BECOMING, BEING, BELONGING: TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF IDENTITY TRANSITIONS DURING MASTER'S LEVEL RESEARCH

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Abstract

The commitment of many in the teaching profession to engage in active research at a local (classroom and school) level has a long history in England (Stenhouse, 1981; Wyse et al., 2018). However, teachers' engagement in and with research has been significantly influenced in recent years through hegemonic policies and practices in education. Directions for teacher education in England – both initial teacher training/education (ITTE) and continuing professional development (CPD) – are shaped by national politics and are tightly controlled by the centre through the Department for Education (DfE) and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) (Gunter, 2023). Since 2019, centralisation, standardisation and accountability in ITTE and CPD have intensified with the introduction of Core Content Frameworks for beginning and early career teachers, along with a suite of National Professional Qualifications for experienced teachers. This direction carries with it implicit, and at times explicit, criticism of university-based teacher education (Menter et al., 2019). At the same time, common perceptions and discourses about teachers' work seem to have shifted away from teaching as a caring, moral and ethical endeavour and towards teaching as corporate and marketised, with an emphasis on economic and measurable data outcomes (Moore & Clarke, 2016; Skinner et al., 2021). As a result, some consider that teaching in England has become a 'semi-profession', in which teachers are positioned as 'technicians' and their engagement in critical intellectual and research work is actively discouraged (Mayer & Mills, 2021; Menter & Flores, 2021).

Set in this challenging policy and practice context, the key aim of this empirical research was to collate teachers' descriptions of their experiences as a teacher and a researcher during and after their engagement in completing a Master's in Education dissertation. The intention was to build rich narratives which shed light on the cognitive and affective aspects of each participant's identity[ies] as teacher and researcher and any transition[s] in identity[ies] that they experienced. In order to do so, a conceptual and analytical framework was constructed. This framework was influenced significantly by the work of Hattie (2004) who frames self-concept using the metaphor of a rope. Developing this metaphor further, and influenced by the work of Holland et al. (1998) and Noffke (1997), a model was constructed within which it was possible to conceive and examine particular strands, yarns and fibres of teacher and researcher identity[ies] of each participant.

Three teachers, who were in their final, dissertation year of a part-time Master's in Education programme undertaken at their local university, opted to participate in this project. During the course of their final year in the Master's programme, they each submitted a sequence of video diary entries, articulating their experiences of what it meant to become, to be, and to belong as a researcher AND

a teacher. Along with semi-structured interviews, one of which took place 12+ months after completion of their Master's degree, these personal descriptions were brought together into first person narratives which were subsequently analysed using the conceptual and analytical framework.

The original contribution of this work is two-fold. Firstly, a unique contribution is made through the development of a conceptual and analytical framework which extends previous metaphors of a rope to explore notions of the formation and reformation of identity[ies] related to time, place,, and space. Secondly, contributions to knowledge are made through summarising and analysing participants' narratives, exploring their experiences of [re]formation of the personal, professional and political strands of their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher. At particular moments in time, as well as over many months, each of these teachers went through some re-conceptualisation of what it meant to become, to be, and to belong as a researcher and a teacher. These experiences came to be characterised as transformational: at times painful, but at others joyful and uplifting, these teachers' stories encapsulate what it means to be a research-active teacher in England. The value of these stories can be seen in the final conclusions and responses, where recommendations are made at multiple levels and for multiple actors which would further enhance teachers' – and teacher educators' – potential to develop and sustain a sense of belonging as researchers within and across professional and academic communities.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 What is it like to be a teacher in England?

The years that have passed during the conception, production and completion of this research project (2018-2023) have presented a series of unique and significant challenges for teachers and teacher educators in England, as well as across the whole of the UK and internationally. Although many of these challenges have been shared, some appear distinctive and thus a case can be made that teachers and teaching in England should be regarded as somewhat of an outlier compared to many other nations across mainland Europe and further afield (e.g. Ball, 2018; Beauchamp et al., 2015; Day, 2017). An accumulation of what could be perceived as hostile policy approaches (e.g. Gunter, 2023; Lupton & Hayes, 2021), paradoxically framed as de-regulation yet at the same time increasing central government control over multiple aspects of teachers' worlds and work (e.g. Clarke, 2022; Mutton et al., 2017), was rapidly gaining speed and effect by 2018-2019. Discontent amongst some of the teaching body was already reflected in difficulties related to the retention of teachers, and perhaps even in emerging challenges of recruiting (Department for Education, 2019b).

From early 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated effects - lockdowns, school closures and changes to curriculum and assessment for all children and young people in education - created seismic shifts and turbulence for teachers. Much has been written elsewhere about the effects of the pandemic on students' learning, progress, engagement with schooling and mental health (Farquharson et al., 2022; Twist et al., 2022) as well as about the personal and professional impacts on teachers who were positioned initially as 'front-line' or 'key workers', working hard to maintain in-person and distance learning for their students (Kim & Asbury, 2020b; Worth & Brande, 2021). However, initial celebration and praise of teachers' work and efforts during the early part of the pandemic, which appeared to represent a step-change from the preceding 'bad press' that had been normalised in a great deal of print and social media, did not last.

During the first few weeks of the pandemic response, March - May 2020, the vast majority of students were 'home-schooled', with lessons delivered online where possible and teachers physically delivering work, resources and, at times, food, to their students' homes. With families isolated in their homes and many parents attempting to combine their own remote working with supporting their children in schooling, appreciation of teachers' workloads and professional commitments came suddenly to the fore. In both social media and print media teachers were initially described as 'heroes' (Gibbons, 2020) and 'astonishing' (Johnson, 2021), with analysis of Twitter during the early weeks of lockdown demonstrating both a high level of praise for teachers, along with parents sharing challenges of home-

schooling (Ewing & Vu, 2021). But this sudden shift in the public perception of teachers and teachers' work was short-lived. In England, announcements of a staggered 're-opening' of schools were made in late May 2020, with responses from the National Education Union raising significant concerns about the safety of staff and students. Print and social media rapidly shifted position on teachers again, now framing them as 'lazy' and 'scaremongers', with prominent voices fuelling negative narratives and building a widely-believed suggestion that schools had been closed for weeks and that teachers were reluctant to go back to work (Kim & Asbury, 2020a).

From September 2020, as most students returned to schools, teachers struggled with widespread media concerns about the impact of the spring and summer closures on students' learning, progress and mental health, and further negative press was fuelled by the UK government's decision to close schools once more from January – March 2021, in response to rapidly rising infection and death rates attributed to the Covid-19 virus. Although evidence gathered later was to show that restricting school attendance and stringent social distancing measures put in place by schools *were* effective in reducing Covid-19 transmission and hospitalisation in children and young people (Hume et al., 2023), public feeling and media messaging at the time was once more that 'work-shy' teachers were to blame for school closures, rather than it being government agents who made such decisions. Perhaps most telling of public perception at the time is a sequence of leaked WhatsApp messages between then Education Secretary of State Gavin Williamson and then Health Secretary of State Matt Hancock, in which it was claimed that teachers 'really really do just hate work' and the teaching unions were described as 'a bunch of absolute arses' (Elgot, 2023).

The impact of Covid-19 on teachers, as well as their students, did not suddenly abate when preventative measures and school restrictions were lifted as part of the UK government's plan to 'leave lockdown' between March and July 2021. Although life seemed to have returned to relative normality by September 2021, repercussions continued to ripple through personal and professional experiences of teachers in England. Teacher turnover and retention rates, which had stabilised during the pandemic, had returned to pre-pandemic levels by summer 2022 and recruitment of trainee teachers, which had surged during the pandemic, experienced a dramatic drop (Worth & Faulkner-Ellis, 2022). By early 2023, major concerns about a growing recruitment crisis were reported, including predictions that secondary teacher education was on track to recruit less than 50% of its target, and primary teacher education set to recruit only 95% of its target, an all-time low (McLean et al., 2023).

Winter 2022 - Spring/Summer 2023 has heralded unprecedented strike action from teachers and teaching assistants, along with swathes of other public sector workers including train drivers, nurses, junior doctors, refuse collectors, civil servants and the like. It is notable that many people in these

fields were celebrated and championed during the early part of the pandemic as 'key-workers' who put themselves at risk on the 'front-line' to keep the nation going. But in recent weeks and months teachers taking strike action have been called out in certain parts of print and social media for creating 'agony' and 'chaos' for parents and students (Singh, 2023), although recent polling suggests that 48% of the general population and 60% of parents *do* support teachers' ongoing strike action (Pedley et al., 2023). What is clear, at this time of writing, is that to be a teacher in England is to operate within a particularly challenging and conflicted field. But this is not just related to recent experiences through the pandemic and ongoing industrial action; the policy and political dimensions affecting teachers' worlds and work have been a contested space in England for many years. For the purpose of this research project, in what follows I will set out some aspects of the local and national context of teachers and teaching, considering the relationship between teachers and teacher education. I will also highlight some of the consequences of the policy and political landscape in relation to common social and cultural conceptualisations of teachers' professional identity[ies]. Finally, I will present an outline of the structure and content of the thesis

1.1 Policy context

As a former teacher and a current teacher educator I have lived experience of some of the challenging spaces in which teachers' professional identities are formed and reformed. In the English context, educational policy making, including directions for initial teacher training/education (ITTE[1]) and continuing professional development for teachers (CPD), is shaped by national politics and tightly controlled by the centre through the Department for Education (DfE) and the national inspection body, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). Since 2019, centralisation and standardisation of ITTE and CPD in England have intensified, through the implementation of a centrally written and monitored curriculum for all ITTE programmes (known as the Core Content Framework or CCF[2]), a process of centrally co-ordinated and approved 'accreditation' for future ITTE providers, a standard two-year career entry programme of CPD (known

[1] In England, both Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) are used by the DfE, Ofsted and providers. Some would argue that the terms training and different are different but not mutually exclusive (Chitty, 2009). Therefore, I use the term ITTE (Initial teacher Training and Education) throughout this thesis.

[2] 'The initial teacher training (ITT) core content framework defines in detail the minimum entitlement of all trainee teachers. Drawing on the best available evidence, it sets out the content that ITT providers and their partnerships must draw upon when designing and delivering their ITT programmes' (Department for Education, 2019d). See Initial teacher training (ITT): core content framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

as the Early Career Framework or ECF[3]) and an increasing number of centrally designed CPD programmes for teachers at all stages of their careers, known as National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)[4].

The suggestion that teacher education should be circumscribed by government carries with it implicit (and at times explicit) criticism of university-based teacher education (e.g. Cochran-Smith et al., 2018; Mutton et al., 2021). Of issue with this kind of policy turn is the way in which common cultural and social narratives of a teacher's role become aligned with those of an 'expert technician', which significantly narrows understanding of the field of teachers' work (Skinner et al., 2021). In England in particular, current policies for teaching and teacher education are perceived by some as overtly regulatory in terms of defining the scope of teachers' work and, as such, dampen potential for teachers' engagement with broad intellectual work and critical research (e.g. Beckett, 2020; Mockler, 2022b).

Yet, at the same time, the commitment to establish and support teachers' research activity has a long history in England as well as internationally. It has been suggested that teachers' engagement in critical scholarship and research activity can encourage action and reflection which serves a variety of interests and purposes, from solving individual and local problems through to articulating with other interventions and wider social movements (Mayer & Mills, 2021; Pantić & Florian, 2015). However, this can be problematic given extant teacher education policies in England which seem grounded in a 'what works' agenda (Biesta, 2017). Lingard and Renshaw (2010) highlight the contradiction in the terms of teaching as a 'research-based profession' and as an 'evidence-based profession'. In England, 'evidence-based' is favoured by policymakers as indicated in a focus on medical models, randomised control trials (RCTs) and systematic literature reviews (Wrigley, 2018) carried out and published by select agencies. As a result, teachers can be positioned as passive in relation to research: as merely receivers and implementers of evidence-informed practices from select research bodies, such as the

[3] 'The early career framework sets out what early career teachers are entitled to learn about and learn how to do when they start their careers. It underpins a new entitlement for 2 years of professional development designed to help early career teachers develop their practice, knowledge and working habits.' (Department for Education, 2019a). See Early career framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[4] 'A reformed suite of NPQs is now available which have been developed in collaboration with the sector and are informed by the best available research and evidence. NPQs are designed to provide training and support for teachers and school leaders at all levels and deliver improved outcomes for young people.' (Department for Education, 2022). There are four leadership NPQs and four NPQs for teachers in specialist areas of teaching practice. The subject, content and curriculum of each NPQ is developed by the DfE in collaboration with select external partners. See National professional qualifications (NPQs) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)[5]. Further issues are raised around centrally selected and mandated evidence bases which have been critiqued for the ways in which they tend to sustain and reproduce narrow measures of educational quality, school effectiveness and school improvement (Biesta, 2017, 2010; Thrupp, 1999; Wrigley, 2016). Russell and Korthagen (1995) portray this as attempting to 'strive for certainty' (p.5), which they claim is indicative of a highly regulated system where answers are privileged over questions.

In the current context in England, further challenges for teachers who wish to pursue active research can be seen in the way that financial support from government agencies has been withdrawn for those who wish to engage in Master's level qualifications at universities[6]. From 2021 there has also been a significant shift to providing fully-funded NPQs for teachers, designated and written by the DfE and 'delivered' by select providers. Not only is this shift seen by some as on overt move to side-line the role of universities further in all areas of teacher education, but a preoccupation with coherence and compliance to CPD mandated by government bodies is described as eroding the democracy of teacher professionalism (Biesta, 2017; Campbell et al., 2017; Zeichner et al., 2015).

1.2 Local and personal context

It is within this political and policy context that I set out to investigate the experiences of a select group of teachers as they pursued a part-time Master's in Education programme. The empirical work was based at the university where I work, which is a significant provider of ITTE and CPD for primary and secondary teachers in the north of England. During the course of this research project I was initially a Senior Lecturer in the faculty where the Master's in Education programme sits and subsequently, after data collection had been completed, an Interim Head of School. Although I had delivered guest sessions on the Master's in Education programme and was a Master's dissertation supervisor, I had not had any contact with the cohort from which I sought to draw my participant group before the start of this research project. The first time I met the cohort was when I was invited by the Master's

[5] 'The Education Endowment Foundation is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. We do this by supporting schools to improve teaching and learning through better use of evidence' (Education Endowment Foundation: About Us, n.d.). The EEF publishes open-access research for schools in the UK through its 'Teaching and Learning Toolkit' and works in partnership with a number of research schools and other select organisations in the education sector.

[6] A fully-funded Master's programme specifically for teachers was launched in 2008 and withdrawn from 2010 (see Thomas, 2017). Currently, in England, postgraduate loans are available for teachers, among others, who wish to pursue full- or part-time Master's and/or Doctoral level study. Loans are available through application to Student Finance England and are repayable following completion of a course, with interest rates for Postgraduate loans currently at 7.1%.

programme leader to a dissertation presentation session, in September 2019, as detailed in the methodology and research design chapter. I had opportunity to introduce myself and the research project to the cohort, as well as to view the cohort's dissertation research proposals and have informal discussions with individuals who were interested in joining my participant group. This meant that, from the very beginning of this project, I seemed to position myself 'in-between': simultaneously an insider and outsider as researcher. This position is considered in further depth in the methodology and research design chapter.

Perhaps what came to be most influential in relation to my position throughout this research project was both my previous experience as a teacher engaged in part-time Master's study as well as what I – and some participants - came to consider as ongoing parallel experiences with the participant group. My own journey throughout this research project of becoming, being and belonging as a teacher educator academic and legitimate researcher is, in some ways, entangled with participants' experiences and relationships with myself as researcher in this study. As explored in the discussion chapters, this relationship was a valuable part of this study but also added another facet of uniqueness in terms of the situatedness and outcomes of the research.

I came to this research project with a keen awareness from my own personal and professional experience of some of the challenges for teachers – and teacher educators – who opt to engage in higher degrees as well as with critical and intellectual research more broadly. Along with other regional providers of ITTE and CPD, the university at which this research is located has reported concerns related to difficulties in recruiting to target across all undergraduate and postgraduate ITTE programmes, but has also experienced a particularly persistent downwards trend in recruitment, retention and completion of teachers on part-time post-graduate taught courses. As will be explored in greater depth in the literature review, the complex interplay between multiple policy and political dynamics in England have significant implications for teachers and teacher educators in the ways in which they conceptualise themselves and their roles. Potentially a somewhat volatile space, it is within these national and local policy frameworks and personal and professional lived experiences that this research project is embedded.

1.3 Chapter overviews

In this introduction, I have set out some of the context of this thesis. I have described, at a national level, some of the most pressing issues which teachers have faced in recent years which could be considered to have had significant influence on their personal and professional experiences. Some of the policy directions undertaken by consecutive UK Conservative-majority governments have been

spotlighted, along with some of the common narratives about public perceptions of teachers and their work that have featured in print and social media. It is suggested that interaction between this policy and media landscape influences common social and cultural conceptualisations of teachers' professional identity[ies], value and worth. These areas will be explored in further detail in the literature review, which will then establish a case for the research questions posed and selected methodological approaches enacted within this research project. An overview of each of the subsequent chapters of this thesis is presented below.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature review begins with a more detailed presentation of the current policy landscape for ITTE and teachers' CPD in England and key policy movements from the DfE and Ofsted that have had significant influence in recent years. Through a lens of critical policy analysis (Ball, 1993, 1997), a macro-analysis of key policy decisions along with pertinent issues related to policy implementation and impact is detailed. I am influenced by Lupton and Hayes (2021) and Gunter (2023) in exploring how education policy space in England has become, paradoxically, more crowded yet more dispersed. I describe the complex and constantly evolving stage of multiple new and persistent actors all with varying degrees of influence over education ministers and policy-makers.

While considering the peculiarities of the English context, some international comparisons are made which highlight the way in which the teaching profession in England may be considered by some to be an outlier, particularly as benchmarked against ITTE and CPD provision in Europe. Influenced by the work of Day (2017) I consider the ways in which the worlds of teachers' work and lives can be seen as complex, multi-faceted and interrelated. This brings me to interrogate existing research literature in relation to the policies and professional frameworks in England set out in the introduction and how these come to influence the formation and reformation of teachers' identity[ies]. A key aspect to consider is related to notions of social justice and the ways in which teaching is often cited as a values-oriented enterprise: teaching as a 'moral imperative' or views of teaching as a 'common good' (Hansot & Tyack, 1982) are highlighted as significant in teachers' construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of themselves as professionals (Younger, 2004; Flores & Day, 2006). This brings me to consider identity theory as a key underpinning schema for this thesis.

A key concept of identity theory explored is a common view that an individual's identity is neither a singular nor a fixed attribute of that person. There seems to be a significant relational aspect in constructs of identity formation and reformation: as cultural forms and personal relationships continuously shift, identities as a manifestation of relationships between culture, society and self are similarly fluid and somewhat ethereal. I draw from the work of Holland et al. (1998) who describe a

conceptual conundrum in the study of identity, as an individual is considered to be both the producer and the product of their relationship between culture, society and self. Utilising the work of two key theorists, Bakhtin and Vygotsky, I highlight how formation and reformation of teachers' identity[ies] involves a subtle interplay between socio-constructivist and socio-cultural positions: the individual in the society.

Having established my theoretical understanding of identity[ies] in relation to teachers' worlds and work, I employ the work of Noffke (1997) who defines three key dimensions of teachers' work with research as personal, professional and political. I present these three dimensions in relation to teachers' worlds and work, considering cognitive and affective influences, issues of trust, agency and autonomy and democratic ideals. This then brings me to consider teachers as researchers in order to understand current evidence and thinking on how teachers' engagement in research could be defined through a lens of identity[ies]. In the English context, I relate back to policy directions exposed in the introduction to build a picture of how teachers are positioned in relation to research. I then consider current literature which examines teachers' motivations for engaging in and with research, as well as the influence of social media and eminent policy actors who influence the field of education research.

The conclusion of the literature review brings attention to the way in which teachers who engage in critical research work may encounter 'epistemic injustice' (Fricker, 2007) alongside potential tensions and conflicts that may occur when intellectual and scholarly activity is in contrast with common school cultures where teachers are not conceptualised as learners (Edwards, 2002). However, what is not clear from existing literature is the nature of lived experiences of teachers who choose to engage in critical research work (such as Master's level dissertation projects) or the impact that this has on their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher. This gap leads on to the subsequent research questions and design established in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Design

In this chapter, I present the research questions, the aims and subsequent methods chosen, and the research decisions that were made. The key aim of this empirical research was to collate teachers' descriptions of their experiences as a teacher and a researcher during their Master's-level dissertation. It was my intention to build rich narratives which shed light on the cognitive and affective aspects of each participant's identity[ies] as teacher and researcher and any transition[s] or [re]formation of identity[ies] that they experienced. In order to do so, I lay out a conceptual framework influenced significantly by the work of Hattie (2004) who framed self-concept using the metaphor of a rope. Of particular relevance in this metaphor is the maxim of Wittgenstein (1958), who states that the

strength of the rope 'lies not in one fibre running throughout its length, but in the overlapping of many fibres' (Section 67). Further influenced by the work of Holland et al. (1998) and Noffke (1997), I explain the construction of a 'teacher-researcher identity[ies] rope model', which uses the rope metaphor to discern particular strands, yarns and fibres of identity[ies] for scrutiny in the empirical research.

I subsequently draw from Engeström's (2004) concept of 'knotworking', whereby actors map, translate and rearticulate their relational positions (or identity[ies]) across an organisational 'knot'. In Engeström's terms, actors' co-configuration of their position[s] within a figured world relies on discourse and narrative. This brought me to consider narrative methodologies as an integral part of my research design.

Having established a conceptual framework, in this chapter I then explore my ontological and epistemological assumptions, establishing the empirical research project within a qualitative, embedded case-study paradigm. In this embedded case study, each individual participant is considered as a 'sub-unit' and subsequent data analysis occurs within and across these sub-units. I articulate the decision-making process related to narrative approaches and the use of semi-structured interview, video diaries and member check interviews. I set out the timeline of data collected and my subsequent stages of analysis and interpretation. Influenced by Ricœur's (1980) working hypothesis of narrativity and temporality as closely related, I set out my understanding of the significance of the interaction of episodic and configurational dimensions of each participants' narrative, as well as the configuration of each individual narrative as a whole.

