joint Practice Development (JPD) model to engage FE college teachers in collaborative professional learning. The purpose of this inquiry emphasises the depth, rather than the breadth, of the experiences of using JPD. The study dives deep into the experiences and stories of all participants including myself. In this final chapter, I use the research questions to explore and weave the learning threads into the final tapestry of this thesis. These are contextualised by discussing the overall research findings and the extent to which the research aim has been met.

This chapter presents a discussion of ten learning threads and associated findings aligned to my research questions:

1. What do FE teachers tell us about their experiences of CPD?

2. In particular, what are the ways that teachers describe the enablers and barriers to their CPD?

3. What are FE teachers' experiences of using and participating in the JPD model?

4. How do the narrative accounts co-constructed from teachers' experiences of participating in JPD workshops tell us about implementing JPD in practice?

The chapter concludes with consideration of the significance of the research study, its limitations and implications for further research. Finally, recommendations for policy and practice for FE teachers' professional development are made in response to the findings from the study.

Learning Thread 1: Transparency of CPD with Context in Mind

A key finding of this study is that continuing professional development needs to be transparent with its opportunities and rationales clearly communicated with teachers. CPD opportunities for teachers depend on the context of personal, departmental and organisational needs that require careful analysis and consultation with individual teachers. This finding relates to the first research question, in terms of FE teachers' experiences of CPD. In Chapter Two, six models of CPD routinely employed in FE colleges were reviewed and analysed using Kennedy's analytical framework (2005; 2014). Perceptions and experiences of CPD were explored with participants at the beginning of the inquiry. The results from the initial interviews suggest that current CPD opportunities do not always align with teachers' professional needs. These opportunities are largely arranged and decided by the institutional hierarchy rather than in consultation with teachers. Thematic analysis of the initial interviews with participants generally portrays similar issues as those discussed in the literature review. The analysis reveals how traditional top-down approaches and one-off CPD

events not only undermine FE teachers' professionalism but also demoralise teachers by disempowering them through centralised and prescriptive expectations on practice. However, not all such CPD opportunities are perceived negatively. A particular view from one participant illustrates the situational and heterogeneous nature of personal and professional values. Individual teachers attribute different values in different learning opportunities.

Factors significantly contributing to the value of CPD are culture, context, content and frequency. Results from my study suggest the importance of teachers being informed about the rationale behind organisational CPD; in other words, transparency is essential. A more personalised or subject specific approach is beneficial to meet the needs of teachers in their local context. Instead of one-off CPD days, regular bite-sized events appear to be more favourable to FE teachers coupled with sufficient time to support practice, reflect and evaluate.

Absent from the interview transcripts was a discussion of other models of CPD, such as mentoring, coaching and the award-bearing model of teacher education courses. This may be a consequence of these participants having already undergone the initial teacher education at the start of their teaching career and all having a minimum of six years of teaching experience. Another possible explanation for this might be that teachers may not be fully aware of or be updated with available CPD opportunities on offer. Notwithstanding the absence of other CPD models, all participants emphasise the importance of communities of practice which evidently are essential to their professional development and emotional support at work. Referring to the literature

review, these communities of practice have been developed and nurtured autonomously without managerial intervention.

Learning Thread 2: The Need for Subject Specific Communities of Practice in FE

Another key finding from the CPD experiences narrated by FE teachers is the need to develop subject specific communities of practice. This finding relates to the second research question concerning the enablers and barriers to CPD. FE teachers with technical and vocational backgrounds entering a teaching career will always want to impart their subject specific knowledge and practice to their students. The analysis from the pre-JPD interviews also reveals a salient point which is that FE teachers recognise subject specialism as their primary professional identity. Maintaining and developing their subject or vocational expertise remains central to their teaching identity. However, with limited time, resources and increasing administrative workloads in FE, CPD for subject specific pedagogic knowledge and practice seems to lend itself to teachers' own individual responsibility without further managerial and financial support. There is restricted scope and opportunities for collaborative learning internally and externally. The issue of funding to support subject specific professional development and learning means that FE teachers are inhibited to access external courses or events which are often expensive and inflexible to suit teachers' working life.

Unsurprisingly, the experiences narrated by participants about CPD are consistent with the widely expressed view in the literature that time, resources, funding and workloads due to staff turnover are major and persistent difficulties to professional learning in FE. Despite these challenges, FE teachers continue to devote their passion

and professionalism by using their innovative and entrepreneurial skills to locate resources and find solutions to provide for their students. FE teachers' conditions of work are still incomparable to schools and higher education institutions in conjunction with competitive offers and demands from industries, particularly in STEM subjects. This results in recurring problems and concerns over teacher retention and recruitment which FE colleges and government policy makers continuously try to create strategies for remedy. However, with the newly introduced technical qualifications (T levels) in the English FE systems, existing issues of retention and recruitment remain persistent and add further challenges to attract highly skilled and industry experienced subject specialists for higher level courses into FE teaching. Another implication concerns existing FE teachers who have mastered their pedagogic knowledge and practice in teaching but receive little support in advancing their vocational pedagogic practice and experience, which will no doubt benefit students and much needed skills set for higher level qualifications in this post Brexit and (post) COVID-19 era.

Learning Thread 3: A Reconceptualised JPD model as an Alternative Approach to CPD

A central finding from the study indicates that teachers respond positively to the JPD model.   The narrative accounts from participants and myself through the implementation of JPD suggest that this model offers an alternative and teacher-centred approach to their professional development and learning. This finding relates to the second and third research questions. Emerging from the results about FE teachers' perceptions and experiences of CPD, it is noticeable that teachers want to get better at what they do despite current conditions of service in FE and constant policy reform. Although FE teachers face uncertainties in job security due to financial constraints and the performative culture discussed in the first two chapters, they put

students at the heart of their practice. Through working and learning together, individual ideas become collective ideas to support each other in solving the dynamic problems teachers face every day. When I first encountered Joint Practice Development in 2012, the idea of collaborative professional learning stayed with me and has remained an empowering approach integrated into my professional practice with students and colleagues. It was only when I started my new role in teacher education and professional development that I reflected upon what was happening and recognised that the experiences of implementing JPD needed to be studied. The motivation to do so is central to my thesis, particularly the similar perceptions and experiences of top down and prescriptive CPD shared by the participants in this thesis.