Finally, I indicate pertinent ethical issues as related to the empirical work and how these were addressed throughout the project.

Chapter Four: Findings from Case Study One, Karen

This chapter begins with a brief introduction which establishes the analytic framework for presenting findings from each sub-unit of the embedded case study. It begins with a visual representation of the configurational dimension of Karen's experiences as teacher and researcher to provide a context for the narrative analysis that follows.

In 'the beginning', Karen's initial identity[ies] as teacher and researcher are exposed. We learn how Karen is an experienced teacher and head teacher, having been in the profession for over 40 years. In her current role she is engaged as a school improvement advisor, supporting over ten primary schools in the local city area. We hear how Karen had always wanted to engage in a higher degree but felt that she could not give the time to additional study due to her professional commitments. Of significance

at this starting point seems to be Karen's assumptions that the critical intellectual and research work in her Master's study are not related to her world and work as a teacher.

In what follows, four video diary entries from Karen are scrutinised, along with a semi-structured member check interview and 12+ month semi-structured follow-up interview. At each of these episodic points insights into Karen's identity[ies] as teacher and researcher are uncovered. We see how Karen's conceptualisation of herself as a researcher developed over the course of her dissertation, and how it was externally validated and secured after publication of a research article in a professional magazine. Experiences of isolation as both a teacher and research are exposed, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. Karen's frustrations at the lack of engagement with research among those in the teaching profession, and at the poor CPD opportunities for experienced teachers, are featured at multiple points. When we reach 'the end' of Karen's journey in this research project, we see how she had come to locate herself and others in an area of tension between accountability agendas and the need to engage in critical intellectual research, work which could potentially lead to less compliance and more challenging of the status quo in the profession.

Chapter Five: Findings from Case Study Two, Nigel

This chapter begins with an introduction to the second research participant, Nigel, who is a secondary school teacher and vice-principal of a large, inner-city academy. Unlike Karen, Nigel had not been committed to teaching as a choice of profession: he had entered teaching with the intention of completing two years and then applying to become an educational psychologist. However, 17 years later, Nigel articulates significant social justice drivers and a strong desire to make a difference for his students. He had always wanted to engage in Master's level study but had only just found himself in a position where he felt he could make the time commitment. Part of his motivation to begin study was his perception that a higher-level degree would help his future career progression. Yet, in the beginning, Nigel explains how research is not valued at the school where currently works and how there has been little support from his senior leaders in his study so far. There are indications that Nigel sees the work of his Master's degree as very distinct from his daily work in school.

For Nigel, three video diary entries are scrutinised, followed by a semi-structured member check interview and a 12+ month semi-structured follow-up interview. In the episodic analysis, key tensions for Nigel frequently arise related to self-doubt in his skill and ability as a 'credible' researcher. This seems to be exacerbated by his isolation from the Master's research community during the Covid-19 pandemic and by frustration at his perceived lack of time to work on his dissertation due to work commitments. In all episodes Nigel presented strong affective yarns, frequently referring to intense

feelings of frustration, surprise, annoyance and, eventually, pride as a researcher. When we reach 'the end' of Nigel's journey we hear how he had come to feel more confident and secure in his researcher identity[ies] and how he had now begun an EdD to continue his research journey. Although he still perceived there to be a gap between the world of school and the world of universities, his role as an advocate for other teachers to engage in critical research had developed.

Chapter Six: Findings from Case Study Three, Jane

In this chapter we are introduced to Jane, the final research participant. Jane had been teaching for six years after a career change in mid-life. She had previously owned her own business, but after selling this completed an access to education programme and then a four-year B.Ed in primary education. At the beginning, we hear Jane describe her difficulties in mainstream education as a young person and her disenfranchisement from education at the ages of 15 and 16, following significant illness and absence from school. She emphasised how her return to education had significantly impacted on her self-concept and her decision to begin Master's study was driven by both personal and professional reasons. Although at this point Jane did not feel that she was a researcher, she explained her hopes of her dissertation having a significant impact on her school and the way she worked with colleagues.

For Jane, three video diaries are scrutinised followed by a semi-structured member check interview and a 12+ month semi-structured follow-up interview. At each of these episodic points Jane engaged in highly emotional discussions about herself as a researcher and how she experienced tensions and conflicts with colleagues as she sought to embed research into school policies and practices. Perhaps this is unsurprising given that the focus of Jane's dissertation was on the social, emotional and mental health of primary pupils; even more significant given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the end of the research journey, we hear Jane discuss how she felt empowered to lead research and to challenge colleagues who focus on data and attainment outcomes rather than considering the whole child in their roles as teachers. We see how her researcher identity had flourished and how, 15 months after submitting her dissertation, she had completed an NPQH qualification and expressed desire to continue into a doctorate in the future.

Chapter Seven: Discussion of Episodic Dimensions

In the first of two discussion chapters, I return to the main research question and present an analytic framework which is utilised to discuss findings and outcomes across the embedded case study as a whole. The main body of this chapter focuses on analysis of episodic dimensions, taking a thematic approach to explore some of the experiences shared by two or more participants in relation to personal, professional and political aspects of their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher. Some of

these themes included participants' desire to complete a higher degree but, in the cases of Karen and Nigel, putting off beginning study due to a perceived lack of time in relation to their teaching role. This is not uncommon in the teaching profession: a great deal of literature exists which charts difficulties for teachers in taking time to engage in critical reflective and reflexive work (e.g. Hoyle, 2009; Wilson, 2015). This perception of lack of time for intellectual work is interrogated in relation to notions of fast-schooling (Lewis & Hogan, 2019) and so-called 'silver bullet solutions' to complex educational dilemmas (e.g. Biesta, 2010; Podesta & Hoath, 2020). Frequent discussions in video diaries from all three participants emphasised the issue of time, which indicated how they often perceived their research work to be totally separated from their teacher work.

Another significant theme explored is participants' motivations for beginning and sustaining their Master's degrees, along with their choice of dissertation topics, all of which are related to social justice interests. All participants described their work with pupils, families and communities who experienced significant levels of poverty and disadvantage and their desire to 'make a difference' in their schools and beyond, by translating and mobilising outcomes from their dissertations. Much of the literature presented suggests that many teachers experience social justice motivations for entering the profession (e.g. Flores & Day, 2006; Younger et al., 2004) but for this select group we explore how their experience through Master's level research brought about more politicised and critical discourses in their understanding of social justice and educational policy implementation. This intersection between their developing researcher identity[ies] and school cultures and reforms became a particularly significant area for further analysis.

Chapter Eight: Discussion of Configurational Dimensions

In this chapter, analysis of the whole-case configurational dimension is presented. Having explored and exposed particularly significant and shared episodes in time of each participants' narrative, analysis of configurational dimensions allowed some 'grasping together' (Ricœur, 1980, p.178) to elicit patterns as well as contradictions in and between the episodes of the three narratives. Inspired by the words of Karen, this analysis is presented as occurring in three phases: experiences of becoming, being and belonging as a researcher AND teacher. One prominent shared experience is related to each participant's commitment to teaching as a research-engaged profession, along with changing conceptualisations of what this means. Considering their engagement in a taught Master's degree programme, it is unsurprising that all three participants indicated their commitment to research-informed practice as a teacher. What is noteworthy, however, is how they all experienced some transition from considering their individual teacher identity[ies] as 'research-informed' to advocating, as researchers, for all teachers to be engaged in critical and intellectual research activity. This relates

to their emerging commitment and articulation of a need for all teachers to understand socially just pedagogies and practices, as well as to the way in which they each describe moments of challenging others' compliance with external mandates. Some conclusions are drawn about how these actions are underpinned by more established researcher identity[ies] for these teachers at the end of their journey in this research project.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion and Next Steps

In this final chapter a summary of key findings is presented in relation to the research questions posed. A number of recommendations are made for future policies and practices at both a local (university) and macro level. Local recommendations and commitments to action include developing reflexive conversations with teachers/supervisors in the Master's in Education programme at pertinent points during their dissertation study; establishing a more formal 'community of practice' to support teachers throughout their Master's level study; re-configuring the Master's in Education part-time route to make it more accessible to teachers working full-time; and developing critical research and enquiry models that are accessible to teachers through CPD and short-courses in partnership with school trusts/alliances in the local region.

More broadly, recommendations are made around challenging the current direction of teacher education policy making and implementation in England. Opportunities to publish and present the work of this thesis are outlined along with plans for future research, which includes some international comparative work in the field of initial and continuing teacher education between England and other European countries.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In the first chapter, we uncovered some of the complexities and challenges related to teachers' (and teacher educators') work in England. Some key policy frameworks, conjoined with public perceptions and conceptualisations of teachers and teachers' work, were highlighted. In this literature review it is now my intention to examine in greater depth existing research literature in relation to education policy, public discourse and professional frameworks in England, all of which establish parameters for teachers' work, including the ways in which forms of initial teacher training/education (ITTE) and continuing professional development (CPD) may influence common conceptualisations of teachers' identity[ies]. I then highlight some significant aspects of socio-cultural theories of identity some dimensions which may be significant in relation to understanding [re]formation of the multiple strands of teachers' identity[ies]. Finally, I consider current paradigms of teachers' engagement with educational research and knowledge, including the potential for teachers to engage in forms of intellectual and critical research activity which may be related to professional learning at Master's level. In conclusion, I reflect on some of the challenges that teachers may face when they undertake Master's level study and become actively engaged in research.

2.1 Teachers' work in England

International reports into schooling and educational outcomes suggest that it is teachers who make more difference in terms of variation in pupils' educational attainment than any other school factor (e.g. Gu et al., 2018; Musset, 2010; Siraj, 2019). As a result, an assumption that teacher quality is a causal factor of student outcomes has prompted rapid change in ITTE and CPD teacher education policies in England, as in other Anglosphere nations such as the US and Australia (Cochran-Smith, 2021; Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020; Gore & Rosser, 2020). However, many of the changes actioned by policymakers in England have been critiqued as lacking in rich understanding of teachers' work and the ways in which this understanding should underpin the development of effective educational policies (Darling-Hammond, 2021; Mutton et al., 2017; Smith, 2021). This critique also encompasses a perceived lack of consistency in defining teaching and teacher quality beyond auditing teachers' actions against a set pf pre-determined, performative 'standards' (Mockler, 2022b). As Darling-Hammond (2021) points out, in the highest performing education systems globally, including Finland, Shanghai (China) and Singapore, teaching quality frameworks are evolving and recognise teachers' professional work as rooted in a wide-ranging and intellectual knowledge base which combines an understanding of content, pedagogy and context. Teachers working within these frameworks are

encouraged to engage in ongoing research and inquiry as a means of developing knowledge that is at the core of their professional practice. Yet this description portrays a very different context to that within which teachers in England find themselves living and working.

It is important to acknowledge that teachers' positioning in England – socially, culturally and politically – is informed and influenced by a complex interplay between multiple dimensions (e.g. Day, 2017; Lindvall & Ryve, 2019a). This complexity is acknowledged later in this literature review through considering the influence of identity theory in determining how teachers themselves conceptualise their world and their work. But, as we saw in the Introduction chapter, one key influence to be considered is the evolution and enactment of policy[ies] in initial and continuing teacher education which seemingly set particular expectations of what is - and *is not* – accepted practice for teachers.

Much has been said in recent years concerning continuous and dynamic change across education policy frameworks in England and beyond. In the English context, the former Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition (2010 – 2015) and the current Conservative governments' (2015-present) general direction in schooling and teacher education policies are considered by some to be influenced more by political ideology than by balanced empirical evidence (Ball, 2018; Gunter, 2023; Lupton & Hayes, 2021). As a result, teachers operate in a culture of increased – and increasing - accountability and measurement against quality standards. Of concern is how this kind of culture positions teachers as 'expert technicians', a process which narrows perceptions of the scope of teachers' work, yet at the same time holds them accountable for all educational outcomes (Reay, 2022; Skinner et al., 2021). At this juncture, then, it is useful to consider the influence of the current policy climate in England which establishes parameters for teachers' broad spectrum of work.

2.2 The policy environment in England

Studies involving policy in the UK tend to be informed by tools from policy sociology. For example, Stephen Ball's work (e.g. 1990, 1993, 2013) draws on the work of Foucault and his examination of power dynamics. Ball considers policy as a process rather than as a fixed text; something that is 'ongoing, interactional and unstable' (Ball, 2013, p.8) rather than a fixed, pre-determined outcome. Hence, we should consider that policy is *produced* in complex ways, but also *produces* in multiple, and at times contradictory, ways. Of particular relevance here is dialogue and discourse and the ways in which particular understandings and conceptualisations – in this case of teachers and teaching – are legitimised, evidenced and warranted through publication and enactment of policies (Hyatt, 2013). As Ball et al. (2012, p.138) tell us, 'primary discourses of policy… produce particular kinds of teacher and student subjects – good teachers and good students'. Thus, critical analysis of policy should consider

the subjection of actors named and represented within policy at all stages of the dynamic policy cycle, in order to expose how policy makes 'particular sets of ideas obvious, common sense and 'true'' (Ball, 2013, pp.6-7).

The work of Helen Gunter (e.g. 2011, 2018, 2023) extends Ball's approach to add political sociology to policy work. She posits that education policy making in England is distinctly embedded in 'claimocracy', or rule by assertion. She draws on the work of Bourdieu and Arendt to deconstruct policy cycles both sociologically and politically. An Arendtian approach makes a distinction between 'whatness', an individual's labelled and pre-determined identity[ies] established in policy discourse, and 'whoness', an individual's unique identity[ies] revealed in relationships and dialogue with others. In the case of education policy, such a distinction draws attention to the potential for conflict and tension between a teacher's 'whatness' and 'whoness', or differences in the way public conceptualisations of teachers and teachers' work are shaped by policy claims and assertions and the lived realities experienced by teachers. Gunter (2023) explains that adding a Bourdieusian lens then helps us to see social, cultural and symbolic barriers to participation for particular individuals related to 'who' and 'what' their identity[ies] designate them to be. Thus, a combination of both approaches gives rise to critical policy reading in which the researcher takes account of vantage points and viewpoints, regimes of practice, relationships, and intellectual histories (Gunter, 2023).

Influenced by the work of Ball and Gunter, amongst others, it is my intention to examine some key policies that have been consulted on and implemented in relation to ITTE and CPD for teachers. It should be acknowledge that this is not a full critical policy analysis, but rather an excursion into select policies, which help us to understand how each policy, individually and cumulatively, has established and re-inscribed 'regimes of truth' (Bradbury, 2020, p.244) about who and what teachers are, and which therefore should be considered to have potential for influencing [re]formation of teachers' identity[ies] and public perceptions of teachers and teachers' work. Taking account of political influences on education policy making in England, and what some refer to as a 'Gibbian' period in recent years, distinguished as a relentless pursuit of traditional and didactic schooling (Clarke, 2020), I have selected particularly influential policies from 2010 – 2023. This time period spans the previous Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition UK Government and current Conservative majority UK Government. That is not to say that previous policies pre-2010 have not been influential in shaping teachers' identity[ies] and public perceptions of teachers, but the selected time-span does acknowledge that a shift from Labour to Conservative control of power in 2010 foresaw a significant step-change in education policy directions. As will be shown in the review of policies and associated literature, critiques of education policy-making and policy outcomes have a long history, and there are

common themes related to power dynamics, legitimacy, evidence and warranty of policy that straddle pre- and post- the 2010 starting point chosen for this review.

2.2.1 Policy on Initial Teacher Training/Education (ITTE)

Critiques of ITTE policy and practices in England over several decades have highlighted increasing concern with 'unilateral government intervention of a quite unprecedented kind' (Hagger & McIntyre, 2000, p.ix), which has seen the system of teacher education in England move increasingly towards central control (e.g. Lupton & Hayes, 2021; Tatto et al., 2018). This concern is augured by policy and practice directions from 2010 onwards, which according to some commentators demonstrate a UK government intention to side-line 'the university project' in teacher education (Furlong, 2013a; Whitty, 2014). What many agree on, is that the period of ITTE policy and reform from 2010 to the present has been characterised by marketisation leading to complexity and competition in increasingly diverse ITTE routes for new teachers (Menter et al., 2019) along with the framing of teacher education as a 'policy problem' (Burn & Menter, 2021). Mutton et al. (2021) assert that the foundations for subsequent ITTE policy reform were constructed in the 2010 White paper, 'The Importance of Teaching' (Department for Education, 2010). As they explain, although the period pre-2010 had seen movement in ITTE away from universities and towards schools, the drive of the 2010 White Paper and subsequent reforms were far more radical in an explicit desire to see more than half of ITTE provision led by schools. Here we see a manifestation of the 'practice turn' (Cochran-Smith, 2016), exemplified in then Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove's assertion that, 'Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman' (Gove, 2010). Indeed, a common theme identifiable in the 2010 White Paper is not just the focus on improving teaching quality as a panacea to improving educational outcomes for all, but a continuous suggestion that both new and experienced teachers learn best from other teachers and professionals. In repeated reference to 'the best education systems', it is asserted that in England,

> Too little teacher training takes place on the job, and too much professional development involves compliance with bureaucratic initiatives rather than working with other teachers to develop effective practice (Department for Education, 2010, p.94).

Subsequent to the 2010 White Paper, further reforms were established to address the structure and practicalities of the ITTE 'market' across an increasingly diverse number of providers. Impacts of these reforms was, to an extent, successful in shifting numbers of student teachers as desired by the UK government. In 2014, school-led providers were allocated 44% of ITTE places; by 2022 school-led

provision now accounted for 56% of ITTE students[7]. While the first few years following the 2010 White Paper were marked by reform and restructure of the system of ITTE, the emphasis then shifted to the quality and content of ITTE provision following an independent review led by Sir Andrew Carter (Carter, 2015). The introduction of 'The Teachers' Standards' (Department for Education, 2011) had already been intended to provide a clearer articulation and a shared understanding of teachers' work and professional responsibilities and attributes. However, one key conclusion of the Carter Review was concern with lack of consistency in the structure, content, delivery and assessment of ITTE provision across the wide range of existing providers. The Carter Review, as a whole, was characterised by an emphasis on accountability and measurement in relation to teacher 'quality', and presented to education ministers and policy-makers a seemingly urgent need to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in ITTE (Mutton et al., 2017).

The recommendations of the Carter Review resulted in unprecedented changes in the ITTE system in England. The Early Career Framework (ECF) (Department for Education, 2019a) was introduced, a mandated curriculum for all new teachers in the first two years of the professions, delivered by a select six national providers. The ECF appeared to strengthen the role of schools in accrediting early career teachers' professional learning and judging their 'quality' after their first year in teaching. This standardised offer was also designed to improve consistency and coherence of early teachers' professional development and to secure guaranteed 'off the job', weekly training sessions, with the intention of reducing new teacher attrition. At the same time, the introduction of the Core Content Framework (CCF) (Department for Education, 2019d), a mandated curriculum for all ITTE providers, was implemented, despite contestations from many established providers who raised concerns about academic freedoms in their ITTE curricula (Knight, 2021; Mayer & Mills, 2021). Taken together, this set of policies implies a desire by government in England to intervene to such an extent in teachers' training/education that it exerts not only greater influence but control over the form and content of all training/education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2018; Furlong et al., 2011; Menter et al., 2019).

More recently, the ITT Market Review (Department for Education, 2021) set in motion four key stated aims for further reform across national ITTE in England, intended to: develop an evidence-based curriculum; to support student teachers to understand and apply these curriculum materials; to have a controlled and cumulative curriculum; and to introduce a condition of accreditation, so that no institution can provide ITTE without meeting the first three conditions (Sims, 2021). The response to

[7] Data available at Initial Teacher Training Census, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

the review and subsequent rounds of submission for accreditation for new and existing providers was largely negative, with the Chief Executive of the Russell Group universities highlighting serious concerns around disruption to ITTE, damaging relationships with universities as large providers of ITTE, and potential disruption to teacher supply across England (Bradshaw, 2021). While many similar responses to the Market Review have been garnered since the announcement (e.g. Knight, 2021; Murtagh & Rushton, 2023; Sims, 2021), of importance here is the impact on perceptions of teachers and teachers' work that comes from such seismic changes to ITTE.

The underpinning ideology of the ITT Market review consolidates notions that university involvement in ITTE is problematic, with too much emphasis on theory at the expense of practice (Mutton et al., 2021). But at the same time, concerns have also been raised about a highly prescriptive and restrictive approach to the curriculum for providers, including a homogenous approach to both university-led and school-led aspects of training. Burn and Mutton (2013) highlight how the fundamentals of ITTE programmes should enable student and beginning teachers to draw on all available sources of information and knowledge as they seek to make sense of their own classroom interactions and experiences. The process by which this happens has been conceptualised in various ways, including 'practical theorising' (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006; McIntyre, 1995) and 'research-informed clinical practice' (Burn & Mutton, 2015). Although each of these conceptualisations varies, a common theme is that they all 'convey the necessity of bringing research-based understandings of teaching and learning into dialogue with the professional understandings of experienced classroom teachers' (Burn & Mutton, 2013, p.3). Central to this common theme is partnership and collaboration between schools and universities and how these partnerships are valuable and are valued by stakeholders well beyond the boundaries of ITTE programmes (Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Evans et al., 2017; Mutton et al., 2018).

2.2.2 Policy on Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The importance of teachers' CPD beyond ITTE experiences has long been acknowledged in England. From the publication of the James Report in 1972, which recommended a cycle of post-qualification 'in-service' training for teachers, successive governments have initiated waves of policy in this field (Burstow, 2018; Hardy & Melville, 2013). In regards to policy making and implementation in England from 2010 onwards, we can return to key influences from the 2010 White Paper (Department for Education, 2010), which set out similar reforms in teachers' CPD as it did in ITTE. Based on concerns that in comparison to international competitors education outcomes in England were falling, this paper set a quite clear focus in the statement, 'no education system can be better than the quality of its teachers' (*ibid.* p.3). Two key developments in relation to CPD were outlined: firstly, that teachers'

CPD should be based on 'best-practice' and located within schools where teachers learned from 'outstanding' colleagues across a range of settings; secondly, that funding would be made available for teachers to complete further professional qualifications. However, despite an established Master's programme for teachers, introduced in 2008 under the auspices of the previous government who intended for teaching to become a Master's level profession, central funding for teachers to complete this programme was quickly cut (Bailey & Sorensen, 2013). Instead, teachers were encouraged to complete further, professionally-accredited qualifications offered by the then National College, such as the National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for Headship along with similar programmes for middle and senior leaders. Although such awards were not mandatory for aspiring senior leaders, these were fully funded and so attractive to schools and individuals looking to secure accessible and affordable CPD (Rhodes et al., 2009).

Further developments to school-led and centralised NPQs as the most treasured forms of teachers' CPD were highlighted in the 2016 White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' (Department for Education, 2016a) along with guidance for school leaders, teachers and CPD providers on expected standards for teachers' professional development (Department for Education, 2016b). One key aim outlined in the white paper was to foster a 'world-leading, evidence-informed teaching profession' (Department for Education, 2016a, p.37). As part of this aim, the Chartered College of Teaching was established in 2017, with a remit to support a self-improving education system by setting the highest professional standards, marking out quality of teachers and teaching, and providing guidance and resources – including research – to the profession as a whole (Peacock, 2020). While the Chartered College began with grand aims to develop a culture of teaching towards becoming a learning profession and to develop a sense of collective pride, it could be argued that the impact of the organisation as a whole has been limited in relation to teachers' CPD. Menter and Flores (2021) argue that, in England, teaching is perceived as a 'semi-profession' when compared to professions of higher standing, such as those of medicine, law and engineering. Part of this degradation of teaching compared to other professions, they argue, is due to lack of consistent university involvement in ITTE and CPD, as well as a lack of fundamental underpinning critical and intellectual research within the profession and in education more broadly. As a result, much of the research and evidence on which ITTE and CPD programmes are founded on is rooted in craft knowledge and over-simplified 'bridges' between theory and practice (Shulman, 2005). Limited impact of the Chartered College has also been furthered by perceptions that, as an establishment, it is not entirely independent from the DfE. That such beliefs abound is not unexpected, given the cumulative tightening grip of consecutive

governments in relation to teachers and teaching since the rise of the Thatcher government in the early 1980s (Childs & Menter, 2013).

In more recent years, the introduction of the Early Career Framework (ECF) (Department for Education, 2019c) and an expanding suite of NPQ programmes (Department for Education, 2020) have seemed to be a mirror reflection in relation to teachers' CPD of the reforms to ITTE. Both the ECF and current suite of eight NPQs (four aimed at senior leaders and four at teachers in specialist areas) have centrally mandated curricula and are offered by only select providers: across all NPQ provision, only nine providers nationally are recognised and of these nine, only one is based within a university[8]. Of concern here is another example of a policy regime which seems to position teachers and teacher quality as a 'problem' (Cochran-Smith, 2021) which can be solved through centrally mandated curricula for teachers' professional development and claims that the 'right' kinds of professional development experiences will improve educational quality for all (Lupton & Hayes, 2021). Taken together, the policy directions in ITTE and CPD from 2010 onwards could be considered to have had particular influence on public perceptions and conceptualisations of teachers and teachers' work, which in have turn potential to inform and influence teachers' own [re]formation of identity[ies].

2.2.3 Public perceptions of teachers and teachers' work

The policy and political landscapes described above clearly influence public perceptions and conceptualisations of 'who' teachers are and 'what' their work is (Gunter, 2023). But the role of the media should also be considered, both as a separate entity as well as in interaction with policy and politics, as significant in shaping shared understandings and common beliefs. This is important when we consider that teachers are often viewed as a homogenous group in the public sphere (Edwards & Edwards, 2017; Mockler, 2022) and that schooling can be regarded as a particularly prominent topic for public discussion since it is a common experience that the vast majority of individuals share. Some have argued that this kind of shared interest leads to politicians in Anglosphere countries utilising education and education policy as touchstones for connecting with electorates (Lupton & Hayes, 2021) and this, along with a high-level of community interest in education, leads to an abundance of coverage through traditional print and social media platforms. The prominence of education in public debate often centres on the role of the teacher, perhaps to be expected when we consider that, 'one of the most revered and abiding cultural myths associated with education [is] the assumption that the key to educational success lies with the teacher' (Larsen, 2010, p.208).

[8] Current NPQ programmes and providers are published by the Department for education Professional development for teachers and leaders (education.gov.uk)

Mockler (2022), in her extensive scrutiny of media coverage across the UK as well as internationally, summarises how, collectively and individually, teachers are charged with the responsibility of supporting the next generation both academically and socially. Media coverage also taps into images of teachers from popular culture and taken together, with prominent policy discussions and advocacy, common sense understandings of 'good' and 'bad' teachers are not only developed but are sustained over time. These are not new debates; over 20 years ago Geoff Whitty (2000) argued that the development of a low-trust relationship between society and teachers was exacerbated by government and media discourses which 'blamed' the profession for poor educational outcomes. As has been pointed out elsewhere, such narratives in the public space often relate to manufactured politics of 'crisis' (Mockler, 2014), which are presented as means of legitimising policy changes, such as the reforms to ITTE and CPD explored previously. The consequence for teachers in England are multiple, including constructing and sustaining common perceptions of teachers located in a framework of 'organisational professionalism', whereby teachers are passive recipients of knowledge and technicians who are held to account and controlled by centralised powerbrokers (Sachs, 2016). In this kind of culture, schools as organisations demand unwavering loyalty and total commitment, leading to common beliefs that all teachers, as a homogenous group, must align their values, beliefs and behaviours with those of the local and national institution (Clarke, 2022; Puttick, 2017).

Yet, there is a significant conundrum when these perceptions are considered in relation to other long-held social and cultural beliefs about teaching in England as a values-oriented enterprise. While the profession may be commonly portrayed as predominantly responsible for educational attainment, teachers' work is recognised as going beyond the academic to encompass students' emotional and social development, their understandings of their place in the world and their interactions with society around them (Flores & Day, 2006; Grudnoff et al., 2016). Janzen and Phelan (2019) describe teachers as having an obligation to respond to the child who is 'constantly tugging at our sleeves' (Caputo, 1993, p.6). This 'visceral sense of obligation' (Janzen & Phelan, 2019, p.17) underpins a moral enterprise of teaching which locates teachers' work far beyond technical and compliant conceptions and the prioritisation of standards and teacher quality which dominate in current policy and media narratives.

2.2.4 Teachers' motivations

Motivations for entering teaching are one of the significant factors in teachers' 'construction, deconstruction and reconstruction' of themselves as professionals (Flores & Day, 2006, p.223). As identified above, predominantly altruistic and intrinsic motivations for entering the teaching profession have been identified across international meta-analyses of existing empirical work with

student and qualified teachers (e.g. Fray & Gore, 2018; Heinz, 2015; Meens & Bakx, 2019). Related to public perceptions of teachers, Day (2019) asserts that the very best teachers are those who,

> … have a "call" to teach, whose minds, hearts, relationships and actions are imbued with strong moral/ethical purposes, who are knowledgeable, caring, respectful, committed, resilient and who always strive to teach to their best and well (p.316)

What is common across much literature is the way that teachers' motivations for entering, and sustaining a career within, the profession tend to be aligned to notions of social justice, both in terms of educating *for* social justice and educating *as* social justice (Boylan & Woolsey, 2015). Grudnoff et al. (2016) elucidate issues of social justice for teachers as related to concepts of equality and fairness. For teachers, social justice embodies aspects of distributive justice, such as access to resources, as well as recognising and challenging society's systemic inequalities. Putting social justice and equity at the centre of a teacher's role means enabling them to understand and address the ways in which groups of students have been historically disadvantaged by systemic inequalities, but perhaps more importantly, to actively challenge systems that reproduce inequality (Gannon et al., 2018; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015).

However, given current policy contexts described above, it could be considered that a current focus on and privileging of centrally-mandated ITTE and CPD programmes emphasises teachers' compliance with policy reform and associated standards above all else (Ball et al., 2011; Lindvall & Ryve, 2019; Reay, 2022). As a result, some empirical work has highlighted how some teachers experience 'subordination' of their identity[ies] (Clarke, 2022), whereby individual school and broader socio-political cultures of accountability, standards and performance management undermine teachers' interests in and opportunities to act upon social justice concerns (Day & Gu, 2009; Mayer & Mills, 2021). As Clarke (2022) describes it,

> … by treating teachers and students in the dehumanising instrumental manner characteristic of contemporary education policy - as 'just literally an automaton' as one of the teachers in the study put it - we risk losing sight altogether of any meaningful notion of education (p.9)

The potential for conflict between teachers' motivations for entering the profession and their lived experiences of ITTE and CPD is an important area to consider, as teachers' learning experiences are significant in [re]forming their professional identity[ies] (Brew & Saunders, 2020; Day, 2017). When recent policy directions and public perceptions of teachers' work are taken into account, there seem to be opposing forces at play between teachers' motivations to make positive and principled contributions to society and experiences of teaching cultures where 'value replaces values; care and commitment and service are of dubious worth' (Ball, 2003, p.217).

2.2.5 CPD for teachers

In England, considering that the vast majority of teachers experience ITTE through a postgraduate route typically lasting no more than 10 months, individual and collective experiences of CPD clearly have potential to significantly influence [re]formation of teachers' professional identity[ies] (Day, 2017; Flores & Day, 2006). But the field of CPD seems to be a contested space, with some disagreement over the content, shape and form of 'quality' professional learning (Burstow, 2018; Kennedy, 2016; Lindvall & Ryve, 2019). A significant issue is related to identifying 'what works' in relation to CPD, yet the 'what' seems to be a loaded term which appears to be mostly concerned with teachers' compliance with externally set mandates (Lindvall & Ryve, 2019). A great deal of teachers' current CPD offerings are characterised as so called 'teach fast' programmes, designed to improve teacher effectiveness and efficiency but at the expense of acknowledging complexities of teaching and learning (Lambert, 2019).

A key focus of much literature in the field of teachers' CPD has been to attempt to delineate 'quality indicators' that underpin the complex array of programmes that exist (Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020; Lindvall & Ryve, 2019). A common theme that emerges is that the most effective teacher learning programmes are often characterised as promoting situated learning, collective and collaborative learning and active involvement of teachers in setting goals and designing their own learning activities (Campbell, 2020; Lofthouse et al., 2016; Podesta & Hoath, 2020). These characteristics are typically associated with accredited courses, such as Master's level qualifications, which are also considered more globally to be effective professional development activities as shown by the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (Organisation For Economic Co-Operation And Development (OECD), 2009). Despite the fact that, in England, little has been done in recent years to promote teachers' learning at Master's level, as demonstrated in recent policy directions, teachers and teacher educators themselves continue to portray Master's level study as providing significant professional gains (Dixon & Ward, 2015; Kowalczuk-Walędziak et al., 2020; Thomas, 2018).

Some would suggest that conceptualising teaching as a Master's level profession is a commendable aim (Bailey & Sorensen, 2013; Thomas, 2018) but, as we have seen, the current policy context in England tends to point in a different direction with centralised 'one size fits all' programmes of national qualifications for beginning and experienced teachers. This can be problematic, as such standardised approaches assume that the professional development goals of individual teachers will consistently be aligned with the goals of the institution, whether that be at a local, regional or national level (Lindvall & Ryve, 2019; Lupton & Hayes, 2021; Philpott, 2013; Sugrue & Mertkan, 2017). As Daly et al. (2020) point out, teachers' professional learning and development is predicated in an intricate

web of interrelationships and interdependencies. Thus, positioning teachers and CPD programmes in a standardised system may have benefits in terms of focus and consistency of practice, but could come at the cost of teacher motivation and professionalism (Fox, 2021; Skinner et al., 2021). This may be experienced as troublesome for some teachers, as their values and ideals – often shaped by public perception of teachers as morally agentic and socially justice driven – are placed under competing pressures. Yet potential tensions between the desired outcomes of ITTE and CPD, teachers' positioning in relation to these programmes and the impact of these learning experiences on teachers' [re]formation of multiple dimensions of their identity[ies] is an area that is under-researched in current literature. Following the recent policy trends outlined earlier, a great deal of ongoing research in the field of teachers' professional learning and development identifies concerns with teachers' compliance with 'quality indicators' (Cochran-Smith, 2021; Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020; Mockler, 2022b) and the impact for teachers in relation to individually segregated concepts of 'well-being', 'resilience', or generic 'professional identity' (Day, 2019; Evans et al., 2017; Skinner et al., 2021). As Day (2017) acknowledges, some of the complexities of teachers' experiences as related to multiple facets of [re]formation of their identity[ies] are under-researched, especially when conjoined with their experiences of ITTE and CPD.

2.3 Identity theory

The various constructions and definitions of identity in research literature tend to share a common view that an individual's identity is neither a singular nor a fixed attribute of that person and that there are significant relational aspects in identity [re]formation. These aspects include, but are not limited to, notions of identity as: occupying multiple roles and belonging to multiple groups; continuous and self-fashioning; and a combination of personal worlds in interaction with cultural forms and social relationships (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Burke & Stets, 2009; Holland et al., 1998). As cultural forms and personal relationships continuously shift, identity[ies] as a manifestation of relationships between culture, society and self are similarly fluid and somewhat ethereal. Herein lies a conceptual conundrum in the study of identity, as an individual is considered to be both the producer and the product of the relationship between culture, society and self (Burke & Stets, 2009; Holland et al., 1998).

To address this conundrum, Holland et al. (1998) draw on the work of two key theorists in the socio-cultural field, Bakhtin and Vygotsky, to further their explanation of identity. It is argued that considering Bakhtin's concern with the social weighting of expression and means of communication alongside Vygotsky's emphases on historical development and the potentiality of symbols is only a starting point. Moving beyond the two central approaches of the cultural and the constructivist opens

up a theoretical space in which study of an individual avoids trapping them permanently in 'cultural logics' or 'subject positions', or a combination of the two. Holland et al. (1998) present three interrelated assumptions of a theoretical interpretation of the complex relationship between culture, society and the self which gives rise to notions of identity:

1. Culturally and socially constructed discourses and practices of self are not 'moulds' which create identical identities; they are living tools which evolve in relation to power, agency and artefacts.
2. The self is embedded in social practice.
3. Sites of the self are recognised in their plurality.

Holland et al. (1998) see that we need to respect humans as social and cultural creatures and therefore bounded to their social and cultural lives, yet we also need to recognise the processes by which human collectives and individuals often transverse from one set of socially and culturally formed subjectivities to another. This stance aligns with the work of psychologist Erikson (1968), who focused his research on identity formation in social contexts and on the stages involved in this process. He outlined a chronological and changing concept of identity, interpreted by Beijaard et al. (2004) in relation to teachers' identity specifically as, 'not something one has, but something that develops during one's whole life.' (p.107).

The concept of identity [re]formation as related to time is key in much literature concerning identity theory. Holland et al. (1998) discuss how heuristic development of self, and subsequently identity, 'cannot happen overnight' (p.285), but is something that takes 'certainly months, often years' (*ibid.*). Here there is alignment with teacher identity literature, which identifies how teacher identity[ies] constantly change and evolve over time in relation to cultural and social contexts (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Carrillo & Flores, 2018; Fox, 2021), as well as in response to teachers' CPD activities which can slowly and incrementally affect an individual's beliefs, ideals and subsequent practice (Kennedy, 2016; Kowalczuk-Walędziak et al., 2020). Thus, it seems important to acknowledge the importance of considering policy and political landscapes in relation to teachers and teachers' work, as well as public perceptions and common assumptions, all of which have potential to inform beliefs and assumptions about various dimensions of teachers' identity[ies], including personal and professional qualities. Even this brief foray into identity theory suggests that a sociological lens could be crucial to shed light on teachers' experiences of [re]formation of their identity[ies] through social and cultural interactions which may be public or private, and personal or institutional (Ball et al., 2011).

2.4 Teachers' identity[ies]

Much literature around teachers' work to date has tended to separate and segment various elements of teachers' work and experiences, identifying categories such as reactions to policy directions and changes, the role of leadership and management, professional identities, moral purposes, emotional identities, resilience, career pathways, trust, school improvement, and so on. However, some consider this approach to be limited, as it neglects to consider the way in which the worlds of teachers' work and lives are complex, multi-faceted and interrelated and that it is only by intertwining multiple strands of teachers' experiences that we get a more realistic and illuminating picture of their identity[ies] (e.g. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Day, 2017; Goodson & Cole, 1994). Within this literature review, I have begun by considering teachers' identity[ies] in a holistic manner, considering broadly the impact of policy discourse and public perception on how teachers position and perceive themselves and their colleagues. However, for the purposes of this research project, I will now separate out and consider three particular aspects of teachers' identity[ies]: the personal, professional and political. Here I am influenced by the work of Susan Noffke, among others, who describe inherently personal, professional and political motivations which underpin teachers' actions. Noffke (1997) ascertains a model of teachers' engagement in research which is constructed on the inter-relationship of these three dimensions. In this model, she positions teachers' actions as a political act, in so much as their pursuit of change through action is initiated through some kind of desire to challenge the status quo. In the professional sphere, teachers' knowledge is accumulated in ways that bridge the traditional theory-practice gap. And in the personal domain, teachers' motivations for greater fulfilment, deeper understanding and relationship building are key. Congruent with other work in the field of teacher identity[ies], Noffke (1997) argues that while each dimension has a particular emphasis, all three are complexly interwoven in both personal and public spheres, not least through their relationships with issues of power and control, and agency and autonomy. In what follows, then, I use these three dimensions to further explore existing literature on teachers' identity[ies].

2.4.1 Teachers' professional identity[ies]

Sachs (2005) asserts that understanding teachers' professional identity[ies] is important because,

> Teacher professional identity… stands at the core of the teaching profession. It provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand their work and their place in society'. Importantly, teacher identity is not something that is fixed nor is it imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience. (p.15)

Here, Sachs aligns with identity theory which defines [teacher] identity[ies] as not fixed or singular. Rather, teachers should be considered as individuals whose lives and work are influenced and made meaningful by social and cultural experiences as they experience a process of 'becoming' a teacher (Lambert, 2019; Lee & Schallert, 2016).

The journey of becoming a teacher and forming professional identity[ies] is unique for each individual, but not created in isolation from others (Gibbs, 2006). As discussed previously, there is something to be said here about public perceptions and media representations of teachers and teachers' work which tend to echo government policies and which influence teachers' understandings of their own identity[ies] (G. Adams, 2017; Skinner et al., 2021). Particularly in the English context, perceptions and discourses of teachers seem to have shifted away from teaching as a caring, moral and ethical endeavour, towards teaching as corporate and marketised, with an emphasis on economical and measurable data outcomes (Ball, 2018; Cochran-Smith, 2021; Moore & Clarke, 2016; Skinner et al., 2019). Such interpretations of the changing nature of teaching align with Sahlberg's (2011) concept of a Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM), which he claims endangers teachers' professionalism as education systems become regulated markets. Similarly, Ellis et al. (2019) highlight the disruptive influence of global policy making and policy borrowing which frames teachers as a homogeneous and problematic group. And it is clear that these international influences have significant consequences for teachers and their work. As Ball claims, 'this epidemic of reform does not simply change what people, as educators, scholars and researchers do, it changes *who they are*' (2003, p.215, emphasis added).

Reynolds (1996) also emphasises social and relational influences on teacher identity. She notes that a teacher's workplace is a landscape which can be very persuasive, demanding, and, in many cases, very restrictive. Puttick (2017) takes this further. He argues that many teachers experience 'isomorphism', a process whereby teachers self-police and are policed by others, through coercive, normative and mimetic influences, resulting in similarity and homogeneity in professional behaviours. Of concern is the way in which particular social and political (policy) narratives may narrowly define professional aspects of teachers' identity[ies]. As a result, some teachers may experience tensions between the rhetoric and the reality of their lived experiences, along with discomfort at enacting professional behaviours which may be at odds with their personal values and beliefs.

2.4.2 Teachers' personal identity[ies]

Wenger (1999) conceptualises teachers' identities as consisting of both personal and professional aspects, which are closely interrelated and describes them as 'mirror images of one another' (p.149). This becomes pertinent when we again consider emotion as related to teacher identity: the

emotions that teachers experience, and that, in some contexts, may be encouraged or discouraged from experiencing in certain contexts, may 'expand or limit possibilities' in teaching (Zembylas, 2003, p.122). In addition, some moments in a teacher's professional life – in particular when enacting significant educational reform – may be highly emotive and therefore transcend both personal and professional strands of teacher identity (Chambers et al., 2010; van Veen & Sleegers, 2006).

The personal aspect of identity[ies] is crucial and could be considered to include multiple strands, such as biography, selfhood, agency, values, beliefs, and morals (Goodson & Walker, 1991). Jenkins (2004) considers that,

> 'primary' personal identities are more likely to be resistant to challenge from external influences. However, when faced with particularly powerful, consistent external pressures, 'Others' definitions of the situation become so dominant as to carry the day. Thus, as alienation from others feeds back upon self-perception and reflexivity, individuals become alienated from themselves and their sense of selfhood. (p.54)

Empirical work related to beginning teachers' identity[ies] highlights the complexities and challenges of identity development, particularly for teachers who lack agency to employ deliberate actions to affirm and maintain their personal sense of teacher identity (Cobb et al., 2018). As Anspal et al. (2012) describe, early career teachers may have significant strength in their professional conviction in relation to their personal commitment to be a 'good' teacher and to make a difference to their students, but this element of their identity[ies] tends to be quite fragile. Personal ideologies may come under attack in the face of some of the lived realities of teaching, therefore leaving teachers facing uncertainties; in this scenario, individuals may be more susceptible to modifying their internal values to conform with external policies, actions and dialogues in which they do not truly believe (Moore & Clarke, 2016; Puttick, 2017). As Jenkins (2004) highlighted above, this active modification can be a source of tension within an individual's identity[ies] and can lead to a perceived sense of alienation. But Korthagen (2004) claims that although identity change for teachers is a difficult and painful experience, often there is little change in how teachers view themselves. Thus, a teacher may engage in actions which conflict their values and beliefs, but their sense of self and commitment to those values and beliefs remains stable. Here we see a connection with the work of Hattie (2004), who asserts that although identity[ies] are susceptible to change, individual's tend to sustain elements of self-concept over time.