In education, it is often that a good idea is promoted without considering its context carefully. In this thesis, the intention is definitely not to 'sell' the idea of JPD but to dive deeper into the complexity and actual processes of starting and cultivating a collaborative professional learning community with the principles of JPD in the context of an FE college. Based on the accounts and findings from the pilot study and the early stages of trying to invite willing participants, tensions arose when external inspection outcomes negatively impacted on staff morale. Teachers' conditions were affected by internal organisational restructures implemented with haste to overcome financial constraints. All these factors delayed my initial plan to introduce JPD to potential participants. However, in these challenging times, colleagues continued making efforts to develop their practice to benefit their students, which takes strength and tenacity to do so. In effect, it provided the right conditions to introduce JPD because demoralised teachers urgently need to be remotivated and to reaffirm their values. This is a fundamental principle to creating the right conditions for collaborative improvement of practice. This aspect of professional learning is often overlooked particularly with the

dominant shift towards knowledge based and performance driven curricula which leads to high-stakes measures and an unhealthy accountability culture.

According to the themes drawn from the workshop sessions and the evaluative interviews about the experiences of using JPD, light is shed on the value of using JPD as an alternative and egalitarian approach to CPD. All participants unanimously agree that JPD has brought different experiences and perspectives to their thinking but most importantly of all, they feel valued as equals in the process. JPD appears not only to provide a supportive theoretical framework to engage FE teachers to work together, but also encourages professional learning facilitators to initiate communities of practice and inquiry with care as the core value at its centre. JPD provides opportunities to bring the participants' voices to the fore. Through the interviews and JPD workshops, participants explored and shared their identities and values as professional FE teachers which form an essential aspect of starting collaborative relationships. Over time, I brought my identity and values to this collaborative enterprise which gradually enhances reciprocity. This process of creating conditions can be perceived as an aspect of social justice that manifested amongst participants rising to voice and to amplify their thoughts and ideas as equals.

Based on the experiences and data, I have adapted the initial six-step JPD model by Gregson *et al.* (2015b) with a practical representation of how JPD is integrated in practice in the context of this thesis (see Figure 6.1).
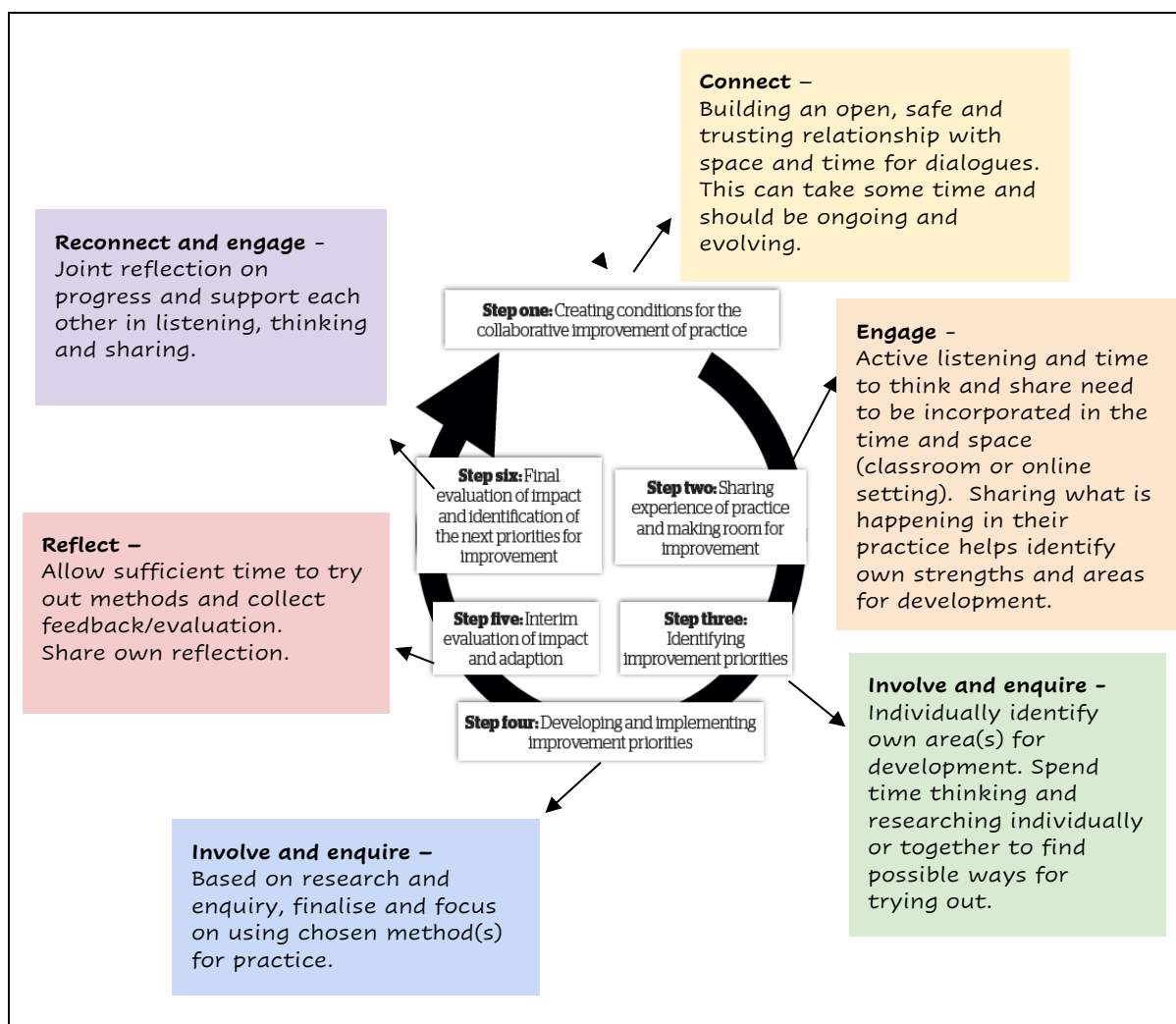
Figure 6.1: A Reconceptualisation of the Six-Step Cycle for putting Joint Practice Development into action by Gregson *et al.* (2015b) (Adapted from Gregson *et al.*, 2015b, p.269)

Learning Thread 4: Untangling Messy Trajectories Through the Lens of JPD

An unexpected finding from this study is a shift in my own presumptions of knowledge, practice and reality. This thesis sets out to collaborate with FE teachers to co-construct the experiences of implementing JPD into our practice. The narratives from the critical incidents, reflective journals and collective reflective dialogues suggest that putting theory into practice requires realistic time for practice and critical reflection, leadership, expertise and courage for dealing with work-based dilemmas. When this thesis started

four years ago, I was new to my role as a teacher educator and a professional development and quality lead as well as a new parent. The struggles of juggling multiple identities professionally and personally were real and happening in parallel with organisational restructures. My personal reflections and joint reflexive accounts suffusing this thesis is a deliberate approach to reveal the messy trajectory of my professional learning in multiple roles and identities. My vision was to provide an insight into the extent to which JPD can possibly be integrated in practice and contribute to professional learning. My beliefs, values and assumptions have been challenged throughout this thesis which leads to ever changing and conflicting identities that I have been learning to balance.