However, empirical work with teachers at various stages of their careers highlights how many are aware of tensions between their personal identity[ies] and motivations, and their professional work, including issues related to compliance with centrally-mandated policies and directives (Day et al., 2006; Taylor, 2020). As Moore and Clarke (2016) remind us, policy in education has a particularly

affective dimension which should be acknowledged as teachers can find themselves trapped in the 'cruel optimism' of their desire to make a difference for their students yet engaging in actions and policies which often seem to sustain the status quo, especially for disadvantaged and marginalised student groups. Attempting to resist such external demands is not a comfortable business, and the resulting tensions and conflicts that teacher experience can erode self-esteem, increase disenchantment with education systems and cultures and, potentially, result in teachers leaving the profession (Skinner et al., 2021).

It has been established that teachers' identity[ies] are integral to everything that happens inside – and outside – of classrooms; the everyday decisions, reactions and choices of teachers are shaped by interaction between multiple strands of their identity[ies], including personal and professional dimensions. Yet some teachers report experiencing significant tensions between opposing forces: their commitment and service to their school, their students and their community, and the professional standards, accountability and performativity of a 'managerialist' culture (Fox, 2021; Raymond, 2018; Skinner et al., 2021). Taking into account Noffke's (1997) assertion that teaching is an inherently political act, particularly in relation to teachers' commitments to tenets of social justice, then perhaps it is helpful to consider what, if any, influence teachers' political awareness and understanding of policy agendas may have on their identity[ies].

2.4.3 Teachers' political identity[ies]

In recent decades, it has been argued that education policy making and enactment in England has been increasingly presented through instrumental and consensual discourses which have aimed to depoliticise education and place any dissent about current policies and practices as totally 'off-limits' (Clarke & Phelan, 2017). As a result, the 'ethico-political' dimension of teachers' work – and identity[ies] – is lost (Clarke, 2020). Yet Noffke (1997) asserts that education is an 'inherently political act' (p.305). Here she is talking about the United States and its long history of slavery, where the denial of education (particularly the development of literacy) to a particular race of peoples, sought to sustain a certain construct of social order. But there is congruence here with historical traits and trends in England, where, historically, education was similarly denied to particular people – although related more to issues of class and gender rather than race – to sustain social order (Reay, 2022; Smyth & Wrigley, 2013). More recently, claims have been made that, in the English context, policy directions and trajectories for schools and teachers are indicative of highly regulated and regimented systems of schooling that often replicate and preserve the existing status quo in relation to class, race and [dis]ability (Gunter, 2023; Littler, 2018; Lupton & Hayes, 2021). Within this context, Noffke (1997) argues that teachers who seek to action change do so, intentionally or otherwise, in relation to wider

social movements. These teachers may conceptualise teaching as a 'common good' (Hansot and Tyack, 1982) and therefore, through making some challenge to the status-quo, are engaging in political acts.

Noffke's political view aligns with Day's (2017) views of teachers' professional development work as underpinned by a commitment to broader ethical and moral purposes of teaching, set against the context of reform ideologies. Even teachers' daily work deals with issues of power and control, not least through their interactions with existing forms of knowledge production and knowledge distribution (Gunter, 2016). These everyday concerns related to power and control emanate from the ways in which educational policies are read and enacted by teachers, and how teachers may (or may not) perceive a sense of agency in relation to wider social issues through their professional development (Day, 2017). Noffke (1997) furthers this argument. She claims that to deny the political aspect of teachers' work, including professional development, supports a tacit agenda which seeks to depoliticise teachers' work and to refute inherent political agendas which maintain schooling as one form of social reproduction.

When teachers are afforded an opportunity to reflect critically on their role through both a moral and political lens, then they may come to view themselves as initiators of change. As Hargreaves and Fullan put it,

> When the vast majority of teachers come to exemplify the power of professional capital, they become smart and talented, committed and collegial, thoughtful and wise. Their moral purpose is expressed in their relentless, expert-driven pursuit of serving their students and their communities, and in learning, always learning, how to do that better. (2012, p.5)

The issue here is that to be collegial, wise, and in pursuit of ways to better serve students and communities, teachers may begin to challenge extant policies and practices which they may perceive as regulating or restricting their personal and professional identity[ies] and daily work. Sachs (2000) and Beckett (2016) both frame this process as becoming an 'activist' professional, as teachers explicitly take up the political dimension of their work, often through intellectual and critical forms of professional development. This raises fundamental questions about teachers' professional development and the ways in which it may contribute to or sustain particular forms of professionalism. Day and Sachs (2004) are concerned to question the wider political issue of who validates teachers' professional development, meaningful practices and professional identities. They are mindful that more critical and democratic forms of teachers' professional development, such as intellectual and critical research, position teachers to challenge managerialist concepts of teacher professionalism.

Through engaging in these forms of professional development activities, then, teachers may become more explicitly aware of the political aspect of their work and identity[ies].

2.5 Teachers' knowledge work

Integral to teachers' identity[ies], along with public perceptions of teachers and teachers' work, is the positioning of teaching in relation to 'the professions'. It has been suggested that teaching is more a 'semi-profession' when compared to other professions such as medicine, law and engineering (Menter & Flores, 2021). Ellis and McNicholl (2015) go further, arguing that teacher professionalism is considered to be highly restricted and threatened with 'proletarianism', reminding us of the relationship between professionalism, social class and social status. This includes the way that teaching has, historically, been positioned as a socially mobile career providing accessibility into 'the professions' for individuals from lower class backgrounds (Heinz, 2013). At the same time, teaching - particularly in the primary age-phase - is also viewed as 'feminised' and thus typically a vocational role rather than some kind of learned career (Moreau, 2020). As Dame Alison Peacock, the founding Chief Executive of the Chartered College of Teaching describes it,

> Somehow in England, we have assumed that teaching is more intuitive than scientific. Pupils, parents and fellow teachers assume you either have the makings of a great teacher or you don't. Teachers who thrive within schools appear unassailable. They manage … as if by magic. (Peacock, 2020, p.9)

Despite work which shows the impact of engaging in critical intellectual dialogue as a way of scaffolding teachers' engagement with 'deep' knowledge structures (Daly, James, et al., 2020; Shulman, 2019), teachers in England continue to be positioned in such a way that the knowledge landscape they inhabit is dominated by craft and technical knowledge. This positioning has been described as the 'subordination of teacher education as intellectual, moral and ethical endeavour to the production of locally relevant job skills' (Mayer et al., 2008, p.80). Consequently, common perceptions of teachers' functions are viewed as the application of technical protocols rather than any meaningful critical intellectual work (Hordern & Tatto, 2018).

Menter and Flores (2021) describe how professions of higher standing have firmly established professional education and professional development within the remit of higher education, whereas both initial and continuing learning and development for teachers has, in recent decades, increasingly moved away from universities and into schools and private businesses. Similarly, there seems little agreement on the fundamental role of research which underpins the knowledge base of both the education and work of teachers compared to, say, doctors and lawyers. Perhaps one of the issues here is related to the complexity and fluidity of knowledge creation, mobilisation and translation in

education. Oancea and Pring (2009) explain that because education exists within and across social and cultural worlds, the reality of education is unpredictable and changeable. Such an assumption is not new in the field: Dewey, in 1929, explained how educational means and ends do not occur in a linear process of reliable causality. Therefore, teaching is not simply a matter of selecting the most effective means in order to achieve pre-determined ends or outcomes. Rather, as Cain (2015) argues, teachers rely on a complex combination of knowledge from a range of sources to make contextualised decisions and actions. These sources include research generated knowledge, considered to be propositional, generalisable and impersonal, and pedagogical knowledge, viewed as practical, specific, personal, largely tacit and intimately bound with an individual's beliefs and values. Such complexity leads to arguments that those concerned with teachers' knowledge development should, at best, aim to support teachers to build rich 'reservoirs and repertoires' of professional knowledge and skills which can be drawn upon depending on specific places, spaces and actors (Oancea, 2016).

However, as seen in the English context, governments embarking on educational reforms generally prefer restricted technical or craft-based conceptions of knowledge, as these may seem to fit more effectively with the objectives of those reforms and how teaching is conceived within them (Hordern & Tatto, 2018). At the same time, concerns are raised about whose knowledge counts and the selection of knowledge that is considered to be authentic and valid in relation to policy-makers. In England, for a number of years, Michael Young's work on 'powerful knowledge' in schools has gained increasing traction (Young, 2010; 2011), resulting in emphasis on subject-based curricula and learning by rote. The influence of Young and others can be seen in current iterations of the CCF, ECF and NPQs, where teachers 'learn that' by rote and are expected to demonstrate tightly directed professional behaviours in classrooms. To this end, professional standards at a national level are presented as natural and irrefutable and more complex forms of teachers' knowledge are side-lined, along with the silencing of teachers' own voices and any debate about policy and practice positioned as a challenge to orthodoxy (Clarke & Phelan, 2017).

One response to this policy and practice context has been movements in recent years to develop so-called 'bottom-up' CPD organisations and activities for teachers. As a result, there has been a proliferation of events organised by groups such as ResearchEd and BrewEd, along with significant growth in social media spaces for teachers' professional development. Organisations such as ResearchEd were initially promoted as ways to further bridge the gap between theory and practice, and to create spaces where teachers and practitioners, rather than academics in universities, could lead research and knowledge work (ResearchED, 2020). However, although some organisations and events are marketed to teachers as learning from their peers in ways that challenge or disrupt, the

content and outcomes of these CPD activities tend to remain tied to existing imaginaries of teachers' craft and technical knowledge and 'best-practice' (Bergviken Rensfeldt et al., 2018; Thomson & Riddle, 2018; Watson, 2020).

As Mutton et al. (2021) point out, there are increasingly polarised debates about what sorts of evidence and knowledge can inform the teaching profession. In England, discourse around evidence, research and knowledge for teachers tends to exist as an artefact of the institutionalisation of educational scholarship and the professionalisation of educational research (Biesta & Aldridge, 2021). As a result, unhelpful binaries are often drawn between educational theory and academic research as scholarly activity and close-to-practice research or craft knowledge as professional activity. Such a binary locates the 'problem' of ITTE in universities and the 'solution' in schools and learning through practice. Although the benefits of school-based research and sharing of 'best practice' are well-established as key components of teachers' professional development, to dismiss the role of academic research and/or theory altogether seems somewhat reductionist. And the situation in England in relation to teachers' knowledge work seems to contrast with many other European countries. The move towards higher qualifications for entrants into teaching, such as those found in Norway and Portugal, entails a view of the teacher as professional with an inquiry-based or research-based knowledge and professional practice base. However, countries such as England continue to contest the place of critical research and intellectual work in teacher education and professional development (Menter & Flores, 2021). Inquiry-based learning takes time, and policies and practices of teacher education in England demands condensation of programmes along with curricula that prioritise school-based practice above all else. But, equally, a balance should be struck: if teacher education becomes too academic and less profession-oriented, there is the risk of too much abstraction and creation of theory unrelated to pedagogical action. Because while teaching is a profession concerned with knowledge and cognition, it is also concerned with values, ethics and morality.

2.6 Teachers as researchers

As we have seen, there are multiple sources of teachers' knowledge that are accumulated through personal and professional experiences. These experiences include the ways in which teachers construct understandings of social and cultural influences that shape their personal experiences, the peculiarities of particular situations they experience, and the voices of learners whose own particular interpretations of experience will be quite different to those of the teacher (Furlong, 2020). Intrinsically linked to these notions of teachers' accumulation and construction of knowledge is education research and the ways in which research – and researchers - are framed by political, institutional and ideological approaches (Menter & Flores, 2021). A recent report into the state and

future of educational research by the Royal Society and the British Academy (2018) describes a complex ecosystem of educational research within and across the four jurisdictions of the UK. This ecosystem involves a multitude of sites and actors, with teachers in England most frequently positioned as 'consumers' of large-scale, external research projects and schools as sites for particular forms of localised action research. Wyse et al. (2018), in their BERA funded report on 'Close-to-Practice Research', further consider that some debates about teachers in relation to research lie in conceptualisations of what constitutes as reliable and valid research and knowledge creation. At issue is the way that some make clear definitions between 'academic' research and 'practice-based' or 'classroom' research. Implicit (and at times explicit) in this delineation of the two is a value judgement rooted in 'metrification' of research quality which positions academic research as reliable, valid, generalisable and a reputable source of new knowledge, and classroom or practice-based research as localised, context-laden and therefore as having little impact beyond the immediate professional space in which it takes place (Hogan & Malone, 2023). While both the RSA and BERA reports end with substantial recommendations for increasing teachers' research literacy, it appears that a great deal of teachers' own practical research activity continues to be perceived as of low or modest quality in comparison to the work of academics or large-scale research bodies. Wyse et al. (2018) identify how considerable work could – and should – be done to ensure that teachers who engage in critical research activity are able to theorise and justify, transparently, any outcomes from their work. Yet, to do so, argues Hordern (2021) could be problematic as it has the potential to undermine research *for* education by focusing on principles of research *of* education which have argumentative weight due to their methodological sophistication.

As with teachers' intellectual and knowledge work, there seems to be some kind of epistemic injustice at play where teachers experience 'credibility deficit' (Fricker, 2007) as producers of new knowledge. Perhaps this is unsurprising, given some of the policy and public discourse of teachers considered previously. Lingard and Renshaw (2010) bring attention to the influence of policy vernacular in how teachers are positioned in relation to research and knowledge work. They highlight a contradiction in the description of teaching as a 'research-based profession' and 'evidence-based profession'. In England, 'evidence-based' is favoured by policymakers as indicated in a current focus on medical models, randomised control trials (RCTs) and systematic literature reviews. As a result, the evidence base presented to teachers has been critiqued by some as overly focused on instrumental problem-solving which involves a reductive view of knowledge and which only makes sense in positivist paradigms (Cain, 2015b; Philpott, 2017; Wrigley, 2018). Further, centrally directed forms of research activity and evidence collection may sustain and reproduce narrow measures of educational quality

as school improvement continues to be dominated by external 'what works' agendas and narrow conceptualisations of 'school effectiveness' (Biesta, 2017; Lewis & Hogan, 2019; Wrigley, 2016). And this may be exacerbated by the way in which some consider 'evidence' has become a tool of government in order to, 'justify policy, but also to grant speaking rights to selected actors whom ministers deem to have the right ideological leanings' (Helgetun & Menter, 2022, p.98). Of particular concern, in the English context, is how policy and practice discourse related to educational evidence and research seem to pay attention to individual factors or individual policy actions in isolation, symptomatic of a highly regulated and managerial system where cause and effect logic dominates answers are privileged over questions (Daly, Milton, et al., 2020). Yet there is consistent agreement across literature that the benefits of research for teachers are multi-faceted and complex, leading to, among others, enlightenment (Dewey, 1929), cultural understandings (Biesta, 2007), and opportunities for 'painstaking exploration of lived experience, subjective meanings and cultural milieux' (Oancea, 2016, p.113).

At this juncture, it is useful to consider England's culture of teacher research in relation to Carr and Kemmis' (1986) critical framework which outlines three differentiated levels of research activity. The first level is 'technical', where concern lies with the effective attainment of given goals, e.g. meeting a predefined set of professional standards. A list of consensual criteria is specified and linked to short terms goals: these criteria often correspond to broadly-defined 'efficacy' criteria which are teachers' priority concerns (McIntyre, 1993). The second level is 'practical', where teachers concentrate on evaluating and developing their own teaching. The focus here lies in teachers' articulation and justification of how effective they perceive their practice to be. Moving beyond the technical level, teachers develop their own criteria and use sources of evidence to support decisions and conclusions (Sachs, 2016). However, it is the third, 'critical or emancipatory' level, which holds potential to be most transformative for teachers. At this level, teachers' concerns move to encompass wider social contexts and movements, including policy, politics and societal forces. They may come to consider conflict between dominant policies and practices and perceived moral and ethical responsibilities as a teacher. This speaks to issues of social justice as teacher research at this level is located in a sociological paradigm where systems come under scrutiny and outcomes of research deliberately challenge the status quo (Campbell et al., 2017; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Pantić & Florian, 2015b). But to reach this level of research, particularly in the Close-to-Practice domain (Wyse et al., 2018), requires teachers to be proficient in critical reflexivity where they are vigilant of the inherent values of education itself as related to their current and their future practice[s] (Hogan & Malone, 2023).

It is clear that supporting teachers to engage in critical and intellectual forms of research can alter the meaning of accountability, evaluation and supervision (Schön, 1983). Teachers who actively participate in critical or emancipatory level research are well placed to challenge conceptualisations of teaching as craft, along with policy discourses which dismiss wider social contexts of school communities as merely background noise (Beckett, 2020; Daly, Davidge-Smith, et al., 2020). However, difficulty remains in current paradigms of teachers' CPD that appear to militate against a common framework that would promote teachers' critical thinking and research activity. As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009, p.146) define it,

> When practitioner researchers work from an inquiry stance, they are working both within and against the system – an ongoing process, from the inside, of problematizing fundamental assumptions about the purposes of the existing education system and raising difficult questions about educational resources, processes and outcomes.

This conundrum aligns with examples from empirical work. Campbell and McNamara (2010) cite a case study of teachers involved in Master's level research who spoke of 'cultural shifts' as they moved away from the routine and superficial and became involved in more deep and critical interrogation of their own practices. Similarly, Snoek and Volman (2014) identify professional conflict for teachers who may undergo significant personal and professional changes as a result of Master's level learning [and research] experiences: 'when a changed teacher returns to an unchanged school, the result is a teacher who is frustrated and drops out' (Snoek & Volman, 2014, p.99). In their conceptual work, Daly, Davidge-Smith et al. (2020) highlight how teachers who seek to reposition their concerns or ask challenging questions through dialogue around perceived deficits, systemic pressures, assumptions and social justice may experience 'deeply unsettling impacts of increased consciousness of values-practice dissonance' (p.351).

In relation to actively engaging in critical forms of research as teachers' CPD activity, Kennedy (2016, p.974) reminds us that,

> We need to replace our current conception of "good" CPD as comprising a collection of particular design features with a conception that is based on more nuanced understanding of what teachers do, what motivates them, and how they learn and grow. We also need to reconceptualize teachers as people with their own motivations and interests.

However, in the English context, this may be challenging. As indicated previously, Anglosphere conceptualisations and evaluations of teachers' CPD focus largely on 'what works' (with the what being adherence to policy reform) (Lindvall & Ryve, 2019). In contrast, European work in this field tends to be more discursive and critical in relation to teachers' agency and autonomy in enacting new

policies through their CPD experiences (Prøitz et al., 2017). This distinction has a significant bearing on the positioning of teachers in two very different systems, and subsequently may influence teachers' identity[ies] as well as their understandings of their relationships with professional learning, research and knowledge.

2.7 Conclusion: experiences of dual identity[ies]?

When teachers actively engage in research and knowledge building work, critical intellectual conversations about wider issues of education, dominant policy discourses and narratives, and critical theorising of the political context of teachers' work can take place (Beckett, 2016; Day & Sachs, 2004; Thompson et al., 2016). Such theorising may mean that teachers seek to influence agendas beyond improvement of student attainment in their individual schools and go on to challenge the status quo related not just to professional dynamics, but to wider social, cultural, moral and ethical dimensions. However, this may be challenging, considering that these teachers may find themselves working simultaneously within and against the system (Clarke, 2022; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015).

The contested and complex nature of research in teaching and teacher education has resulted in teachers' (and indeed teacher educators') diverse understandings of and engagement with research-informed learning and professional practice. But if we want to achieve an authentically inquiry-based or research-informed teaching profession, there needs to be a shift from simplistic theory-into-practice dialogues based on instrumental rationality. Rather, a praxeological epistemology is required, whereby professional knowledge is created on the basis of critical reflection and theorising of practice (Burn & Mutton, 2013; Menter & Flores, 2021). Hence, it could be argued that some democratisation of the teaching profession is required in order for teachers' voices to be heard in relation to their own knowledge creation, especially for those who may be disempowered in particular situations (Fricker, 2007; Sachs, 2000).

Teachers' engagement in intellectual and knowledge-building work through Master's level learning and associated research activity has the potential to provide critical scholarship which underpins teachers' systematic inquiry and subsequent knowledge creation, mobilisation and translation (Burstow, 2018; Philpott & Poultney, 2018; Thomas, 2018). And such forms of critical scholarship and knowledge work can extend teachers' imaginary by opening up alternative policy discourses and narratives which may have been previously hidden (Beckett, 2016; Lofthouse et al., 2016). But in England, unlike the majority of other European countries, these forms of professional learning contrast with common narratives and perceptions of teachers who are assessed against professional

standards and leave ITTE as a 'finished product', rather than being conceptualised as life-long professional learners (Edwards, 2002).

From this literature review I have come to draw three key conclusions which go on to underpin the research questions and subsequent research design for this empirical project:

1. Current forms of centrally controlled ITTE and CPD programmes can significantly influence perceptions and beliefs about teachers and teachers' work, including the [re]formation of teachers' professional identity[ies]. These identities are perceived by some to be narrowly defined, leading to potential for tension between a teacher's existing personal, professional and political values and beliefs and their lived experiences of ITTE and CPD.
2. Within current policy frameworks and public narratives there is little space for teachers' critical reflection, active research and intellectual work, especially in relation to wider social and cultural dimensions and opportunity to challenge the status quo. Subsequently, some teachers might not possess the imaginary needed to re-position themselves as learned and critical professionals. And among those that do, some teachers may experience discomfort as their actions, values and beliefs might be in direct conflict with the normative assumptions of others.
3. Teachers' learning and research activity at Master's level has potential to refocus their work on social justice agendas and the creation, mobilisation and translation of 'new' knowledge within and beyond their individual classrooms – but this can be difficult when teachers' critical and emancipatory research could be framed as simultaneously working within and against the system.