With my research identity discussed in the methodology chapter, I continue to believe that practitioner research is one of the most valuable and impactful professional learning I have engaged with. Looking back on my own learning as an experienced teacher and now a teacher educator, the critical thinking aspect of conducting practitioner research really contributes to sustain and nurture my professional career, life and growth. In this thesis, it is evident that JPD has helped participants and myself to think critically, individually and collectively, which requires trust and consistent relationships in a supportive culture to flourish.

As the research progressed, what became apparent during the JPD workshops was the importance of the facilitator's role in professional learning. All participants indicated how they treasured the open and reciprocal dialogues we had. They valued the time for reflection with pivotal questions which supported and guided individual thinking. Such feedback ignites further self-reflection on the value of challenging one's

own assumptions as a facilitator. The narrative accounts demonstrate that divergent thinking in a professional learning community creates a vibrant and secure environment for listening to different perspectives. This is especially important to JPD facilitators who require strong reflexive practice and inclusive attitudes and behaviours towards participants in the communities of professional learning. JPD facilitators enact as teacher's agents to cultivate and sustain societal and relational capacity for learning which is much needed in the current context of FE.

Before engaging with the participants from STEM subject specialisms, I held a more deficit view of attitude and disposition towards teachers who I was supporting or mentoring. I positioned myself as an outsider expert and a teacher educator who should 'pass down' my knowledge and skills but soon realised that my ignorance and arrogance did not help teachers' personal and professional growth. This conscious realisation from my experience in practice triggered diffraction which led to the initiation of this thesis. The trajectory of my study can be described as a learning curve which included my professional learning as well as collective learning with participants. Together we have built collegial relationships. The experience of this temporal trajectory presents the reality of how a good idea is not simply transferred into practice.

During the course of my research, a substantial amount of learning focused on understanding and exploring my own philosophical and methodological stance. Previous and present experiences coupled with my diverse roles in professional and personal life leads me to locate my methodological stance in the interpretative sphere. I experienced transformation in my learning by examining my assumptions, shifting from the more positivist and objective understanding of the world towards an

interpretivist and relational constructivist perspective. The research began with a personal critical reflexive account derived from the Ofsted inspection which sets the scene for this thesis. At each phase of my study and with reflexive practice, I examined and re-examined my methodological position and made conscious efforts to align my values and beliefs along with theories, research methods, approaches and ways of interpreting and presenting the narratives and experiences to create a coherent narrative inquiry-based research thesis. Extracts from my personal reflective diary entries have been woven into the narratives and themes to illustrate the messiness of the practitioner action research journey and illuminate the authenticity of how relational scenarios happen. The workshop notes and narratives from the evaluative interviews affirm that participants felt listened to, empathised with, and felt an increasing sense of self-awareness and motivation. Through the lens of JPD, it elucidates my philosophical and methodological positionality when tackling and resolving dilemmas and critical incidents arising during this study.

Learning Thread 5: Implications for Conducting Insider Research

Another important finding emerging from the narrative accounts is the challenges of conducting insider research. This study may help us to understand the complexity of this type of research in the FE context. The interpretivist paradigm has been employed in this study and my research position situated as an insider researcher. In the methodology chapter, the benefits and limitations of conducting insider research were critiqued and discussed. In this learning thread, I reflect on the experiences of doing 'insider' work and its implications for future studies in the context of FE. In most cases, insider researchers are able to access the site(s) and participants easily but in this study, the reality of personal, social and institutional factors impacted substantially on

initiating the research project. I initially anticipated to engage with a group of teacher trainees but organisational priorities and demands resulting from external inspections made this impossible to achieve. Despite contacting numerous potential participants, only one teacher confirmed and agreed to take part in my pilot study. Personal and organisational circumstances meant that my pilot study was not completed as initially planned. Furthermore, internal restructures brought uncertainties to job roles and all-consuming processes and time to respond to restructuring proposals. This significant factor affected staff morale and stability and was narrated in the data from all participants.

This thesis offers an insight into a different perspective to conducting insider research particularly in the FE context. The evolving and ingrained neoliberal and performative culture over the last thirty years in education means that experienced FE teachers are sceptical about any new ideas or sometimes have lost their authentic voice in expressing their views and thoughts. Being an insider researcher, possession of in-depth knowledge about the local context has a double-edged effect on conducting research. The positive effect means the researcher can quickly locate sites, resources and information without wasting time. Having knowledge about operational schedules and teachers' timetables also helps identify suitable space and times to engage with participants. However, information about teachers' prior experiences and confidential historical insights shared by managers or colleagues can influence the researcher's thinking and judgment, which may lead to unconscious bias, or worse even, an erosion of trust. Examples of the dilemmas and issues are illustrated with a critical incident and extracts from my personal reflexive accounts in the previous chapter demonstrating how as an insider researcher I dealt with delicate relational matters in

the research sites. The experience of conducting this study is tremendously valuable in developing my research skills as an insider researcher.

The unique position of an insider researcher can also bring positive influence and be rewarding. The themes and findings derived from the interviews and JPD workshops support the notion of an ethic of care as the underpinning principle of all activities. The Ethical Guidelines of BERA (2018) specifies that no harm should be imposed upon the participants. This has an important implication to participatory action research projects such as this study. An insider researcher needs to foster meaningful relationships with participants. This aspect of conducting insider research brought an unexpected result of developing a trusting and trustworthy connection between the participants and myself as a colleague and as a researcher. It is worth noting that at the start of this thesis, I was an 'outsider' to the participants as I had never worked with them directly and did not know them at all. The following earnest message came from one of the participants one year after the data collection stage was completed. It really illuminates how the reciprocal relationship with participants has developed over and beyond the course of this thesis.

> *'I wanted to thank you for supporting me during my time at the college. Quite honestly, I don't know how we'll all do without you… thank you for everything. You're a diamond!'*

Learning Thread 6: The Value of Developing Phrónēsis as Professional Knowledge Through JPD

At the start of this thesis, my personal work-based dilemma and reflection led to questioning the 'effectiveness' of different CPD models in relation to professional development and learning. The experience of reviewing relevant literature and philosophical positionality has been a journey of developing my research knowledge and identity as a novice researcher. As I arrive towards the end of this thesis, I am

contemplating what this thesis actually means and what it contributes to. The experiences from the JPD workshops and narrative accounts of this study indicate that all participants value the focus on their 'real issues' in practice with theoretical input from each other. This finding supports the ideas of Aristotle (trans. 1999), Biesta (2010) and Kemmis (2012) that developing practical knowledge in action is an important value to FE teachers and it is possible to cultivate capacity for collective enquiry through JPD.

From my reflection, the question of judging the effectiveness of any type of CPD has become invalid somehow because the answers depend on individuals who have experienced and made their own judgement of what they view as valuable to supporting their practice in situated contexts. However, this study reveals that it is through developing inter-relational and social dimensions of learning, we thrive to learn. The collaborative process of developing our practical knowledge and professional practice (praxis) in this thesis started from participants sharing their personal narratives which underpin their professional perceptions and identities. This aspect of relational connectedness is essential to both developing partnerships in this research and accepting a new member like myself to be part of a professional learning community. One of the most important findings from this study is the power of co-created space and time to think, discuss, share and reflect together. Through collective enquiry via JPD workshops, the participants and I engaged in dialogical and dialectical exploration of educational pedagogy. The tables of each workshop (Table 5.1, 5.2, 5.3) in Chapter Five illustrate the commonality of the student-centred issues raised by participants, such as student motivation and the challenges of teaching students of mixed levels. The analysis supports the salient factor contributing to critical collaborative enquiry that the uniqueness and situatedness of each group of students

taught by the participants means that they had to identify and balance their resources and capacities to meet the needs of their students. These adaptive capacities are based on understanding, researching and finding strategies to meet the needs of the students. The participants and I have become each other's resources when we share our own theories in practice. This process of collaborative enquiry supports the notion of phrónēsis defined by Aristotle (Aristotle, trans. 1999); in other words building practical wisdom. Our engagement through JPD workshops narrates how participants 'act' their praxis (Kemmis, 2012). The experience of conducting this study for me is regarded as developing my phrónēsis as a researcher, an educator and a facilitator. It is through connection, mutual engagement, participation, reflection and evaluation that we individually lead and collectively learn. Through collective learning, our individual learning has been invigorated and nurtured.

Learning Thread 7: Emotional Connection as a Basis for Emancipatory and Reciprocal Professional Learning in JPD

With respect to the final research question is the finding that the accounts from the participants and my reflexive journals support the literature in this area (Day, 2015; Illeris, 2017; Zembylas, 2003) and demonstrate the important role emotions play in the co-creation of a professional learning community through JPD. The key words and phrases expressed by the participants reveal their reflexive thinking which sheds light on the reciprocal relationship we have developed and maintained throughout and beyond this thesis.

My research also supports the work of Fielding *et al.* (2005), Hargreaves (2011, 2012) and Gregson *et al.* (2015) about the importance of trust and relationships in JPD. Although this study has been conducted with a small number of participants within a

specific context, the rich collaboration and detailed accounts from participants contribute to this significant theme of relational trust and trustworthiness as a basis for emotional connection and emancipatory practice. A key role in developing emancipatory and reciprocal relationships is that of the facilitator (Gregson *et al.*, 2015; Kennedy, 2005; 2014a; Timperly, 2007). Through this thesis, I have been able to explore and consciously apply emancipatory and reflexive practice in my role as a JPD facilitator. This role is interwoven with my research identity with an emphasis on enacting ethical practice. This thesis brings tacit knowledge and nuanced practices to the fore. The detailed extracts from participants and my reflexive accounts make a case for contributing to the under-researched area of the conceptual knowledge of the facilitator's perspectives on JPD. This learning thread is particularly illuminating as it indicates the fundamental condition of teachers' learning which is the development of starting with a trusting and affirmative professional learning community.

Learning Thread 8: (Re)gaining Professional Confidence through JPD

Another significant finding in this thesis is the ways in which participants and I have regained our professional confidence through our joint work. With internal and external pressure and demands imposed upon us, it was no surprise that low morale and low motivation led to a decline in professional confidence. Despite all the challenges, engaging in this study has brought light to darkness. One of the key themes that emerged from the evaluative accounts has shown that we (the participants and I) have, in fact, been exercising our collective agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2005; Pyhältö *et al.*, 2014). This revelation brings growth in individual capacity as well as professional confidence to think critically and make our own judgements about the situational

issues we face as FE teachers. Through listening to each other and amplifying each other's thinking, we have strengthened our co-constructed professional identities. All the participants and I are experienced FE teachers who entered teaching with passion and commitment to educate our students. It takes years of experience to master the technical and pedagogical skills and knowledge to 'become' a teacher. FE teachers' professional identities do not remain static. They evolve according to cognitive, emotional and sociocultural circumstances. The introduction and integration of JPD as a collaborative professional learning framework has played an important role in regaining the professional confidence of the participants and me. Our lived experiences through this thesis present a story of how professional capital can be built through the interplay of interactivity, temporality and spatiality at personal, social and cultural levels (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000).

However, caution needs to be taken when making any generalised assumptions and claims. Professional capital should be reviewed on a continuum, it can increase and decrease over time. Based on the findings from this study, it is encouraging to know that the participants expressed an increase in their personal and professional growth. However, this growth requires continuing support to maintain and nurture on personal, community and organisational levels.

Learning Thread 9: Democratise CPD and Listen to Teachers' Voices

The experiences and narrative accounts from this study tell us that there is a need to democratise CPD and create a safe space for teachers' voices to be heard. One fundamental aspect of JPD in cultivating a collaborative professional learning community is developing trust with mutual understanding. It starts from the initial

connection between members in the group and requires effort, nurturing and tenacious leadership to sustain the community. JPD is much more complex than it might first be perceived as a cyclical framework. In education, there is much emphasis on listening to students' voices, which is important, but what about teachers' voices? So much focus is on promoting British Values which includes democracy for our students, should we not model these values for ourselves and at all levels? In this thesis, the narrative accounts and themes illustrate how much participants appreciated the time and safe space to voice their concerns and be listened to without feeling 'under surveillance'. Participants' experiences and accounts provide a glimpse of possibility and hope to democratize FE teachers' CPD. Our story shows how participants take responsibility and work together in driving their professional learning. Through the lens of JPD, it promotes equality in listening to different perspectives and creates a safe and respectful space to think, question and challenge our assumptions, reflect collectively and make our professional judgements (Aristotle, trans. 1999; Biesta, 2010; Dewey, 1916).

Learning Thread 10: Working and Learning Together to Enact Values-Based Professional Learning and Professionalism

Our story supports the theory that critical reflection and reflexivity leads to emancipatory praxis (Dewey; 1916; Kemmis, 1986; Schön, 1983; Thompson and Pascal, 2012); and the findings illustrate that an egalitarian approach to engagement can influence positive interaction and interrelationship. The participants and I (we) have made a commitment to each other and have worked together to care for our students and care for each other. The golden thread weaving through this thesis is the moral and educational values we share - ethics of care, as the underpinning

philosophy of why we do what we do (Aristotle, tans. 1999; Dewey, 1916). We enact our values in our collaborative professional learning through JPD in convergence towards our professionalism.

In this final learning thread, I reflect on my research methodology and processes of research. Despite the messiness, I tried to untangle the divergent assumptions, perspectives and beliefs; through participatory action research and narrative inquiry, I tried to make sense of these experiences as a JPD facilitator, a teacher educator and a novice researcher. This study contributes to my own professionalism and professional learning as an educator and as a lifelong learner. The core value of ethics of care brings hope to the professional communities where I live and work; I will continue to enact this value in sustaining and nurturing these educational communities.