In the next chapter, I will present the research questions which have been informed by these three conclusions. These questions are intended to expose and explore teachers' experiences as related to their personal, professional and political identity[ies] as they undergo Master's level research. Informed by this literature review I present a conceptual and analytical framework, underpinned by philosophical understanding of self-concept and lived experience in a rope metaphor (Hattie, 2004; Wittgenstein, 1958). This framework takes account of the conclusions highlighted here: that managing the dual demands of simultaneously 'becoming' and 'being' a teacher and researcher can result in specific and particular challenges to an individual's [re]formation of identity[ies]. The next chapter will also outline my research design and selected methodologies which seek to provide a lens through which select teachers' lived experiences of these 'dual identity[ies]' can be systematically explored.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Design

3.0 Introduction

In the literature review I explored ways in which contemporary policies and practices in ITTE and CPD potentially position teachers within very particular definitions of their personal, professional and political identities (e.g. Clarke, 2022; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Skinner et al., 2019). Such identities may leave little, if any, space for critical intellectual and research activities, especially in relation to issues of social justice. This environment can then create dilemmas for teachers who find themselves acting as researchers and engaging in critical research work during their Master's level dissertation. In this chapter, I present the questions which underpin this empirical research and describe the research approaches and methods adopted to address these questions. I explain my research philosophy and the assumptions and beliefs underpinning methodological decisions, examining particular aspects of the research design in depth.

3.1 Research questions

The aim of this research was to collate teachers' descriptions of their experiences as a teacher and a researcher during their Master's level dissertation. In doing so, it was my intention to build rich narratives which shed light on multiple dimensions of each participant's identity[ies]. Following the review of literature I have used the term 'researcher' to ascribe one domain of an individuals' identity[ies] which includes a broad range of scholarly and academic activities, both empirical and philosophical, which might not be commonly assumed to be part of a teacher's usual daily practice. Within the research questions and conceptual and analytic model which follows, the term 'researcher' and associated research work includes, but is not limited to, engaging with and/or responding to academic literature, establishing research or inquiry questions, tasks associated with completing a Master's dissertation project, sharing research evidence and findings with colleagues, and supporting colleagues in similar activities.

My overarching research question was,

How do teachers experience [re]formation of teacher and researcher identity[ies] during and after their Master's level dissertation research?

This empirical research was guided by a sub-set of questions designed to interrogate teachers' descriptions of their experiences through a lens of [re]formation of identity:

What experiences during and after their Master's level dissertation do teachers describe as significant?

a) What is the significance of these experiences in relation to individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' (after Hattie, 2004) of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
b) How do these experiences affect the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
c) What, if any, experiences of the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies] are common across participants?

A conceptual framework was developed to systematically map these select teachers' descriptions of their experiences. This framework has been constructed to enable responses to each of the three research sub questions: to examine the significance of individual participants' experiences at particular moments in time; to examine each individual participants' experiences over time and reflect on any [re]formation of identity[ies]; and to combine the experiences of all three participants in order to examine the significance of experiences and related [re]formation of identity[ies] in common across this small group of teachers.

3.2 Conceptual and analytical framework

Following Hattie (2004), and further informed by work from Day (2017), Holland et al. (1998) and Noffke (1997), I came to construct a conceptual model utilising the metaphor of a rope. This model elucidates personal, professional and political dimensions which are pertinent for interrogation apropos teachers' identity[ies] when that role is conjoined with their experiences of engaging in Master's level research.

3.2.1 A 'rope' model (Hattie, 2004)

Hattie's work develops a rope model which frames self-concept [self-identity] as linear and horizontal. In using the metaphor of a rope, Hattie draws on the maxim of Wittgenstein (1958), who states that the strength of the rope 'lies not in one fibre running throughout its length, but in the overlapping of many fibres' (Section 67). Hattie argues that there is no single dimension which operates in isolation to maintain self-concept; rather, an overlapping of many dimensions exists and these multiple dimensions together influence how individuals 'select, bias and interpret the information that [they] receive and that [they] present.' (Hattie, 2004, para.7). While this work was focused on conceptualising children and young people as learners, the metaphor that Hattie creates provides a useful starting point for constructing a conceptual and analytic framework for investigating [re]formation of teachers' identity[ies] in this research project.

In Hattie's model, he describes the interweaving of various 'strands' of self that act as primary dimensions, comprising multiple orientations of self (yarns) which themselves rely on various self-

strategies (fibres) which bring meaning and predictability to self-concept. Hence, a linear continuity of self may be achieved through the drawing together of strands, yarns and fibres.

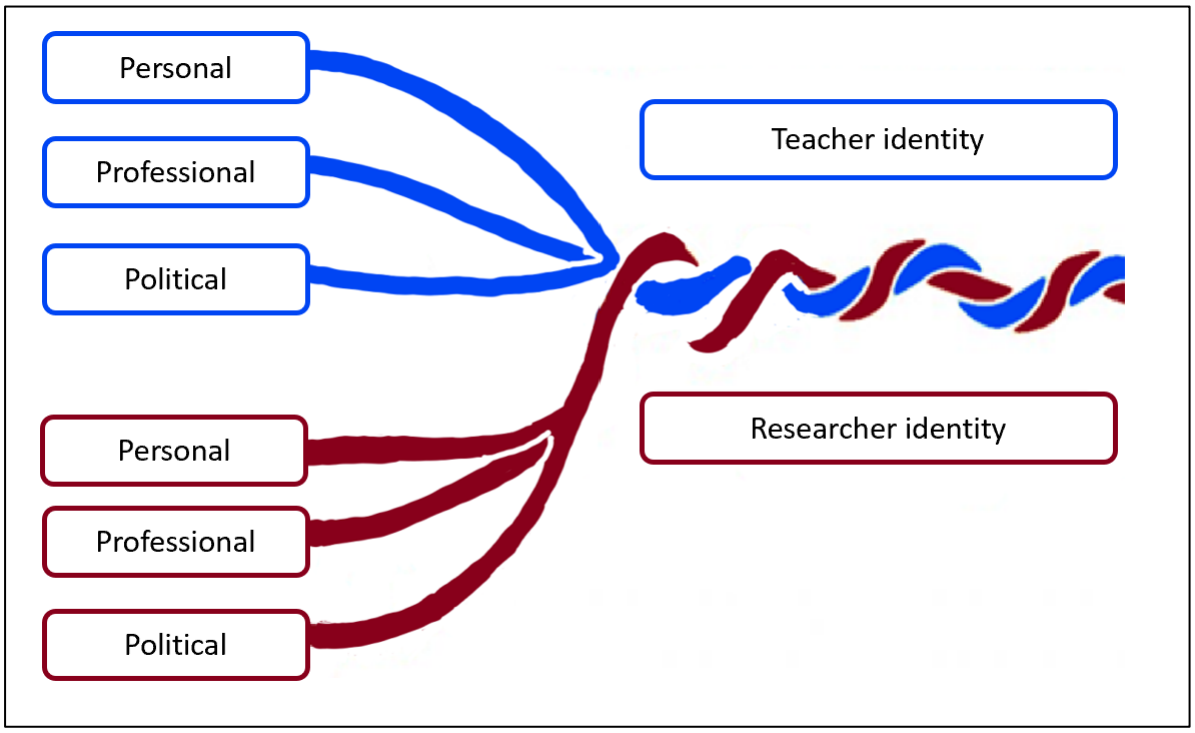
Although this model points to a sense of continuity over time, Hattie concedes that individuals add fibres, discard some and strengthen others. The task, then, for the researcher is to detect the various strands, yarns and fibres that together make up an individual's identity[ies], understand changes over time, and to consider ways in which an individual might incorporate new strands or how the influence and shape of particular strands may undergo change.

3.2.2 Teacher-researcher identity[ies]: a rope model

As discussed in the literature review, an individual's identity can be considered in the way that they perceive themselves as 'occupying' multiple roles (Holland et al., 1998) and 'belonging' to multiple groups (Burke & Stets, 2009; Sfard & Prusak, 2005). However, for the purpose of this research I examined two particular roles of each participant: teacher and researcher. That is not to assume that all teachers have, or indeed desire to have, some self-concept as researcher, but for the purpose of this research project it is helpful to consider the extent to which teachers who engage in critical, intellectual forms of research work *do*, if at all, [re]locate themselves as a researcher in some way. So if the roles of teacher and researcher are considered to be components of an individual's complete identity it could be conjectured that in Hattie's (2004) model they are 'strands'. As Hattie suggests, for an individual to achieve some kind of linear continuity of identity, these two strands (along with multiple others) would need to be drawn tightly together. But examination of the strands themselves is not enough to provide in-depth insights: as Hattie suggests, each strand is also a collection of interwoven 'yarns' and 'fibres'. Thus, an individual's perception of their identity[ies], and the linear continuity (or not) of such perceptions, may be dependent on how tightly or loosely strands are interconnected, as well as how the yarns and fibres which make up these strands are bound together.

To provide insights and to expose the intricacies of participants' experiences as related to their sense of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher, I further examined three of the 'yarns' that made up each 'identity strand'. Following the work of Susan Noffke (1997), I discerned three yarns within each strand, categorised as personal, professional and political dimensions of identity[ies] as a teacher and researcher. That is not to say that there are only these three yarns which amount to each strand, but, as highlighted in the literature review, narrowing the focus to these three yarns provides a useful framework with which to decipher the potential transitions and complexities of each participant's experiences. A visual representation of this conceptual framework can be seen in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Teacher-researcher identity[ies] rope model



Following analysis of literature in the fields of teachers' identity[ies] in the context of the current professional and political climates in teacher education in England, these three yarns could be summarised as follows:

Personal yarns could be understood as comprising many 'fibres' including values, beliefs and morals (e.g. Anspal et al., 2012; Cobb et al., 2018; Moore & Clarke, 2016). Significant relationships between teachers' personal motivators for entering the profession and long-term professional identity formation have been highlighted by some researchers (e.g. Day, 2019; Fray & Gore, 2018; Heinz, 2015). Insights into participants' personal yarns are revealed through descriptions of their motivations for entering and sustaining careers in the teaching profession, for beginning and continuing Master's level study and the impact they describe on themselves and others as a result of completing their dissertation. Broader understanding of the affective fibres of their identities is also gained through investigating their emotional responses at different points in their dissertation research, including their responses to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on their personal and professional experiences.

Professional yarns are negotiated through an individuals' interactions with others, not least through experiences of ITTE and CPD and positioning of self within school cultures (e.g. Gibbs, 2006; Lambert, 2019; Puttick, 2017). Professional identity[ies] may also be shaped by common socio-cultural

conceptualisations of teachers and teachers' work, underpinned by extant policies and policy frameworks which may position teachers in particular ways (e.g. Gunter, 2023; Mockler, 2022; Mutton et al., 2017). Insights into each participants' professional yarns are gained from examining their descriptions of their current and past roles, their experiences of (initial and continuing) teacher education and interactions with education policies at a local (school) level and beyond.

Political yarns could be understood as encompassing the ways in which teachers relate their actions to wider social movements alongside their perceived sense of agency and autonomy in enacting policies (across a spectrum from individual classrooms to school and national levels and beyond) (e.g. Clarke & Phelan, 2017; Day, 2017; Lupton & Hayes, 2021). Insight into teachers' political identity[ies] is gained through participants' articulation of their experiences during Master's level study and research in relation to broader issues of social justice and/or political themes and in their responses to significant teacher and education policy ideology and enactments at both a national and school level.

3.2.3 'Knotworking'

In developing the rope metaphor further, insights can be gained from the work of Engeström (2008), who identified the notion of organisational 'knots' and 'knotworking', where no single actor has a fixed authority, but that any labour carried out is enacted through 'co-configuration' whereby there is continuing interaction between all engaged. A useful definition comes from Fenwick (2007, p.139), who states, 'Sites of inter-organisational collaboration are characterised as 'knots': a loose network of actors, practices and systems that does not have a centre, and in which the only consistency over time is the ongoing mix of interaction among contributors, discourse, tasks and tools.'

Fenwick's application of 'knotworking' within a school-university collaboration highlights the discursive and narrative work involved as actors map, translate, rearticulate and span their relational positions across organisational 'knots'. The discursive and narrative dimensions highlighted by Fenwick are drawn from Engeström's (2004) concept of discourse to signify an arrangement of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is formed and narrative is shared by actors in order to make sense of their [figured] world. Such a focus on discourse, however, should not be taken to mean that language is all there is, or that language should be prioritised as the site of analysis for researchers; rather, language and negotiations, or learning, of language in collaboration with others is one way in which an individual engages in self-authoring (Holland et al., 1998).

The focus on narrative as an insight into individuals' lived experiences, and their sense-making of these experiences, aligns with the socio-constructivist and socio-cultural lenses considered for exploring

identity[ies] in the literature review. In relation to the research questions presented above, this positioning has significantly influenced the methodological assumptions and subsequent research design and choices made in the empirical work for this research project.

3.3 Methodological assumptions

It is well acknowledged that researchers hold assumptions and beliefs which Influence research design and processes; it is essential to expose and examine these to understand the situatedness of both the researcher and the research (Punch, 2009; Punch & Oancea, 2014a). As a researcher, I recognise that my own positionality influences not only the questions I ask, but the way I understand the nature of data and knowledge, the tools I use for analysis and the conclusions that I draw from that analysis (Berger, 2015; Miles et al., 2013).

The research questions that I posed above have steered the choice of each aspect of my methodological approach. The nature of those research questions was underpinned by my professional experience, previous study and emergent philosophical position. As identified in the literature review, I have arrived at the empirical research from a socio-cultural and socio-constructive stance. Thus, in order to answer my research questions, the empirical work needed a methodological approach which would allow 'deep' engagement with participants. Qualitative forms of data are considered to have a particular richness for researchers interested in investigating human experiences, as described by Higgs and Cherry (2009, p.8),

> Qualitative research is increasingly regarded as a powerful and credible tool for revealing and understanding the human world… It provides multiple ways of understanding the inherent complexity and variability of human behaviour and experience.

Following Higgs and Cherry (2009) and Savin-Baden and Howell Major (2013), I understand that qualitative researchers use a number of research lenses – philosophical, personal, theoretical and strategic – to underpin research design and selection of methodologies. As these authors depict it, a range of lenses is essential in allowing the researcher to focus on and understand different aspects of the phenomena under investigation. This claim aligns with my earlier explorations of formation and reformation of teacher identity[ies] (Day, 2017; Holland et al., 1998; Sachs, 2016) which describe the complex and multi-faceted nature of social and personal phenomena.

3.3.1 Ontological position

Consideration of my ontological position as related to this research provokes deep reflection on not only the processes and procedures of empirical work but also my own fundamental understandings of the nature, character and essence of social phenomena (Mason, 2018). Given my understanding of

teacher identity[ies] elucidated in the literature review, this research is positioned within a social construction philosophy, which encompasses the stance that individuals create and experience realities through social interactions and interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Punch, 2014b; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). As such, exploration of multiple aspects of history, culture, context and experiences as related to the individual is essential in order to expose and understand lived realities. As Kvale (1996, p.41) puts it, 'the conception of knowledge as 'mirror of reality' is replaced by the conception of the 'social construction of reality' where the focus is on the interpretation and negotiation of the meaning of the world.'

3.3.2 Epistemological position

Having positioned my research within a social construction ontology, epistemological considerations are subsequently raised, which focus particularly on my conceptualisation of the nature of evidence and knowledge, which in turn influences choices that are made about the generation, collation and analysis of data. Within a philosophy of social constructionism, I frame knowledge as constructed through dialogue and negotiation. This means that one particular aim of my research has been to collate and understand individual, shared and co-constructed realities. In doing so, I acknowledge that as researcher I cannot maintain a detached or objective position; as Mason (2018) cautions, absenting the researcher voice or position can lead to lack of transparency in research and potentially result in misleading findings or over-generalizations that have questionable validity and reliability.

The aim of my empirical work, therefore, was to 'aid in the unpacking and creation of social reality' and decisions about methods were made so that data collected would include 'individual and collective reconstructions' (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). This led me to an embedded case study approach in which I would be able to build individual (sub-unit) and whole case understandings, but which I also understood would create potential for some transformative effect on both participants and myself as researcher (Etherington, 2009). As explored later in this chapter, the potential of transformative influence through case study approaches prompted reflexive consideration of my positionality and of the relationship[s] between myself as researcher and the researched.

3.4 Case study

A case study may be defined as an empirical method which 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident' (Yin, 2018, p.15). Herein lies the assumption that context is in some way intrinsically linked to the phenomenon under investigation and as such is subject to investigation itself. This assumption distances case study approaches from positivist and

experimental research paradigms, where the phenomenon is deliberately separated from its context, often through controlled laboratory type environments. Instead, case study approaches align with an interpretivist philosophy where each 'case' provides a researcher with a distinctive situation for investigation where there is a multiplicity of data points, variables and sources of evidence which converge in a triangulating fashion (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2018).

It is important to acknowledge that a case study approach may be considered by some as narrow and individualised; however, the depth of study provides insights that otherwise might not be uncovered (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Griffiths, 2009; Punch, 2009). Case studies involve holistic analyses, which recognise the complexities and contexts of systems, and how individuals position themselves in those systems under investigation. Examining the case in its natural environment allows for wholeness to be retained (Punch, 2009; Thomas, 2011), but a challenge for the case study researcher lies in prior development of theoretical propositions to develop schema in order to focus on particular aspects of the case while ignoring others (Ancona, 2005; Yin, 2018).

Chadderton and Torrance (2011) identify the underpinning principle of case study as accessing participants' perspectives and reporting them through theoretical analysis of these perspectives in relation to social theory. To this end, I am conscious that local knowledge produced within and across cases is not to be considered in isolation but is always connected to larger social, cultural and political concerns (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009; Kenten, 2010; Noffke, 1997). For this empirical research, an embedded case study methodology is used. This allows for both individualised and holistic analysis of the data as a whole, which takes into account shared experiences across the group of participants, all of whom are teachers engaging in part-time Master's in education at one university site. As we are well aware from the literature review, teachers cannot and should not be considered as a homogenous group (Edwards & Edwards, 2017). An embedded case study, therefore, allows for each individual teacher within the research to be conceptualised as a 'sub-unit' (Yin, 2018). This organisation of the case study avoids potential pitfalls in this research project of analysing data and providing conclusions based solely on individual experience, or solely on organisational experiences where the participants are treated as a homogenous group.

In response to the research questions posed previously, data collection initially focused on each individual 'sub-unit' before being brought together and analysed in connection with the case as a whole. Data collection for each participant comprised semi-structured interviews and video-diary entries, intended to build a narrative understanding of each participant's lived experiences.

3.4.1 Narrative approaches

As described in my methodological assumptions, a social construction ontology relates to an epistemological assumption that knowledge is constructed through dialogue and narrative. Narrative – or stories and story-telling – underpins a great deal of Western culture through a long history of popular Bible stories that have become enmeshed in the fabric of Anglo and Christian societies (Dawn, 2010). Narrative approaches to research have been well established in religious, humanities and social science fields, traditionally associated with those who follow a social constructivist position (e.g. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Goodson et al., 2012; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). In social research, a key influence in this field has been Bruner, who explores the ways in which narrative is entangled in two aspects: 'narrare' or 'telling', and 'gnarus' or 'knowing in some particular way' (Bruner, 2003, p.27). Narrative requires a recount of events in which meaning is made through the process of telling. As such, I have come to consider that some knowledge is created and constructed through narratives of lived experiences and examination of these narratives in relation to wider social, cultural, historical and political concerns (Bruner, 1986, 1990; Goodson et al., 2012; Kenten, 2010).

Narrative can be considered through a socio-constructive lens to be a form of externalising internal thoughts and emotions rooted in lived experiences and figured worlds. Carr (1997) brings to the fore what he terms 'first-order' narratives – those constructed by participant themselves – which are also termed 'ontological' narratives (Somers, 1994); that is, ontological in the way that participants who tell stories about their lives provide the researcher with the means to understand each of them better. However, from a socio-constructivist stance, the researcher must acknowledge that a participant's identity[ies] and the social world[s] that they inhabit are constantly 'in the making'. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) point out that narratives are not a transparent or objective account through which the researcher learns 'truths'; rather, the way in which narratives are formed in a symbiotic relationship between individual and their social world[s] provides a window into the milieu under scrutiny. As Chase (1995, p.20) puts it:

> Life stories themselves embody what we need to study: the relation between this instantiation (this particular life story) and the social world the narrator shares with others; the ways in which culture marks, shapes and/or constrains this narrative; and the ways in which this narrator makes use of cultural resources and struggles with cultural constraints.

Thus, the researcher must be attuned to the inter-relational and institutional contexts in which narrative accounts are produced, presented and consumed. Because of the conventionalised character of narrative and the situatedness of participating in a particular form of research, participants' narratives are likely to express ideological effects and hegemonic assumptions. The

researcher must appreciate that participants may be shackled by the stories that they tell (or that are culturally available for them to tell) and that the structure, content and telling of the narrative is defined and regulated by the social world[s] in which participants are situated for the telling (Ewick & Silbey, 1995). Yet this situatedness of the narrative[s] in itself can be revealing and can account for some facets of the richness of narrative as a data source for the researcher. The bounded nature of narrative provides a window on inter-subjective meanings which are constitutive of the social matrix in which participants find themselves and act; the role of the researcher, then, is to carefully negotiate interpretative and reflexive analysis of narrative data so as not to overlook the formation and expression of identity[ies] as related to social and cultural worlds.

To build rich narratives of each participant I drew on two key methods for data collection: semi-structured interviews and video diaries.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

There is a long history in social sciences of the use of interviews in general as a tool to investigate the meanings of individual's experiences and interrogate the context of participants' behaviours (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Seidman, 2013). Interviews enable the researcher to gain complex and in-depth information (Wengraf, 2001); the focus of most qualitative interviews is to develop understanding and interpretation of individuals as related to their milieu (Punch & Oancea, 2014a; Tierney & Dilley, 2002; Waller et al., 2015). As Punch argues,

> It [interview] is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. It is also one of the most powerful ways we have of understanding others. (2009, p.144).