Contribution to Knowledge

The aim of this research study was to explore and investigate accounts of experience of implementing a Joint Practice Development (JPD) model to engage teachers in collaborative professional learning. I should make clear that the intention of this study was not to prove the effectiveness of a particular theory or phenomenon, or as highlighted in my discussion, to claim that JPD is a panacea to resolve all issues relating to FE teachers' professional development and learning. This study makes a contribution to understanding the complexity of integrating a theoretical framework (JPD) into professional practice with FE teachers. There are four significant areas of work which contribute to knowledge in this study:

Firstly, this study contributes to a small body of research and literature that have explored the JPD model, most of which is mainly based in school settings (Fielding *et*

al., 2005; Hargreaves, 2012; Sebba et al., 2012). Coffield (2017) claims that JPD is an effective form of professional learning but there is hardly any research and evidence to support this in the FE sector. One major piece of work significant to the FE context is completed by Gregson et al. (2015) from the University of Sunderland's Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (SUNCETT). This study draws on four years of experiences from the Research Development Fellowship (RDF) programme with practitioners from the further education and training sector, funded by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS). They are also the very same team who inspired me to begin my practitioner research journey and my MPhil/ doctoral study on examining and testing out the experiences of implementing JPD in the FE workplace. Therefore, the context of implementing JPD in a general further education college places this study in a unique position to address this gap in knowledge by systematically applying theories and researching the experiences of FE teachers using JPD as the driver for collaborative enquiry in our practice.

Secondly, this study has been led and conducted by an FE practitioner (me) with participatory action research as the underpinning methodology (Carr, 1995; Carr and Kemmis, 1986; McNiff, 2016; Stenhouse, 1975). A particularly important aspect of contribution from this study is to take a narrative approach to conduct an in-depth small-scale study in the context of a further education college. This study presents rich accounts through narrative inquiry and joint critical reflection and reflexivity between the participants and me as well as my own reflection as an insider researcher with multiple roles (BERA, 2018; Mercer, 2007; Sikes and Potts, 2008). This research has provided an opportunity to raise the voice of FE teachers to be heard and seen. Hence, this study uses innovative ways to portray a lived and relatively underexplored phenomenon.

Another significant contribution is that this study reveals the reality of a small group of FE teachers' lives and work. The narratives in this study support the importance of relational and emotional dimensions of teachers' professional learning. Through the re-conceptualised JPD model (Gregson *et al.*, 2015b), this study provides an insight into the experiences of STEM teachers in an FE college who shared their journey of immersing in the co-constructed professional learning communities. This study also provides an alternative way of presenting the development of a participatory action research study with insights from my position as an FE practitioner researcher and a JPD facilitator in the collaborative learning communities.

Finally, a reconceptualised JPD model (see Figure 6.1) is developed from the original framework created by Gregson *et al.* (2015b), with contribution from participants and myself through co-constructed narrative accounts from the lived experiences of participating in JPD workshops. This reconceptualised model might be helpful to practitioners who are considering putting JPD into practice in the context of their workplace.

Limitations of the Study

My study shares limitations that are inherent in qualitative research which focuses on the in-depth understanding of a small cohort of participants' experiences at one FE college. Therefore, the findings from this study may not be generalizable. Though it is fair to say that such experiences may be familiar to other FE teachers and provide opportunities to transfer ideas from this study into the working lives of others in the FE sector.

There are three key areas which could be considered for further development. The first area is the recruitment of participants. The participants in this study are largely

from a homogenous group from a particular curriculum faculty across two different campuses. Their experience of working and teaching in FE can also be affected by the length of time they have served at the same or different organisations. These factors can impact on how individual participants perceive their own identity, beliefs and values as well as their views on CPD. There was an intention to recruit new participants after the three JPD workshops were completed and in fact I had approached three teachers who expressed their interest. However, the COVID-19 outbreak affected the lives of potential new participants who had to withdraw their participation. Given the opportunity to extend this research, I would like to participate with more teachers from different subject specialist areas or from different FE colleges. It would provide further insights into experiences of different identities and practices in a variety of vocational subjects in different organisations.

Due to the scope of this study and the sudden disruption of the pandemic, there was no opportunity to involve the participants' students in evaluating JPD. I think it would be useful to involve participants' students in the process and engage them in participating in the JPD workshops to understand their experiences and evaluate development in their learning. Including students' voice in future studies may bring even more diverse perspectives to understanding what differences are made when using JPD as a model of collaborative enquiry.

Although rich experiences have been gathered and included in this thesis, another missing voice is that of faculty management in relation to their experiences and perspectives on CPD for teachers. I did not have the opportunity to engage managers in providing their views on JPD even though I gained their support and agreement to engage with their staff in this study.

Recommendations for Practice, Policy and Research

Despite the above limitations, this research offers particular insights into how the egalitarian approach of JPD to collaborative enquiry can empower teachers in taking ownership of their professional learning. The narrative inquiry into teachers' experiences and social emotional perspectives to their professional lives that this study has revealed indicates that there is potential for future research particularly in the context of FE. I would suggest the following recommendations for practice, research and policy:

- **For Practice**

  Whilst it is widely acknowledged that the existing managerial and performative culture in FE is difficult to shift, coupled with the uncertainty of the impact from the pandemic, there is an urgent need to (re)connect and build relationships between individuals within the communities in the organisation. FE teachers should not wait for the hierarchy to impose further standards upon practice. Instead, FE teachers can and should take ownership of their professional learning by working together to cultivate safe and collaborative spaces in which honest and reciprocal dialogues can happen.

  Elsewhere, I emphasise that the intention of this thesis is not to suggest JPD as a simple or singular solution to professional development and learning. This thesis has revealed the complex and challenging trajectory of cultivating and nurturing professional relationships in organisational life. However, JPD provides an alternative and democratic model for FE teachers to lead and engage in collegial dialogues based on trust, care and reflexivity. The only way to really appreciate what JPD means in practice is to adapt the model to your

own context and experience the journey yourself. With limited resources, time and space, the reconceptualised JPD model (see Figure 6.1) offers possibilities and flexibility to adopt some of these features in your practice.

- **For Policy**

A significant implication for policy is to encourage and support teacher-led collaborative professional learning such as JPD as part of staff professional development and learning opportunities. Participating teachers have responded positively to their experiences of JPD workshops and commented on the extent to which they were trusted to take responsibility for their own professional learning. They were able to share their reflections critically and reflexively in a safe environment. The authentic voices of participating teachers need to be heard and recognised. Whilst writing up this thesis, a global pandemic has disrupted the world but has also brought glimmers of hope in trusting teachers to do their best in working together to support their students during lock down. There is a concern about the return to the potentially hostile environment where this trust may well again be eroded. Leaders and managers in the FE sector need to recognise and invest in sustainable professional development and learning which supports the cultivation of reciprocal professional learning communities as a basis and condition to nurture teachers' work and life.