However, the use of interviews to support narrative approaches can be problematic, as participants may not be able to construct their own representations in a situation where their dialogue is frequently punctuated by questions from the researcher (Waller et al., 2015). But interviews as a tool to support the construction of a narrative should not be ruled out entirely. King & Horrocks (2009) discuss three different types of interviews: realist interviews (fact-finding and decontextualised); contextual interviews (uncovering participants' individual experiences as related to situation, along with acknowledgement of a researcher's subjectivity); and constructionist interviews (co-construction of meanings by the interviewee and interviewer). The latter two notions of contextual and constructionist interviews speak to narrative approaches. There is alignment here with the notion that storytelling is an interactive process and that narratives are co-constructed. This has led me to consider framing my role as researcher as a 'guide' who encourages and co-constructs stories of experiences with a participant (Riessman, 2008; Waller et al., 2015).

Accordingly, within a narrative approach there should be no strict interview structure, although a series of open-ended questions may be created by the researcher (Punch & Oancea, 2014a; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Waller et al., 2015). These should include narrative questions, which elicit story responses, and evaluative questions, which encourage participants to make judgements and to explore how their lived experiences relate to different social or cultural situations (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Wengraf, 2001).

As Wengraf (2001) asserts, it is important not to under-theorise semi-structured interviews in terms of data collection and data analysis. My initial interview schedule for each semi-structured interview with participants was informed by my review of literature, conceptual framework and previous data collection, including themes that had arisen in initial reconnaissance work (Table 3.4). As can be seen in Table 3.1, these questions were open and designed to prompt participants to reflect on and elucidate multiple aspects of their experiences and their responses to these, which could provide a focus for analysis through a lens of identity[ies].

Table 3.1 Semi-structured interview schedules

Initial interview (Dec 2019-Jan 2020)
• Please can you tell me about your background as a teacher – for example, your current professional role and what brought you into teaching. • Can you tell me about any experiences that you feel have been important in your career so far? Why is/was this significant? • What motivated you to begin Master's study? • What have been some of the significant experiences for you during your study so far? • What do you think the impact of your dissertation will be for your students, colleagues and school? • What do you think some of the key challenges might be in completing this dissertation? • Do you anticipate any changes to yourself as a result of completing the full Master's programme?
Member check discussion (Dec 2020-Feb 2021)
• How do you feel about your video diaries? • You've had chance to see some of the moments I thought were significant and my initial interpretations. Do you agree with these? Why/why not? • Were there any other moments that you thought were particularly significant? • How did you find recording the diaries? • Did knowing it was shared with me affect the content?
12+ month post-completion interview (Dec 2021-Mar 2022)

- What impact has completing your Master's had on you?
- Has it changed the way you think or feel about teaching?
- Has it changed the way you think or feel about yourself as a researcher?
- Has it changed the way you think or feel about politics in education?
- What would you say to a teacher thinking about starting a part-time Master's programme?

3.4.3 Video diaries

I am influenced by reports of previous narrative studies with teacher participants which encompass a strong focus on personal experience and history to highlight individual responses to social and cultural norms, expectations and assumptions (e.g. Anspal, Eisenschmidt, & Löfström, 2012; Carter, 1993; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Goodson, 2003; Watson, 2006). The stories told can provide an examinable link between personal and social worlds and an insight into how individuals construct and reconstruct identity (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013).

In order to gain such insights, I intended for each participant to complete four video diary entries over the course of their dissertation research project. Rather than written diary entries, I chose to use a video diary tool, whereby participants record themselves on a digital device of their choice (phone, tablet, laptop, desktop PC) using a programme familiar to them, Panopto, which uploads securely to the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). On a practical level, video recording diary entries can be completed at a time and in a space of participants' choice, which may increase participants' perceived level of autonomy in the research (Jones et al., 2015; Noyes, 2004). It may also be that some participants find recording audio/visual diaries to be less time consuming than written diary entries. However, literature around the use of video diaries, although still somewhat emergent in the field of educational research, points to the ways in which they provide a multi-modal source of data that could be considered more 'natural' (Blikstad-Balas, 2017) and 'compelling' (Noyes, 2004) than written or other forms of data. Cashmore, Green, & Scott (2010, p.107) argue that video diaries enable participants to 'project a sense of identity that is not limited'; in other words, participants are able to share experiences and emotions within a particular situation, free from the distractions, directions or assumptions of the researcher (Pocock et al., 2009). In the context of my research, the 'intimacy' (Pink, 2007) of video diaries has been beneficial in helping to identify [verbal and non-verbal] markers which suggest significant moments for participants which may provide insights into their identity[ies] as they strive to accommodate the simultaneous roles of teacher and researcher.

It would be naïve, however, to assume that the use of video diary is an unproblematic approach. The issue of reactivity to camera – how comfortable participants feel in talking to camera and the way in which behaviours and speech might be modified in response – should be considered (Ødegaard et al., 2014; Prosser, 1998), as well as the possibility of self-censorship by participants (Kenten, 2010; Meth, 2003). Jones et al. (2015) further problematise the notion of 'naïve empiricism' held by some researchers: an assumption that [video] diaries are a wholly authentic, democratic and empowering platform for participants' voices. In response to both points, reflexivity of the researcher is key. This includes awareness of how a researcher's aims and intentions may unduly influence participants' thoughts and talk (Piper & Frankham, 2007) and awareness of how interpretations and representations of non-linguistic features have to be made with caution, due to their subjective nature (Hammersley, 2010; R. L. Jones et al., 2015; Miller & Zhou, 2007). Researchers' interpretations of diary entries – whatever media used – are subjective and it is recommended that these be reviewed through a member check interview with participants. This provides the participant with an opportunity to clarify, expand and reflect on their accounts, as well as discussing the researcher's potential interpretations of these (Herron et al., 2019; Kenten, 2010; Meth, 2003).

It could be surmised that with careful structuring, scaffolding and prompting (R. L. Jones et al., 2015; Kenten, 2010) there is the potential in using video diaries as a data source which provides ownership (Bloustein, 1998; Herron et al., 2019) and improvisation (Noyes, 2004) for participants and which affords me insight into the construction of personal narrative and presentation of an individual's experiences as related to their identity[ies]. An initial schedule of video diary prompts was established in January 2020, although disruption due to Covid-19 and the impact on schools meant that the schedule was amended in early March 2020. This included the addition of a phone call discussion to ascertain participants' intentions in continuing with their dissertation and participation, as seen in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Remote data collection prompts with participants (sent via email for video diary requests)

Request 1 (post initial interview): February 2020
Please tell me where you are up to with your dissertation project. What have been the significant experiences since we last met? Do you feel as though there have been any changes to you – personally or professionally - from your dissertation so far?
Unstructured phone calls: March-April 2020
Discussion on the impact of Covid on professional role, dissertation work and intentions for continuing dissertation.
Request 2: May 2020
Tell me how your research is going. What have been the significant experiences since you began? Have you had to make any changes to your research? Are you thinking differently about your research in this ongoing situation?
Request 3: June 2020
In this next entry, I'd like to find out more about any findings that might be starting to emerge. Have they been as you expected? Has anything surprised you? But please also take time to reflect on your experiences, what you think has been most significant, and any impact your study is having on you (this could be personally and/or professionally).
Request 4: September 2020
In this next entry, I'd like to find out more about how you feel now that you have finished (or nearly finished) your dissertation. What do you think will happen next with your dissertation work – what impact might it have? Do you anticipate support from colleagues or senior leaders in school in applying the outcomes of your dissertation? Do you feel as though you have changed as a teacher and/or as a researcher since you began the dissertation?

Taking heed of the issues of naturality in front of the camera, rather than posing specific questions to participants I provided an initial, open-ended prompt for a monologue-style talk to camera. To support the relevance of each video diary to the research project, I utilised components of the conceptual framework to highlight some particular themes that participants *might* want want to cover in their entry. However, as will be seen in the findings chapters, each participant took account of some of these components, discarded others, and tended to construct each diary entry based on what seemed important and most significant to them reflecting on their recent experiences. Concerns related to

naturality, openness and honesty were also addressed in the member check and final semi-structured interviews with each participant.

3.4.4 Member check interview

The use of member check interviews as part of the research acknowledges the concern that in qualitative research the researcher may impose their own personal or professional beliefs and interests during the research process, with the possibility that the researcher's voice may dominate that of the participants (Birt et al., 2016; Mason, 2018). The work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) has been considered as seminal in the field of member checking and has influenced many researchers' understanding of member checking as a means of enhancing rigour and qualifying claims of validity and credibility of researchers' presentations and interpretations of phenomena (Doyle, 2007). However, Lincoln and Guba's work took place at a time when many of the benchmarks of quantitative research were used to judge qualitative research, and some would argue that member checking has become conceptualised as a 'quality indicator' of qualitative research methods. Creswell (2016) and Doyle (2007) both describe how member checking in much qualitative research seems to be limited to the checking of data (through review of the accuracy of transcripts) or of agreeing/disputing final interpretations or summaries of analysis. At issue is how these approaches seemingly reinforce the prioritisation of the researcher's voice, with the participants as a passive 'checker' (Birt et al., 2016; Carlson, 2010). Such a construct of member checking could be critiqued in two ways: firstly, that member checking as a research tool is not enough alone to support researchers' claims of validity and reliability. Secondly, that member checking as a validity and reliability tool is an oversimplified format which does not adequately account for epistemological and methodological, as well as ethical, concerns (Brear, 2019). According to Birt et al., these ethical concerns include,

> 'the changing nature of interpretations of phenomena over time; the ethical issue of returning data to participants, the dilemma of anticipating and assimilating the disconfirming voices, and deciding who has ultimate responsibility for the overall interpretation.' (2016, p.1802)

Following these critiques, it is necessary for a researcher to evaluate how their chosen approach to member checking fits with the theoretical position of their study. Birt et al. (2016) describe employing member check interviews as an ethical approach, which situates the participant as more agentic within the research; they promote researchers utilising initial analysis of an individual participant's data as a stimulus for a semi-structured, or unstructured, interview. As Harvey (2015) explains, for researchers to genuinely acknowledge participants as responsible agents of their own lives, there is an obligation for the researcher to provide opportunity for participants to theorise their own experience.

Harvey's (2015) approach to member checking draws heavily from Bakhtin's concept of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981), framing participants as actors who co-create meaning in discourse with others. The participant is an author of narrative consciousness in relation to the researcher and, through member check interviews, the creation of a narrative is a multi-voiced act, with all agents mutually shaping the stories they bring to each other. Harvey's approach seeks to position participants as 'holistic, relational and agentive' (p.25). This position has congruence with the epistemology of social constructionism, from the stance that knowledge is co-constructed.

Authority and privileging of voice in narrative approaches is a particular concern: that of the participant through the use of direct quotes from the data, or that of the researcher through their interpretations of data (Fossey et al., 2002). The member check interview can provide some equilibrium whereby participants have opportunity to engage in co-constructing interpretations, rather than simply checking accuracy and agreeing, or disagreeing, with the researcher's initial interpretations and analysis. In this empirical work, I position member check interviews as a tool to support the trustworthiness of data. Prior to each member check interview, participants were sent a sample of detailed transcripts with my initial interpretations, along with a summary of the key themes across all participants that had been identified at that point. An example for one participant can be seen in Table 3.3. The selection of moments and interpretations to share with each participant was informed by initial analysis, which indicated the frequency of particular experiences (themes) and the frequency or strength of particular non-verbal cues. This meant that each participant had opportunity to review and discuss the most frequent types of interpretation I had made across their accounts.

Table 3.3 Member check notes sent to Karen, pre-meeting

Initial thematic codes from all participant data:		
Teachers don't spend time researching		
MA study changes how you think [developing criticality]		
I'm not a researcher		
Physical space influences identity		
Academic skills separate to professional skills		
Lack of time		
Conflict/resistance [with self and others]		
Importance of professional learning community [supervisor/peers/colleagues]		
Video diary moments and interpretation for discussion		
Source	**Transcript (times)**	**Verbal/physical cues *Initial interpretations***
Video diary February part 2	2:38-3:12 'So it really is… impacting on me as a professional which is great… erm…. Errr…. Yeah, so, yeah, so, I feel, so I'm trying to look at what ehm you wanted us to say…' 3:14-3:16 'So, sorry, I keep pausing which is really annoying' Moves on to talk about data collection and plans	Lots of pauses and hesitations. Looks at camera and away repeatedly (looking at email prompt for diary?). 3:18-3:28 Repeatedly brushing hair with fingers and touching face – seems anxious? Moves on to talking firmly about plans – what I need to do – counting on fingers firmly. *Raised impact on self as a professional but didn't explain further. Lots of pauses and hesitations, seems potentially to be causing some anxiety?* *Moved on to talk about plans for data collection which could be a safer topic to discuss.* *Would like to know more about how Karen felt about her professional identity at this time – was it changing and was this causing anxiety?*
Video diary May	3:30-3.46 Talking about difficulties with literature review 5:25-5:41	3:46-3:48 Brushing hair with fingers – is this a sign of moment of anxiety/concern/worry? 5:35-5:41

	'but, just… pulling together that research *critically*… for someone like me who is not used to doing lots of academic reading so everything is hard you have to read it once read it again read it again… to really understand it…'	Talking about challenge of reading critically, emphasis on challenge, hand gestures to emphasise how hard it is (one or both hands/arms pushing firmly down) *Goes on talk about methodology section as more straightforward and feeling more confident.* *Working critically with literature requires a different academic skillset to planning 'action' in research – is there some conflict here between approaching research as a teacher and as a researcher?*
Video diary July	7:47-8:13 'but, academic writing… errr…[sigh] yeah… perhaps it gets easier I don't know… but… erm…it.. you know, because because I haven't wanted to just do it either, I've wanted to do a reasonably good job of it which I'm sure most people do [big intake of breath and sigh] I do feel like, yeah, it's been a bit of a slog at times…'	7:50-8:13 Grins, leans back, leans forward, moves arm across chest and scratches elbow, folds arm – seems to close body, pull self in tight – sign of nervousness? Followed with that big sigh [8:07-8:10]. Goes on to talk about reflecting on self as a learner and the need to spend time thinking about things – different to previous work in school where there isn't time to reflect and think about things systematically. *Suggestion of a change in researcher identity – becoming more familiar with the researcher skills and acknowledging how they are different to a teacher professional skill set.*
Video diary September	Much of the time is spent describing outcomes of research and impact for school. 13:42-13.53 'I'm sorry if I've rambled on but I've got… [pause].. I've got quite passionate about, about it… erm… yeah…'	*Confidence in talking about research suggesting stronger researcher identity. Focus on impact on school rather than impact on self – suggests priority is on school and outcomes for children. Is this a driver for Karen – social justice orientated?* 13:42-13.53 Pauses when talking about passion for project, smiling but seems hesitant. *Apologising for talking and being passionate – suggests that expects others not to appreciate research, or that to be passionate about it is not quite right in some way. Researcher identity perhaps not secure? Is the teacher identity dominating?*

As can be seen in the interview schedule in Table 3.1, discussions in the member check interviews were centred around my initial interpretations, their own responses to reviewing their raw data, and discussion around their perception of openness in each of their video diary entries. The resulting conversations provoked me to interrogate further my positionality and reflexivity apropos my own identity[ies] and perceived power relations with each participant. It also brought to light particular 'episodes' related to identity[ies] that warranted further investigation within and across the 'sub-units' of this embedded case study and influenced the shaping of analytic approaches as explained later in this chapter.

3.5 Site and context of the research

The research study was based at a small, post-1992 university, which is a significant provider of ITTE and CPD for teachers in the north of England. It is the university at which I work and teach, although during the course of this research project I had no contact with the participant group as a Master's tutor. I chose to focus my study on teachers who were in the final, dissertation year of a part-time Master's in Education programme. In my professional experience of supervising previous dissertation students on this programme (2016 onwards), the locus of enquiry is often related to personal and professional experience, for example, interrogating curriculum and pedagogical approaches to specific subject areas linked to pupils' under-attainment or investigating barriers in students' levels of engagement with teaching staff. But it has been documented that teachers who engage in research on their own practice engage in 'risky business' (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015): it can be difficult to raise tricky questions around what happens in their own classrooms and in the wider context of the school and beyond (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Philpott & Oates, 2017). This is not least because during the course of research teachers may find themselves working both within and against the system, particularly in relation to centrally-determined policy and practice (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Sachs, 2000). Although the teachers in this research project would have engaged with research prior to beginning their dissertation projects, up until this point their work with research has tended to be around reviewing and analysing research work of others. It is only at the dissertation stage in this Master's programme that teachers become active researchers, carrying out in-depth empirical or theoretical work with opportunity to reflect critically on their own personal, professional and political understandings of the issues they explore. But in order to reify my understanding of the value of Master's level dissertation research as the locus of study, I engaged in reconnaissance work with teachers nearing completion of their part-time dissertation on this programme in Spring 2019.

3.6 Reconnaissance work

Reconnaissance work can be conceptualised as an element of 'fact-finding' (Ivankova, 2014) or 'information gathering' (Walsh & Moss, 2010) within close-to-practice research. A reconnaissance approach is useful in the way in which it can enable the researcher to draw out pieces of information about existing practices, experiences and contexts which shape the facets of the 'puzzle' related to the site of research (Walsh & Moss, 2010). Using reconnaissance work can be a rapid way to gain information in an emergent and flexible way, as questions unfold and the researcher pursues what makes sense (Patton, 2014). It is also beneficial in the context of a longitudinal study where a pilot study may not be practically possible.

Ivankova (2014) identifies the benefits of researchers engaging with reconnaissance work to inform the development of actions in the next stages of research. As she says, meta-inferences can be created during reconnaissance work, which may prompt the researcher to return to research design in order to fine tune data collection plans, or, in the case of my own research, to fine tune a conceptual framework and research questions that underpin the research project as a whole. Similarly, Walsh & Moss (2010) describe 'Stage one reconnaissance', which incorporates collection of some baseline data and subsequent process mapping which enables the researcher to identify the 'clinical puzzle'. In the case of my research, reconnaissance work informed decisions about sampling, semi-structured interview schedules, prompts for video diaries and supported the refinement of the conceptual framework. The reconnaissance work also provoked me to examine my own positionality and potential researcher bias which influenced some assumptions within the original research questions and video diary prompts.

Reconnaissance work took place in April-May 2019. Three teachers who were at the point of dissertation submission took part in an informal discussion about their experiences on the Master's programme and their dissertation year. Each teacher was asked to talk freely about their experiences and prompted to talk about any positives of their Master's study as well as any challenges faced. As this was reconnaissance work to support 'information gathering', conversations were not recorded and only informal written notes were taken. No identifying features of the three teachers were noted. Table 3.4 summarises thematic analysis of these brief notes and conversations. These six areas subsequently influenced the research questions, conceptual framework and framing of initial data analysis.

Table 3.4 Themes from reconnaissance notes

Theme	Notes
Emotional labour	Emotions and the emotional labour attached to MA study, but especially when it comes to the dissertation which takes more investment and emotional attachment - it's more personal and more high stakes. Striving for something personal and passionate about the subject.
Emotional dissonance	Emotions mentioned included guilt, worry, anxiety. Study takes time away from family - personal connections and commitments seemed central to emotional distress. Changes to personal relationships had not been anticipated. Changes in professional relationship attributed to the academic study, i.e. difficulty in continuing professional relationships, 'I was just pretending all the time. I didn't feel comfortable in those kinds of conversations.'
Academic identity	Transition from work to academic study - not feeling confident or good enough. Fear of 'the academy' and tend to perceive teaching as not an academic profession, i.e. 'I actually had to Google critical analysis, and then I told myself off for being ridiculous because I teach this to my sixth form students.'
Political awareness	Recognition of a political element to study, tended to grow in awareness of policy and impact on wider education reform throughout Master's study. Increase in criticality and consideration of 'status quo'. Some frustration that colleagues lacked the same awareness.
School culture	Level of support from school, including financial, time, workload, and interest. Consistent lack of recognition from SLTs around potential for wider professional development and potential to lead development in the school post-Master's.
Insider research	Relates to professional relationships as indicated in emotional dissonance. Difficulty perceived in articulating outcomes from Master's and dissertation with colleagues in school, but especially SLT. Some frustrations in inability to challenge 'usual' practice, i.e. 'I felt an oppressive atmosphere in schools - I started to dig and the deeper I got the more bodies I found.'

3.7 Sample

As Mason (2018) puts it, 'qualitative research is very often about depth, nuance and complexity, and understanding'. To answer my research questions fully, I needed a sample of teachers from the AY2019/20 Master's in Education dissertation cohort. I intended to recruit a sample of four - six participants, following the maxim that choosing to use a small number of narratives allows the researcher to explore rich experiences and development over time, rather than 'snapshots' of particular moments (Reissman, 1993). Punch & Oancea (2014b) posit that while there are multiple sampling approaches in qualitative research, the basic tenet that sampling must fit within the other components of the study remains constant. As in my experience, practical constraints can further shape the approach taken to sampling (Dawson, 2009; Mason, 2018) and in this research project I employed a purposive and convenience approach, utilising my connection with the Master's in Education programme. I am aware that convenience sampling can come 'at the expense of information and credibility' (Miles & Huberman, 1994b, p.28) and that the ability to generalise findings from a convenience sample can be limited (Dawson, 2009). However, as one of the intended outcomes of my research questions is to consider increasing recruitment and retention of teachers to the Master's programme within the local context of the university, the sample is highly relevant. I attempted to maximise the plausibility of my research findings by selecting a sample that was typical of the Master's in Education part-time student cohorts.

I was open to participation by any teachers completing the dissertation stage of the Master's programme but discounted the one teacher that I had provisionally been assigned to supervise. The cohort progressing into AY2019/20 was made up of 12 teachers from primary, secondary and FE settings. In November 2019, the start of the dissertation year for the Master's cohort, I attended one of the taught sessions to present the opportunity to participate in the research. Five participants were initially recruited: two primary teachers and three secondary teachers, including one secondary teacher who was employed in the independent sector at the beginning of their participation. Although participants self-selected, I was aware that a cross age-phase sample would be beneficial as there is significant contrast in terms of the size and structures of primary and secondary schools (even within schools on the same cross-age-phase site) which could be an important factor in regard to teachers' professional identities and opportunities to engage with research activity.