- **For Research**

This participatory action research study has been conducted by an FE teacher, with and for FE teachers, in the FE sector. Previous action research projects have reshaped my professional identity, values, beliefs and practice as a

teacher and a teacher educator. This thesis has afforded me an opportunity to explore my philosophical position and develop my knowledge and phrónēsis in research. This further transforms my practice and ways of thinking in collaborative, systematic and critical ways to a different level. Moreover, it has helped me to revisit, review and reaffirm my values and beliefs as a teacher and a teacher educator. This transformative journey can only be experienced by engaging in practitioner research by practitioners themselves. I would strongly encourage practitioners, particularly from the FE sector, to consider taking part or leading research as part of their professional development and learning.

Furthermore, collaborative forms of professional development and learning are under researched in the FE context. In order to understand and identify tangible impacts of collaborative professional development and learning, further research into this area from a variety of contexts is highly recommended.

Final Reflection and Future Direction

> *'Narrative inquiry is the study of experience, and experience, as John Dewey taught, is a matter of people in relation contextually and temporally. Participants are in relation, and we as researchers are in relation to participants. Narrative inquiry is an experience of the experience. It is people in relation studying with people in relation.'*

(Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p.189)

I started this research study in 2017 with a new role in teacher education and professional development. My personal reflection from the experience of an external inspection started my personal quest in search of meanings in the work I do. Four years on, this work continues but this thesis needs to end. Undertaking this research study has been challenging but invaluable. The experience through this thesis has afforded me opportunities to gain knowledge in subjects relevant to professional

development and learning which inform my professional practice. This study has provided ways to expand and develop my research skills and knowledge to a different level. More importantly, the research process has become an essential exploratory journey of self, personally and professionally, independently and collectively. My positionality in this research process has shifted from, me versus you, to us. The participating teachers in this study have become an integral part of our joint endeavour. Narrative inquiry gives us the impetus to tell our stories. My work does not stop here. I will continue telling and retelling the stories of our experiences. In this research journey together, I have always aimed to practise ethics of care on a daily basis, reflecting upon and paying attention to my inner consciousness and noticing external environments and subtle interactions with participants. Although ethical guidelines are useful to offer the directions of 'what', on reflection, it was the actual 'doing' (practice) and experiencing critical incidents that we encounter in everyday life that really helped me develop and reflect on my ethical research practice. This way of reflecting upon and acting ethically is something that will stay with me beyond the duration of this thesis as this aspect of the study has enriched my vocation as an educator and a teacher educator for life.

As discussed in the limitations of this study, studies on collaborative professional learning in FE are underexplored. Further research into JPD as a model of collaborative enquiry with FE teachers would help understand their experiences from different communities. However, it is important to start with myself to share my research work and experience by engaging audience and participants diversely on multiple platforms. In the duration of this study, I have actively disseminated my study informally and formally. The dissemination outcomes of the study are listed at the start of this thesis.

This thesis must end but my work continues. I have been invited to contribute to a book chapter about inclusive learning design based on my research study about JPD. The book proposal and content has been peer reviewed. The draft chapter is at the final stage of refinement. The book is scheduled to be published in the beginning of 2022 by Routledge. I am submitting an abstract to the British Educational Research Conference 2022. I have plans to publish my work at my workplace and via the Education and Training Foundation.

Last Words

I have arrived at the final destination of this study. This research journey has brought personal and professional growth that has been transformed with and nurtured by the participating teachers. I hope I have done justice as an advocate for the participating teachers in raising their voices. What about your experience? I would encourage you to share your voice and your experiences in the context of your practice.

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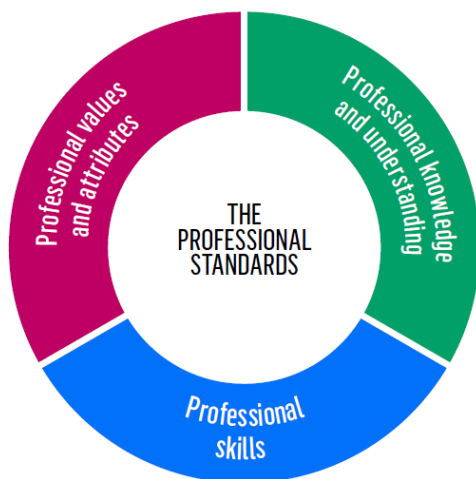
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Appendices

Appendix 1: The Education & Training Foundation (ETF) 2014 Professional Standards

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ACHIEVING PROFESSIONAL POTENTIAL

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

for Teachers and Trainers in Education and Training

THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Professional values and attributes

Professional knowledge and understanding

Professional skills

Teachers and trainers are reflective and enquiring practitioners who think critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practice in the context of a changing contemporary and educational world.

They draw on relevant research as part of evidence-based practice. They act with honesty and integrity to maintain high standards of ethics and professional behaviour in support of learners and their expectations.

Teachers and trainers are 'dual professionals'; they are both subject and/or vocational specialists and experts in teaching and learning. They are committed to maintaining and developing their expertise in both aspects of their role to ensure the best outcomes for their learners.

These expectations of teachers and trainers underpin the 2014 professional standards, with their overall purpose being to support teachers and trainers to maintain and improve standards of teaching and learning, and outcomes for learners.

Appendix 1: The Education & Training Foundation (ETF) 2014 Professional Standards

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PROFESSIONAL VALUES & ATTRIBUTES

Develop your own judgment of what works and does not work in your teaching and training.

1. Reflect on what works best in your teaching and learning to meet the diverse needs of learners.

2. Evaluate and challenge your practice, values and beliefs.

3. Inspire, motivate and raise aspirations of learners through your enthusiasm and knowledge.

4. Be creative and innovative in selecting and adapting strategies to help learners to learn.

5. Value and promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion.

6. Build positive and collaborative relationships with colleagues and learners.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

Develop deep and critically informed knowledge and understanding in theory and practice.

7. Maintain and update knowledge of your subject and/or vocational area.

8. Maintain and update your knowledge of educational research to develop evidence-based practice.

9. Apply theoretical understanding of effective practice in teaching, learning and assessment drawing on research and other evidence.

10. Evaluate your practice with others and assess its impact on learning.

11. Manage and promote positive learner behaviour.

12. Understand the teaching and professional role and your responsibilities.

Appendix 1: The Education & Training Foundation (ETF) 2014 Professional Standards

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PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Develop your expertise and skills to ensure the best outcomes for learners.

13. Motivate and inspire learners to promote achievement and develop their skills to enable progression.

14. Plan and deliver effective learning programmes for diverse groups or individuals in a safe and inclusive environment.

15. Promote the benefits of technology and support learners in its use.

16. Address the mathematics and English needs of learners and work creatively to overcome individual barriers to learning.

17. Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning and assessment, setting goals that stretch and challenge.

18. Apply appropriate and fair methods of assessment and provide constructive and timely feedback to support progression and achievement.

19. Maintain and update your teaching and training expertise and vocational skills through collaboration with employers.

20. Contribute to organisational development and quality improvement through collaboration with others.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES & ATTRIBUTES

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1. Reflect on what works best in your teaching and learning to meet the diverse needs of learners.

2. Evaluate and challenge your practice, values and beliefs.

3. Inspire, motivate and raise aspirations of learners through your enthusiasm and knowledge.

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10. Evaluate your practice with others and assess its impact on learning.

11. Manage and promote positive learner behaviour.

12. Understand the teaching and professional role and your responsibilities.

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Appendix 1: The Education & Training Foundation (ETF) 2014 Professional Standards

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PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

PROFESSIONAL VALUES & ATTRIBUTES

ACHIEVING PROFESSIONAL POTENTIAL

The 2014 Professional Standards:

– Set out clear expectations of effective practice in Education and Training;

– Enable teachers and trainers to identify areas for their own professional development;

– Support initial teacher education

– Provide a national reference point that organisations can use to support the development of their staff.

This Guidance, which was developed with the support of practitioners, aims to help teachers and trainers use the standards and apply them to the context in which they work.

University of Sunderland

Application 004750

Section A: Applicant details

Date application started:
Thu 25 July 2019 at 15:22

First name:
Joyce

Last name:
I-Hui Chen

Email:
Joyce.I-Hui-Chen@research.sunderland.ac.uk

Programme name:
Master of Philosophy

Module name:
Year 2
Last updated:
31/07/2019

Department:
School of Education

Applying as:
Student

Research project title:
Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging FE college lecturers in professional learning

Similar applications:
- not entered -

Supervisor

1. Supervisor

Name	Email
Ms Patricia Spedding	trish.spedding@sunderland.ac.uk

Risk Assessment

Suitability

Adheres to BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2014)?
No

Takes place outside UK?
No

Involves NHS?
No

Healthcare research?
No

ESRC funded?
No

Involves adults who lack the capacity to consent?
No

Led by another UK institution?
No

Involves human tissue?
No

Clinical trial?
No

Social care research?
No

Risk Assessment

Does the study involve participants who are potentially or in any way vulnerable or who may have any difficulty giving meaningful consent to their participation or the use of their information?
No

Are participants to be involved in the study without their knowledge and consent (e.g. through internet-mediated research, or via covert observation of people in public places)?
No

Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited?
No

Does the research methodology involve the use of deception or activities which are conducted without participants' full and informed consent at the time the study is carried out?
No

Are there any significant concerns regarding the design of the research project?
No

Does the research involve any of the following groups?

   a. children under 18 years of age?
   b. vulnerable adults (eg people with learning or communication difficulties)
   c. individuals who have a dependent or subordinate relationships to researchers
   d. people in custody (eg young offenders or people in prisons)
   e. individuals unable to give consent
   f. individuals involved in illegal activities
   g. therapeutic interventions

No

If the proposed research relates to the provision of social or human services is it feasible and/or appropriate that service users or service user representatives should be in some way involved in or consulted?
No

Are there payments to researchers/participants that may have an impact on the objectivity of the research?
No

Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?
No

Could the study induce unacceptable psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life? Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?
No

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.)
No

Are drugs, placebos or other substances to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?
No

Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?
No

Is there ambiguity about whether the information/data you are collecting is considered to be public?
No

Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?
No

Will the research involve the use of visual/vocal methods that potentially pose an issue regarding confidentiality and anonymity?
No

The Data Protection Act 2018 will apply to any data-processing activities entailed by this research. Is there any cause for uncertainty as to whether the research will fully comply with the requirements of the Act?
No

Are there any particular groups who are likely to be harmed by dissemination of the results of this project?
No

Do you have any doubts or concerns regarding your (or your colleagues) physical or psychological wellbeing during the research period?
No

Will the research involve accessing security-sensitive material, such as material related to terrorism or to violent extremism of any kind, including, but not limited to, Islamist extremism and far-right extremism?
No

Summary

The research aims to find out what the potential impact is on the implementation of the Joint Practice Development model with teaching staff for their own professional learning. My research questions include:
- what literature are available about the JPD model
- what and how to measure the impact of using the JPD model
- what differences are made to teaching staff, using the JPD model
I have access to a group of twenty STEM teachers and I intend to involve a minimum of six teachers to participate and test in the research. The method used will base on the narrative inquiry research methodology, which involves interviews and case studies.

Section G: Declaration

Signed by:
Joyce I-Hui Chen
Date signed:
Wed 31 July 2019 at 09:12

Offical notes

- not entered -

Appendix 3: Presentation to introduce the study to gatekeepers (managers) and potential participants

University of Sunderland

Research Project Briefing Sheet

Title of Research Project: Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging FE college lecturers in professional learning

Thank you for considering participation in my research. To help you to decide whether to participate, the following information details the purpose of my research and my chosen methodology.

What is the purpose of the study?
This research is to be carried out as part of the requirements for the Award of Master of Philosophy, for which I am a student registered with the University of Sunderland. The aim of this study is to explore the impact of the implementation of a collaborative professional development model called Joint Practice Development (JPD).

There will be at least six willing participants within the study, all of whom will be vocational teaching staff. Participants should be prepared to share their experience of their engagement with continuing professional development (CPD) and their participation in the Joint Practice Development workshops.
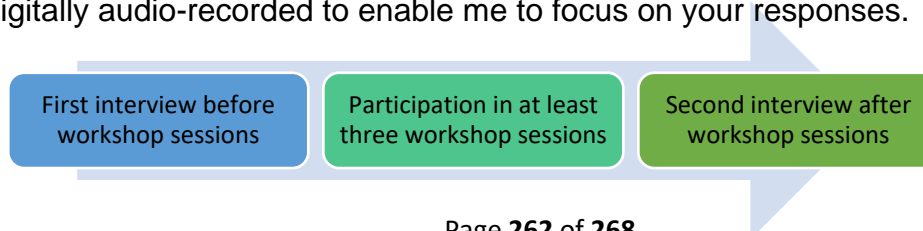
What will happen to me if I take part?
As a participant, you will take part in **two** interviews and a minimum of **three** workshops. The first interview will enable me to collect some background information about you, your teaching role and your experience of engagement in CPD activities related to your job role. The interview is likely to last up to one hour.

The workshops will be pre-arranged with you at your convenient time and place within college. Each workshop is likely to last up to one hour. The conversation and notes during the workshops will be collected to form part of the research data. Please be reassured that any of the data I collect from you will remain confidential and your identity will be protected.