Each participant took part in a semi-structured interview in November-December 2019, allowing me to ascertain their initial reflections on their experience as a teacher and motivations for beginning, and continuing, Master's level CPD. Over the course of their dissertation (November 2019 – September 2020), each participant recorded and submitted a number of video-diary entries (I sent

four requests and participants each submitted 3-4 videos). At the point of the first Covid-19 outbreak in March 2020, I contacted each participant, initially via email and then by a follow-up phone call for three participants, to discuss whether they were able to continue with their dissertation and continue with the research. One participant had withdrawn from the dissertation and research in February 2020. One participant suspended their dissertation in February 2020; they returned to studies in December 2020 and replied to my email enquiry about whether they wished to continue in the research project at this stage with a request to opt out. Three participants continued with their dissertations and the research, although their capacity to respond to request for video diaries was compromised due to the impact of the pandemic.

Each of the three participants took part in a member check discussion with me online in the period December 2020 - February 2021. In November 2021 invited each participant to a 12+ month (post-Master's completion) follow-up interview. Participants engaged in these between December 2021 and March 2022. These final interviews allowed me to ascertain if, and how, participants described any longer-term impact on themselves following successful completion of their Master's degrees.

3.8 Researcher position

A researcher's positionality is determined by where a researcher stands in relation to the researched. The issue of positionality is a key aspect of the more general concept of 'reflexivity' (Punch & Oancea, 2014a) and as such it is essential for the researcher to consider their position in relation to the locus of the research project and the participants engaged in such. Although the term 'position' may imply an element of fixture, positionality is commonly conceptualised among social science researchers as a more fluid construct, which may shift in various ways throughout the enquiry process (Barnes, 2021; Greene, 2014; Thomson & Gunter, 2011).

A researcher's position is relative to the social values and norms of both the researcher and researched (Merriam et al., 2001). One aspect of critical awareness of the researcher's position relates to theories of insider and outsider positionings, which have long been debated in social science research. There tends to be a broad assumption that researchers function mainly as an insider or as an outsider, and that each of these positions has distinct advantages and disadvantages (Hellawell, 2006). A positivist tradition tends to favour an outsider position, distinct for its sense of objectivity and perceived absence of researcher prejudice (Chavez, 2008). On the other hand, insiders are frequently practitioners researching within their own field, which brings about privileged access to insider knowledge and culture (Greene, 2014). However, this means that the researcher can be constrained by the web of meanings such knowledge provides and may have to make efforts to problematise

common assumptions or accepted policies and practices within their domain of experience. Again, this brought me to consider parallels in examining my own position as a researcher at the same time as my participants are asked to reflect on their own positionality in relation to their teacher and researcher identity[ies] at various points throughout the research project.

Thomson and Gunter (2011) further caution the researcher that common narratives around positionality and the notion of 'self' as a researcher can be reductionist, not least due to the prevailing dichotomy of a distinct insider/outsider position. As they assert, considering the position of researcher through a lens of identity prompts us to address the ways in which the notion of unstable, multiple and dialogic identities might enhance discussions of positionality and interrelationships within research. Subsequently, I am mindful of not limiting this examination to a binary choice of adopting an insider/outsider position which may limit my own understanding of, what Thomson and Gunter (2011, p.17) describe as, 'the real politic and experience of messy research practice'. Indeed, I consider myself to be more aligned to the position of 'inbetweener' (Barnes, 2021; Milligan, 2016) where I am placed in-between an insider-outsider position, with some fluidity related to this position at different points within the research process (Hellawell, 2006). I recognise that I share multiple identities and profound experiences with each of my participants, through a shared history of teaching and engagement in Master's level research. However, in my position as 'academic' and 'researcher' I see that there is a degree of distance or detachment from the community of participants. Following advice from Thomson and Gunter (2011) I consciously tracked my own reflections and reactions to participant interactions throughout the research project. These records of my own experiences enabled me to more forensically examine my positionality at different points in the research project.

3.9 Analytic approach

In qualitative research, data analysis could be considered as an iterative process, whereby a cyclical process of continuous data analysis occurs starting with the collection of the first piece of data and ending only when the final report is submitted (Miles & Huberman, 1994a; Punch, 2014a; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013; Waller et al., 2015). Data analysis works in a cycle that moves both backwards – checking emergent analysis against initial research questions and theoretical perspectives – and forwards – applying patterns to future data set(s) to corroborate analysis. For this case study, I have engaged in sequences of analysis both within and across individual sub-units.

The conceptual framework influenced initial thematic data analysis of each individual sub-unit. I am aware that caution should be taken in using an a priori conceptual framework as, 'at the same time it tells us where to look, it can keep us from seeing.' (Vaughan, 1992, p.195). I take note of advice from

Braun and Clarke (2006), who suggest the researcher should engage in a chronological process of data analysis that includes return and review as analysis and interpretations emerge. This need to return and respond is also at the heart of conceptualising narrative approaches as a tool for analysis of data in this case study.

3.9.1 Principles of narrative analysis

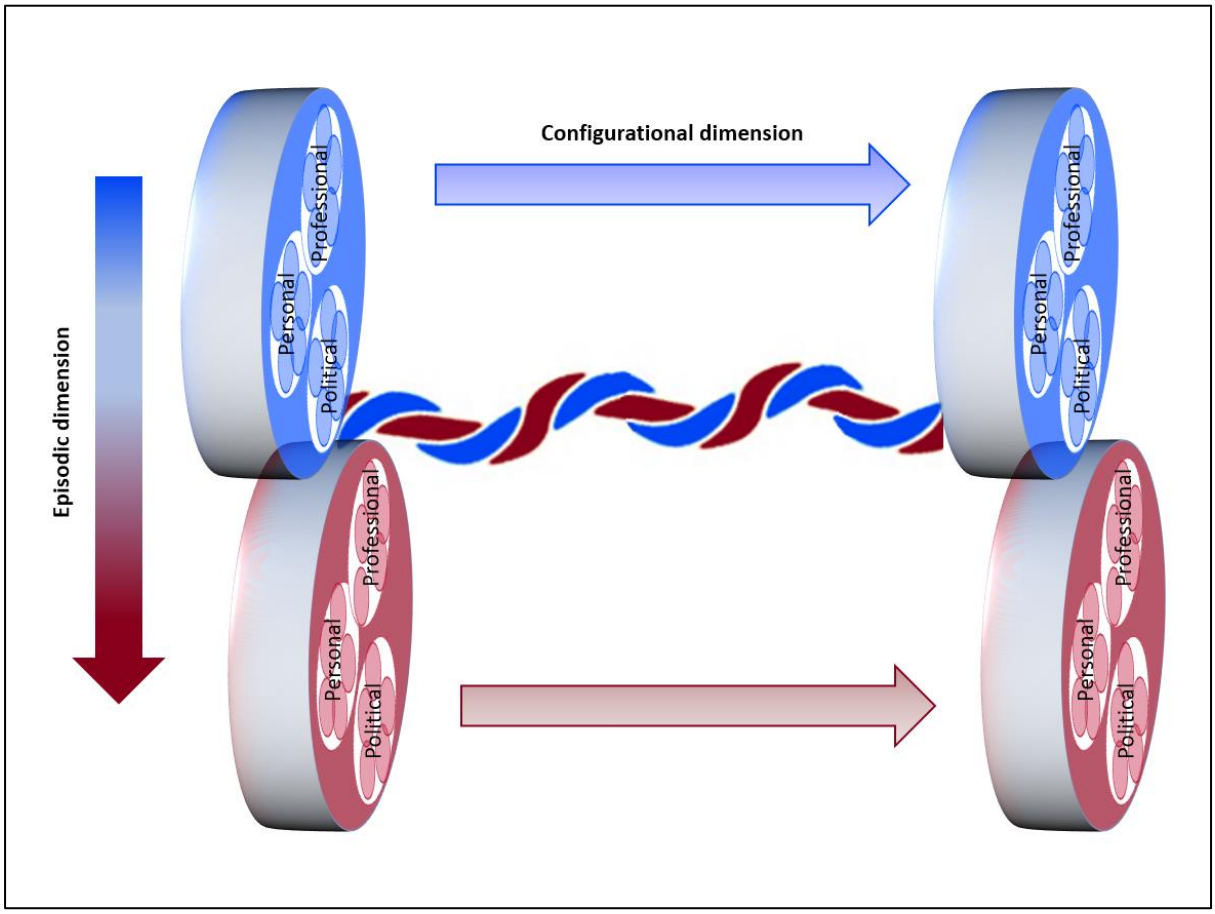
The breadth of our understanding of narrative forms within social sciences research can be problematic in securing a neatly bounded interpretive or analytic approach to narrative data forms. Elliot (2005) points out that the researcher can focus on one or more of three different aspects of narrative accounts: the temporal nature; the hermeneutic nature with a sociological attention; and the social processes involved in producing and consuming narrative accounts.

There appears some correlation here with the notions of Hattie's (2004) rope model which defines the construction and continuation of self-concept and identity[ies] in a linear, temporal fashion. However, the temporality of narrative cannot be assumed to have a distinctive and simple pattern of beginning and end, as in the well-known metaphor of time as an arrow. Ricœur (1980) presents a working hypothesis that narrativity and temporality are closely related. He poses that the construction of narratives cannot be simplified as time-sequenced 'slices of life' to be captured by the researcher. Rather, he considers that every narrative combines two dimensions: an episodic dimension, which characterises the story as made out of specific, individual events, and a configurational dimension, which construes a significant whole out of scattered events over time. That there is a configurational dimension does not assume causality; instead, Ricœur frames the notion of the configurational act as a 'grasping together' (p.178) which can elicit patterns in and amongst the episodes of the story. Rather than considering a narrative as a linear construct from beginning to end Ricouer suggests that we consider there to be a beginning, an end, and an 'in-between' where episodes unite the past, present and future. Thus, there is a cue for the researcher to seek what could be described as an epistemic rhythm or pattern across episodic dimensions.

For the purposes of this research, careful consideration needs to be given to the interaction of episodic and configurational dimensions of each participants' narrative, as well as the configuration across the narratives as a whole. This relates to my socio-constructivist stance, an understanding that storied responses from participants shed light on the relationship between the individual and multiple facets of their social world[s]. Aligning Ricœur's understanding of the episodic and configurational dimensions of narrative along with Hattie's model of identity as linear and temporal, my analysis of participants' data is framed through episodic and configurational dimensions. In relation to analysis of data, it could be considered that episodic dimensions are 'content' analysis and that configurational

dimensions are 'temporal' analysis. The interaction between the content and the temporal can be examined in light of the context, providing a hermeneutic lens with which to examine sociological aspects of an individual's experiences, as well as to relate each dimension to the social and cultural process in which the accounts were created. Thus, I take further direction from Ricœur to engage in analysis which is characterised by investigation, observation, patrol, return and reflection. The requirement to return and reflect on findings is a central repetitive aspect of an epistemic rhythm which provides insight into the complexities of each 'episode' as related to past, present and future events. Each iteration of the epistemic rhythm is in some important if subtle way different from the last, as research experience, knowledge and learning accumulate. Figure 3.2 provides a visual representation of the way in which episodic and configurational dimensions of participants' narratives are analysed as related to the conceptual framework or 'rope model'.

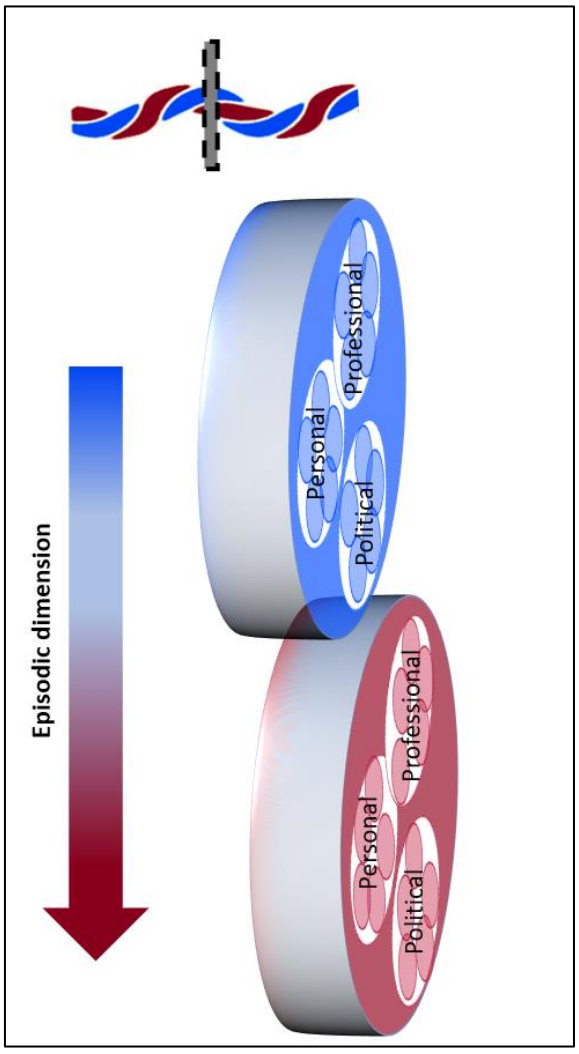
Figure 3.2: Episodic and configurational dimensions of the rope model of teacher-researcher identity[ies]



3.9.1 Data analysis: episodic dimension

Utilising the conceptual framework, or rope model, cutting to a cross-section of the two-stranded rope exposes the two roles of teacher and researcher as dual strands of identity[ies]. This is not to assume that these two strands constitute an individual's whole identity, or that each strand operates independently of the other: as previously explained, I understand identity to be multi-faceted, interrelated and complex (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Burke & Stets, 2009; Day, 2017; Holland et al., 1998). However, for the purpose of this research, it is useful to distinguish the two strands in order to understand how, as explained previously in this chapter, these two strands bind together and if, and when, the two strands might separate and 'fray'.

Figure 3.3 Episodic analysis framework



3.9.2 Data analysis: configurational dimension

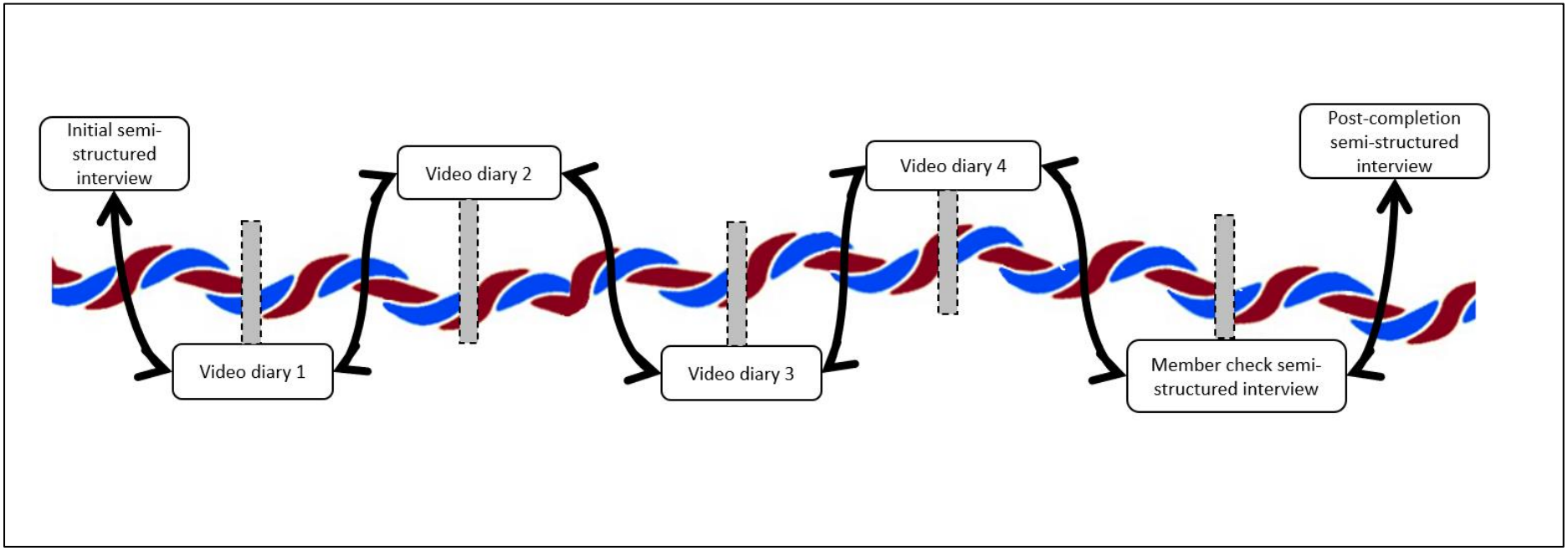
Following Elliott's (2005) suggestions, it can be useful for researchers to establish boundaries on their analytic approach to narrative. In this case, stage one of analysis focused on the temporal nature

of the data and I sought to establish initial participant narrative accounts through linear chronology. It was my intention to spotlight the temporal succession of emplotments, rather than attempt to demonstrate causality and to determine a beginning and an end through which the 'in-between' (Ricœur, 1980) could be explored through ontological and epistemic lenses. Causality is not necessarily a universally recognised feature of narrative in the same way that temporal progression is but the audience of narrative will typically assume causal links even when these have not been made explicit (Ricœur, 1984). In response, the narrative accounts presented here seek to provide an account, in prose form, of events which 'disrupt an initial state of equilibrium or represent a change in fortunes' (Elliott, 2005, p.7). Rather than seeking to explain causality, analysis and interpretation of each narrative account seeks to establish the meaning of events and experiences in relation to each individual's life experiences (Labov and Waletzky, 1997), notions of past, present and future events (Ricœur, 1981) and to identify potential patterns or contradictions between the meanings drawn from each participant's story.

This analytic approach could be considered in relation to Schleiermacher's (1836) concept of the 'hermeneutic circle'. In this philosophy, an understanding of the whole illuminates the parts, which in turn construct the whole. That is not to suggest a repetition of going round in circles as it were, but rather understanding a narrative as related to broader social and cultural constructs, and using these constructs to shed light on the multivocal and dialogical aspects of self that are bounded within these constructs. Relating back to Ricœur's (1980) point: narrative seeks to construct an ordered account from the chaos of internal experience and, as such, there is never a single or definite self-representation, but merely a representation of the individual in relation to the specific time and space of the recount.

Figure 3.4 provides a visual representation of the principle adopted in relation to configurational analysis. In this figure we see a linear representation of each episode which provide insights into the various emplotments of the 'in-between' space. The directional arrows demonstrate one aspect of return and reflection as an example of the way in which the researcher can avoid drawing assumptions of causality and consider the multiple possibilities of relationships between each emplotment in this temporal space.

Figure 3.4 Configurational analysis framework



3.9.3 Data analysis process

The analysis of qualitative data has potential to be 'messy' (O'Dwyer, 2004), so approaches need to by systematic yet without rigidity. The benefit of audio recordings of interviews and video data is that both can be constantly played and replayed, supporting an iterative process of thematic data analysis. Following reports from other research, I opted for detailed analysis of short segments of interview and narrative data rather than systematically transcribing and coding the full data set (Snell, 2011). This supports my intention to 'play' (Yin, 2018) with participants' data. A summary of all data collected across the embedded case study is presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Summary of data sources collected

July 2019	Dec 2019 – Jan 2020	Jan 2020 – Sept 2020	Dec 2020 – Jan 2021	Dec 2021 – Mar 2022
Reconnaissance work with existing MA students	Introductory semi-structured interviews (5 participants)	Video diary entries Karen = 4 Jane = 3 Nigel = 3 & Covid-19 phone calls	Member check discussions (3 participants)	12+ month completion semi-structured interviews (3 participants)

3.9.3.1 Initial thematic analysis

The raw transcript and field notes from each initial interview (n=5), the phone Covid discussions (n=4), member check interviews (n=3) and post-completion interviews (n=3) were uploaded into NVivo. The raw transcripts underwent first level 'topic' coding (Richards, 2015), utilising some 'in-vivo' codes (e.g. 'teachers don't spend time researching'; 'more critical') and some descriptive codes informed by the conceptual framework (e.g. 'personal and professional time for study'; 'policy response').

Second level coding took place concurrent with initial analysis of participants' full sequence of video diary entries. Informed by Creswell (2016), Elliott, (2018) and Saldaña (2016), second level coding included:

- Identifying overlap and redundant codes to refine the coding system
- Organising codes into themes which directly follow the initial conceptual model
- Identifying aspects of transcripts which merit deeper analysis, through differing forms of emergent patterns (Hatch, 2002):
    - Frequent codes within an individual sub-unit or across the whole case

- Different or infrequent codes which may suggest anomalies or deviations
- Codes which relate to potential tension/conflict OR strong congruence between the teacher/researcher identity

Each video diary entry was viewed at the point of submission and initial field notes were taken, driven by the conceptual framework as indicated above. Field notes and a raw transcript taken from each video diary were uploaded into Nvivo for first level coding as above. The development of coding can be seen in Table 3.6.

Following submission of the final video diary entry, each participant's set of videos were viewed as a sequence. Second level viewing field notes were taken which focused on the configurational dimension to identify a beginning, end and various emplotments in-between.