The second interview will take place after your participation of the JPD workshops. We will have a conversation about the experience of your participation and any impact on your professional development and practice. This interview is likely to last up to one hour.

Both interviews will take place in a location of your choice within college to help you to feel comfortable and to enable easier access to any examples of work used in your practice that you choose to share with me. With your permission, both interviews will be digitally audio-recorded to enable me to focus on your responses.

First interview before workshop sessions	Participation in at least three workshop sessions	Second interview after workshop sessions

When referring to any of the data I collect from you within my write-up, I will respect your right to confidentiality and identity protection. I will use a randomized pseudonym rather than your actual name. A general description of college location will be used rather than the actual name of the college. Additionally, I will ensure that I use your data in my thesis in ways that do not reveal your identity in any way.

All data will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your data will be stored electronically on a password-protected device. I am required to keep your data for ten years. Your data will only be used for the purpose of this research and will be kept confidential.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

If suitable, the results may also be presented at academic conferences and/or written up for publication in peer reviewed academic journals. However, please reassured that your data will not reveal your identity.

A copy of the final thesis will be provided on request by contacting me to the email address below.

Who has reviewed the study?

The University of Sunderland Research Ethics Group has reviewed and approved the study.

It is important that you are a willing volunteer of this research. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without reason. You can do so by contacting me. Please be advised that, should you withdraw, any data collected may still be used to generate key themes, however, confidentiality will be maintained.

Please note: If you change your mind about participation, please contact me by email to cancel your participation. If you feel unhappy about the conduct of the study, please contact me immediately or the Chairperson of the University of Sunderland Research Ethics Group, whose contact details are given below.

My (Researcher) contact details:
Joyce I-Hui Chen
School of Education,
The University of Sunderland,
Edinburgh Building, City Campus,
Chester Road
Sunderland, SR1 3SD
Email: Joyce.I-Hui-Chen@research.sunderland.ac.uk

Contact details of the Chair of the University of Sunderland Research Ethics Group
Doctor John Fulton
Email: john.fulton@sunderland.ac.uk
Phone: 0191 515 2529

University of Sunderland

Research Project Consent Form

Title of Research Project: Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging FE college lecturers in professional learning

Participant code: _____

	Please tick to confirm
I am over the age of 18	
I have read and understood the attached study information and, by signing below, I consent to participate in this study	
I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study without giving a reason at any time during the study itself.	
I understand that I also have the right to change my mind about participating in the study for a short period after the study has concluded.	

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

(Your name, along with your participant code is important to help match your data from two interviews and workshops participation. It will not be used for any purpose other than this.)

Date: _____

Witnessed by: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5: Pre-JPD workshops interview questions

1. Can you tell me about how you become a lecturer?

2. Tell me what your motivation is to become a lecturer at an FE college?

3. What training or courses did you undertake to become a lecturer?

4. Tell me about what continuing professional development (CPD) means to you.

5. Can you tell me how CPD is organised in this College?
   What kinds of activities have you participated for CPD in the last and current academic year?

6. What are the main sources of support and main barriers to your own professional development?

7. What are teachers' views of CPD in this College? How enthusiastic are you/they about own professional development?

8. How are your professional development needs met? Do you feel that your professional development needs are met?

9. What kinds of activities do you think would best support you in your CPD? Why?

10. What in your view are the features of effective and less effective CPD? Could you provide examples of both?

11. What evidence do you or the College collect about the impact of your CPD at school, individual and learner levels?

12. Would you be prepared to work with me in using a model of professional development called Joint Practice Development?

13. Any other comments about your own professional development and learning?

Appendix 6: Post-JPD workshops interview questions

- Can you tell me what your experience is like during the JPD workshops?

- How did you feel during these workshops?

- What has worked? Why?

- What has not worked? Why?

- What has been surprising or troubling during the period of time when trying out what we discussed.

- Are you going to continue, adapt, expand or abandon the intervention or try something else?

- How would you describe the way we spoke, discussed and shared?

- If you were going to tell someone else about the JPD model, what would you say to them?

- Do you think that JPD workshops can be used as one of the ways to professional development and learning? Why or why not?

Validation principles for action research
1. Principle of historical continuity
Analysis of the history of action: how has the action evolved historically?
Emplotment: how logically and coherently does the narrative proceed?
2. Principle of reflexivity
Subjective adequacy: what is the nature of the researcher's relationship with his/her
object of research?
Ontologic and epistemologic presumptions: what are the researcher's presumptions of
knowledge and reality?
Transparency: how does the researcher describe his/her material and methods?
3. Principle of dialectics
Dialogue: how has the researcher's insight developed in dialogue with others?
Polyphony: how does the report present different voices and interpretations?
Authenticity: how authentic and genuine are the protagonists of the narrative?
4. Principle of workability and ethics
Pragmatic quality: how well does the research succeed in creating workable practices?
Criticalness: what kind of discussion does the research provoke?
Ethics: how are ethical problems dealt with?
Empowerment: does the research make people believe in their own capabilities and
possibilities to act and thereby encourage new practices and actions?
5. Principle of evocativeness
Evocativeness: how well does the research narrative evoke mental images, memories or
emotions related to the theme?

Appendix 8: An email example to participants for checking the interpretation of their accounts and experiences

From: Joyce Chen
Sent: 03 May 2020 12:33
To: ███████
Cc:
Subject: Confidential – MPhil/PhD research project extracts
Importance: High

Hi ██████

I hope you and family all stay well at this challenging time.

Thank you very much for your participation in the JPD workshops which contribute to my MPhil study entitled *Working Together: Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging FE teachers in professional learning.*

I have now completed the vast majority of my data analysis. All the interview transcriptions and notes collected from the JPD workshops are anonymised and saved within an encrypted laptop and encrypted folders. In my thesis, your name has been replaced by a pseudonym but in the document I share with you, your name is replaced by Lecturer 5. The purpose of doing this is to ensure my ethical practice, following the Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research by British Educational Research Association(2018).

I hope you can spare some time to read and let me know what you think about my interpretation of your contribution. It is both to ensure ethical practice as well as to validate my interpretations of data. Please also let me know if there is anything you wish to amend or even add as I would totally respect your view and would always want to ensure the truthfulness of your voice. If you prefer to talk, I am happy to have a discussion with you, which can be arranged by sending me an email and we can arrange an appropriate time via an online method to discuss, due to the current situation with COVID-19.

Please find the shared link below to the extracts on One Drive, which is only shared with you and it is view only. Please make sure that this document remains confidential and is not shared with anyone. The document will remain open to you until 24th May and then the shared link will be removed. Therefore, I would really appreciate if you can reply to me before 24th May or sooner.

<<Encrypted link to the document>>

Thank you.
Warm regards,
Joyce