Table 3.6 Development of themes and codes

March-September 2020 *Initial descriptive codes from transcripts*	October-December 2021 *Refining of descriptive codes and moving some descriptive to analytic codes (Richards, 2015)*	January-March 2022 *Refining of analytic codes*	November/December 2022 *Final analytic codes for detailed transcripts*
Teachers don't spend time researching	Research not valued in the profession *(lack of time as a proxy indicator for value)*	Research not valued in the profession *(lack of time as a proxy indicator for value)*	Research not valued in the profession
More critical	MA changes thinking *(includes becoming more critical along with changing perspectives/awareness of wider issues in education policy and practice)*	MA changes thinking *(includes becoming more critical along with changing perspectives/awareness of wider issues in education policy and practice)*	MA changes thinking
Making a difference	Impact of research *(including feeling that engagement with MA and dissertation is 'making a difference')*	Impact of research: Application of research in school or other setting A social justice impact through 'making a difference'	Application of own research Social justice orientation
Lack of time for study	Teachers as technicians *(includes lack of time for research and critical intellectual work, as opposed to 'usual' daily practice)*	Teachers as technicians *(includes lack of time for research and critical intellectual work, as opposed to 'usual' daily practice)*	Teachers as technicians
I'm not a researcher	I'm not a researcher	I'm not a researcher	I'm not a researcher
Developing academic skill	Academic community *(developing academic skills and support of peers/tutors to develop an academic self-concept)* AND Functional work *(focus on functional and practical aspects of dissertation rather than on 'active' research elements)*	Academic community *(developing academic skills and support of peers/tutors to develop an academic self-concept)* AND Functional work *(focus on functional and practical aspects of dissertation rather than on 'active' research elements)*	Academic community Functional work
Self-doubt	Emotional response *(including issues of confidence, self-doubt, etc…)*	Emotional labour *(emotional response to the experience of dissertation or other MA work,*	Emotional labour

		including confidence, frustration, anger, sadness, etc…)	
Policies	Policy critique *(explicit or implicit critique of policies which direct teachers' work, attentions or perceptions of their role, including their response to research*	Policy/political critique *(includes political discourse related to government agencies' actions/directives, e.g. response to DfE, Ofsted, etc…)*	Policy OR political critique
Career			Developing as a teacher
Impact of research		Changing conceptualisation of research *(describes research as external to self, e.g. encouraging others to engage in research)*	Self-concept as researcher Advocacy for research
Conflict		Concern with studies *(worries about completion, feeling behind, lack of impact)*	

3.9.3.2 Creating narratives

A significant aspect of the configurational dimension of participants' data analysis is to pay attention to the role of researcher as a distinct narrator of second order, or 'representational' narrative (D. Carr, 1997; Somers, 1994). These narratives differ from first order, or 'ontological' narratives which are individuals' representations of themselves and which can be understood as constitutive of identity[ies]. In second order narratives, the researcher uses interpretive and analytic frameworks to make sense of individual's experiences, insights into their identity[ies] and interactions with their social worlds. This is exemplified by Langer (2016) who, in theorising his construction of vignettes about participants in his empirical research, highlights the researcher's transgression from mere illustrator to a more distinct approach of interpretative inquiry through writing. Central to this transgression is the process of creating narrative, acted out by tuning in to participant data, which opens up both intellectual and emotional responses for the researcher.

This notion of 'tuning in' speaks to the process of creating narratives in which I engaged following second level coding of participants' video and interview data. Each raw transcript was used to create a first-person narrative of each episode of the participant's experience. These narratives follow the vocabulary and expressions of the participants, but have been written in a way that that they make sense to the reader as an individual and combined narrative. This meant that the order of events within an individual episode was sometimes amended so that a more logical, storied sequence of events becomes available to the reader. Utterances, repetitions and non-verbal cues were not included in the narratives, again to provide a logical story for the reader. No expressions or emphases were amended, but grammatical errors were addressed and punctuation added so that each episode could be presented in a storied way. As exemplified in the analysis of the participants in each of the findings chapters, the creation of such narrative accounts was an important first step in building an initial analysis of configurational dimensions and identifying significant episodes which shed light on transitions in identity[ies] over time. An example of a storied narrative, presented in chapters, can be found in Appendix A.

3.9.3.3 Detailed transcripts

Third level viewing of the video diaries and listening to interview recordings focused on identifying significant episodes that warranted in-depth analysis. Video recordings enable researchers to pay detailed attention to more than what is being verbally uttered. Jewitt (2012, p.6) explains that researchers using video can investigate 'resources and practices through which participants in interaction build their social activities and how their talk, facial expression, gaze, gesture and body

elaborate one another'. Therefore, the selection of episodes from the video diaries and interview recordings for in-depth analysis was made using the following criteria:

- Frequent codes within an individual sub-unit or across the whole case
- Different or infrequent codes which may suggest anomalies or deviations
- Codes which relate to potential tension/conflict OR strong congruence between identity[ies] as teacher and researcher
- Episodes where verbal/non-verbal cues suggest a particularly strong/emotional/hesitant response, e.g. comparatively frequent or lengthy hesitation and pauses in speech; emotional tone of voice or body language which suggests anger, frustration, upset, etc…; and emotional language which describes deep feelings ('it bothers me'; 'more of a knockback'; 'but' with a heavy emphasis and sighs; 'I need to make myself' [fist pumping towards camera]).

Interpretive notes and comments were made on detailed transcripts related to verbal and non-verbal cues. In relation to video diary entries, these were discussed with participants during member-check interviews so that initial interpretations and understandings of these events could be agreed between the researcher and the participant. An example of detailed transcripts for one participant can be seen in Appendix B.

3.9.3.4 Whole case analysis

Subsequent to analysis of each individual participant (or 'sub-unit'), I engaged in whole case analysis. The purpose of this level of analysis was to distinguish between the recount and exploration of each individual's experiences and how each of these narratives relates to the broader context, including the experiences of others within this case study (Goodson, 1992; Yin, 2018). The whole case analysis, presented in the discussion chapters, was designed to respond to the third sub-research question of this project. Shared themes in relation to personal, professional and political experiences of each participant were drawn out, followed by considering if, and how, these shared experiences led to [re]formation of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher for the group of participants as a whole.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical challenges arise in all research designs and processes, but in the case of this research study these challenges come to the fore when considering my socio-constructivist position related to key themes of power, responsibility and accountability (Connor et al., 2018). One key issue considered was that teachers may have felt obliged to participate or that there may have been benefit to the outcomes or grading of their dissertation study if they participated. To mitigate these concerns, I chose

not to include any participant that I was supervising for dissertation, and all communications regarding the research project were sent by myself in role as 'researcher' rather than Master's tutor and supervisor. As I am a colleague of tutors on the Master's programme, I was also aware that participants may have felt concerned about sharing details of their experiences if they portrayed the university experience in a negative light. All participants were assured of confidentiality and that any information shared about their experiences was for the purpose of this study only and would not be fed back to course tutors.

During the course of the research study, participants were engaged in significant discussions about identity[ies] and, through reconnaissance work, I was aware of the possibility of an extensive affective response of some participants. This had potential to cause discomfort and so support services available to participants through university systems were signposted to any participant who displayed or disclosed discomfort during or after the study. This was of particular importance during the Covid-19 pandemic as related to participants' feelings of isolation and increased anxieties disclosed in Covid check-in phone calls.

While many of the ethical considerations writ large here speak to a common framework of minimising harm, another consideration is the potential beneficence for participants in this research study. The concept of 'benefit' for participants is both complex and situated within the research: prompted by Oancea (2014) I had to ask the question, will the expected outcomes of the research justify the burden placed on participants? It could be argued that the most important benefit of research is the creation of new and valuable knowledge, which some consider particularly beneficial when it allows teachers opportunity to reflect on their professional experiences and subsequently inform or refine practices and policies (Evans et al., 2017). All participants highlighted benefits of engaging in this research study during member check interviews, articulating ways in which it had prompted deeper personal and professional reflection on the connections between their dissertations and professional roles. These benefits are explored further in the discussion chapters, which highlights how the opportunity to articulate experiences and changes during their dissertation enabled participants to reflect deeply themselves on personal, professional and political aspects of their identity[ies].

3.10.1 Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality

A key risk to participants in this research study surrounds issues of protecting anonymity. The university which is the site of the study is anonymised in all reporting, although it must be acknowledged that as the university is my workplace it would be possible for its identity to be deduced. This is even more plausible as my researcher positionality as insider-outsider or inbetweener is examined in depth within research findings and conclusions.

Although I have worked with a small number of participants, the size of the Master's cohort progressing into AY2019/20 decreased significantly from an expected number of 21 students to 12. This means there is an increased likelihood of individual participants being identified from their reported data. To mitigate this, all participants have been given pseudonyms and some identifying features such as age, precise role in school and location of school are not reported. The only remaining identifiers are teaching age-phase (primary or secondary) and generic role descriptors (e.g. class teacher, subject leader, senior leader, school improvement advisor). This significantly reduces the risk of participants being identified by individuals outside of the Master's cohort and tutor group. Risks associated with identifying reported data were discussed with participants and they all accepted these. Further, the use of member check interviews with participants to provide opportunity for feedback on reported findings meant that participants had some autonomy on how they were represented within this research study.

Participants were assured that all data collected was retained confidentially. Interviews with participants that took place face-to-face were recorded and stored as digital files on a password protected computer. Participants were pseudonymised prior to interview and all audio or transcript files included the pseudonym only. Interviews that took place remotely were recorded digitally through Teams software to a password-protected area on a secure server. Digital recordings were downloaded and stored on a password-protected computer and original recordings were deleted.

All video diary entries were uploaded by each participant to a password-protected area on the VLE. Only the participant and I were able to access each video entry. Participants could be identified from the raw video data. To prevent connection being made between video data and other, pseudonymised, data sources each video-diary submission was downloaded from the VLE and retained separately from all other data on a password-protected computer. At the point of transcribing, all names were removed and pseudonyms applied. Each transcript was stored separately to the raw video data.

Nvivo software was used for coding transcripts. All data uploaded to Nvivo was pseudonymised. All participants were fully informed about the nature of the study and their right to withdraw at any time or to decline to answer any questions or submit any video-diary entries.

My fully approved ethical consideration (CUREC) form can be seen in Appendix C.

3.11 Credibility and replicability

Concerns of the credibility and replicability related to case study and narrative approaches are often tied to complex issues of validity and trustworthiness in qualitative research as a whole (Barone, 2001;

Riessman, 2008; Waller et al., 2015). Following Baxter and Jack (2008), I understand there to be several measures that can help to promote the reliability of my study, including: clear propositions for interrogation; purposeful research design and sampling; systematic data collection methods; and data analysis which is underpinned by propositions and theoretical frameworks. These have been detailed in previous sections and, taken together, support the principle of replicability of the intentions of this research study. However, what couldn't be replicated is my position and positionality with the participants, both individually and as a group. It could be questioned, would another researcher garner similar responses? Initial data analysis and exploration of my positionality has highlighted how each participant elucidated issues in ways that are related to trust in myself as a researcher. This was an area that each participant raised during the member check interviews, along with my 'credibility' to them as a former teacher and teacher/researcher whom they felt could empathise with aspects of their individual experiences. This is explored in greater depth in the discussion chapters, where I examine how much the perceived trust of being a [former and current] teacher/researcher influenced the way in which participants felt able to be open and honest in their discussions of their experiences.

The principles of case study design lend themselves to credibility, not least through triangulation of multiple data sources and exposure to multiple perspectives which taken together enhance the principles of 'idea convergence' (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2018). However, concern remains around potential researcher bias and influence: at the points of data collection and data analysis, the management of researcher subjectivity is key. I have explored in depth issues related to reflexivity and understand how my own social, cultural and political experiences influence the interpretations and representations that I make. Thus, frequently returning to my original research questions, application of my initial conceptual framework to data collection and analysis and keeping ongoing field notes/diaries to reflect on my own subjectivities have been essential throughout the research study.

3.12 Limitations and constraints

Following Yin (2018), I consider it my intention to present 'thick' descriptions of individual sub-units and to develop iterative explorations of these through whole case analysis, rather than seeking for a 'universal truth' which defines a presumed set of causal relationships. This could lead to what Flyvberg (2006) ascribes as 'misunderstandings' about the limitations and constraints of this case study, including notions that generalisations cannot be made from case study research due to the limited size of the locus of study. However, the force of a single example in enlightening understanding of lived realities, such as teachers' experiences of identity changes, can be great, given that such realities may be difficult to expose. A case study approach follows the maxim that we 'do not attempt to simplify what cannot be simplified' (Shields, 2007, p.12). As set out in my research questions and aims,

I do not seek to identify a singular, fixed construct of transitions in teacher and researcher identity[ies] through Master's study or intend to make broad generalisations or advocate universal policy. Rather, I seek to articulate teachers' lived realities of these experiences in order to inform and influence future decision making about such professional learning for teachers.

3.13 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to set out my position as a researcher, summarising my ontological and epistemological beliefs and the values that have informed decisions about research design. A conceptual framework which underpinned method choices and stages of data analysis in scrutinising an embedded case study, containing three participants or 'sub-units', has been presented and underlying assumptions explored in depth. Each aspect of the research design has been considered and examples provided. In the next chapter, I explain the construction of findings from each participant (sub-unit). Subsequently, findings from each participant chapters are presented where episodic and configurational dimensions of each participants' experiences are systematically exposed and explored. Conclusions about the nature of each individual's experiences and potential [re]formation of identity[ies] over time are presented in response to research sub-questions a) and b).

Chapter Four: Introduction to Findings and Karen

4.0 Introduction to Findings

The construction of the findings from each participant (or 'sub-unit' of the whole case) is intended to highlight significant episodes in each participants' dissertation journey, as well as provide a summary of the configurational dimension of their experiences, providing insight into any [re]formation of yarns, strands and fibres of their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher. In each of the findings chapters that follows, one for each participant, we return to the main research question of this project, '**How do teachers experience [re]formation of teacher and researcher identity[ies] during and after their Master's level dissertation research?'** and the sub-questions designed to interrogate teachers' descriptions of their experiences through a lens of [re]formation of identity[ies]:

What experiences during and after their Master's level dissertation do teachers describe as significant?

a) What is the significance of these experiences in relation to individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' (after Hattie, 2004) of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
b) How do these experiences affect the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
c) What, if any, experiences of the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies] are common across participants?

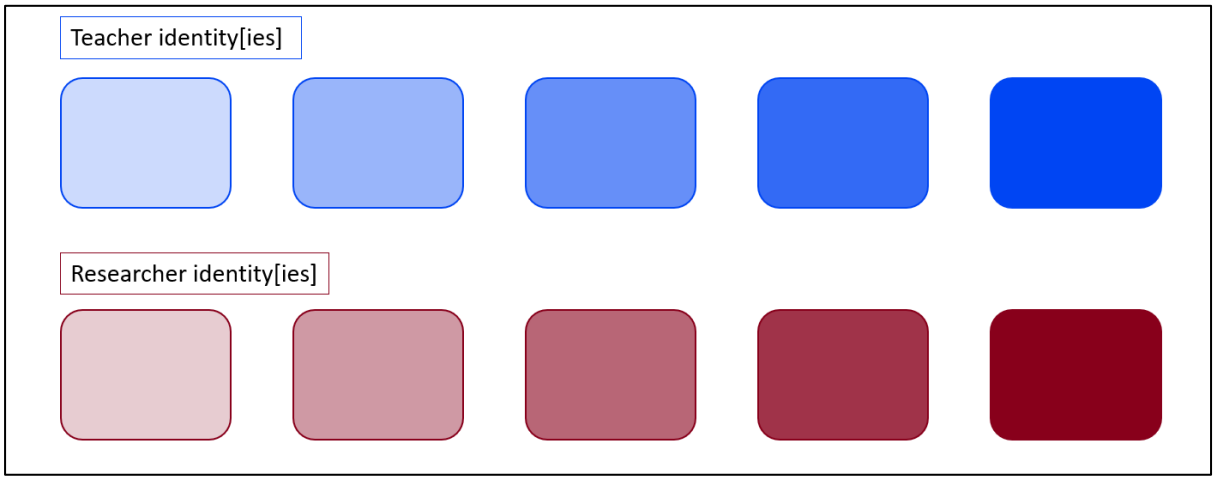
In this and following chapters we will focus on sub questions a) and b), to expose the experiences each participant describes as significant and to consider these experiences in relation to the yarns, strands and fibres of their identity[ies], as well as any potential [re]formation of identity[ies] over the course of this research project. Each individual case follows the same structure: a preamble to introduce the participant and my relationship with them as researcher; presentation of the episodic and configurational dimensions of their dissertation experiences mapped against the conceptual rope model; presentation of key findings in each episode with some interpretative commentary; and a summary of transitions/revisions in relation to the three yarns of teacher and researcher identity[ies]. In the presentation of the episodic dimension, each episode is labelled as a 'Chapter', reflecting the storied construct of each participants' narrative experiences. The beginning of each section is marked by a key quote from the relevant Chapter narrative of that episode; not only does each quote indicate a representative significant experience for this participant, but it also follows my research design which was intended to foreground participants' voices. An example of a full chaptered narrative for

one participant (Karen) and a sample of detailed transcripts for this participant can be found in Appendices A & B.

Figures at the beginning of each findings chapter will demonstrate the mapping of each participant's experiences through the lens of episodic and configurational dimensions, following the initial conceptual and analytic model presented in the research design and methodology chapter. In this model, the two strands of participants' identity[ies] rope are separated out for scrutiny: teacher identity[ies] are represented in green and researcher identity[ies] in orange. This is not to assume that each of these two strands can be totally separated from the other, but to demonstrate initial interpretations of transition[s] from the beginning to the end of the research study, with significant episodes identified in-between.

Within this mapping exercise of the episodic dimension, each particular episode (or chapter) of participation in this research project was graded in relation to perceived significance following research sub-question a) *What is the significance of these experiences in relation to individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?* These gradients are illustrated in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 Gradient coding of episodes



As can be seen above, the gradient coding of each episode moves across a spectrum from a lighter to darker shade, with darker shades representing perceptions of greater significance at that moment in time. Grading the perceived significance of each episode, related to the participant's strand of identity[ies] as teacher or researcher, was constructed following yarns and fibres of each strand as previously discussed in the literature review and methods chapters. These are briefly summarised below:

Personal yarns: constitute affective dimensions and emotional responses, gendered and class-based reflections, descriptions related to confidence and self-doubt, sites of internal conflict, values and beliefs, and social justice motivators for actions.

Professional yarns: include career pathways and future directions/possibilities (or impossibilities), relationships with colleagues, changes to working practices or perceptions of role, and application (or not) of research or Master's study in a professional capacity.

Political yarns: are related to reflection or critique of policies at a local or national level, relationships and experiences with external policy makers and agencies, such as DfE, Ofsted and MAT hierarchies, reference to government decisions (education-based and more broadly) and experiences related to perceived power, agency and autonomy as both teacher and researcher.

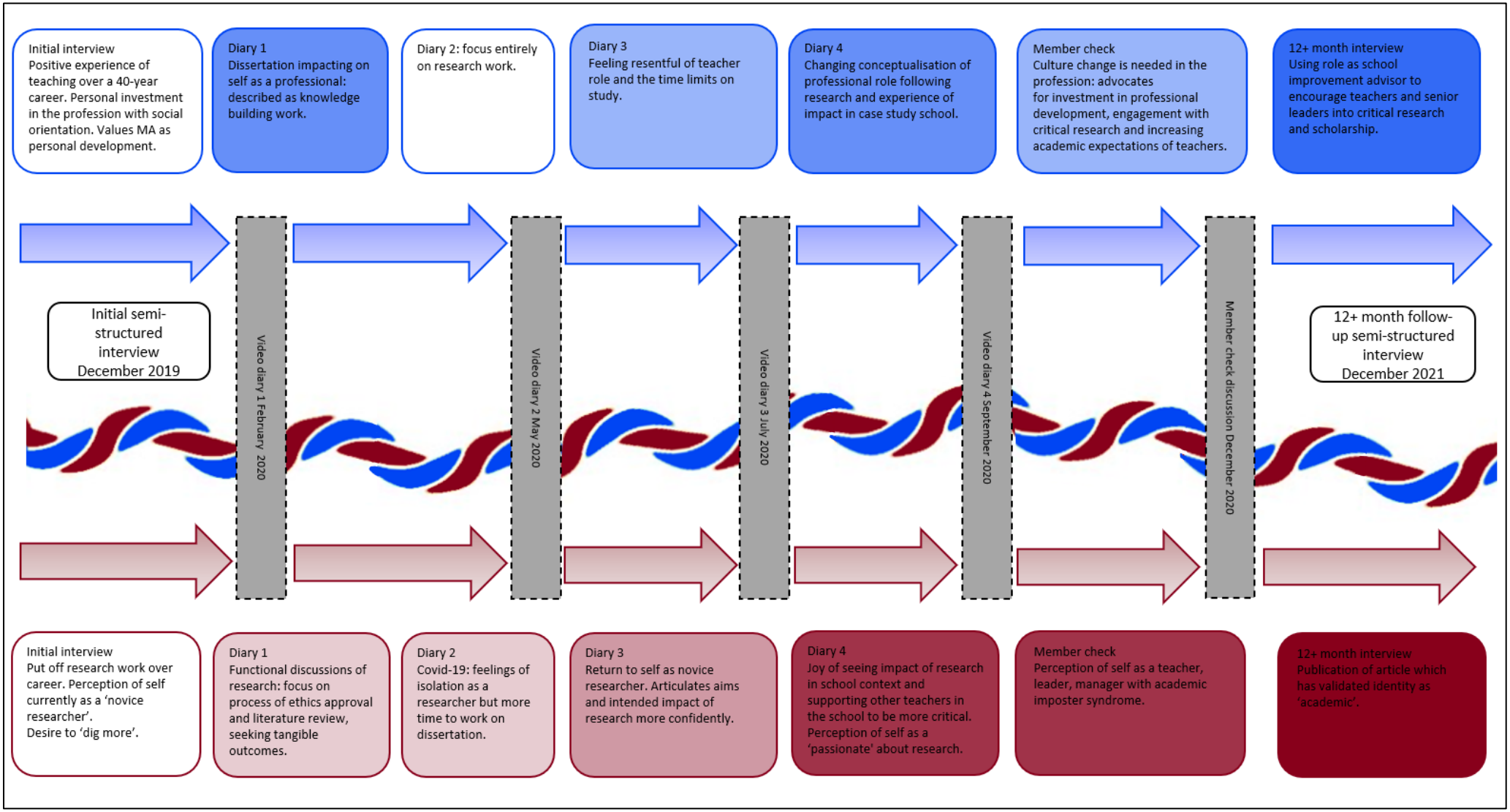
4.1 Preamble: an introduction to Karen and our relationship

I had met Karen before this research, in my previous role as an academic sitting on a Trust Board of local primary schools. At the time, Karen was a consultant for the trust board, having recently retired as head teacher of a primary school within the trust. I was about two years into my role in teacher education, having previously been a primary teacher at one of the schools involved. My involvement in the trust was not just about my professional role – I still had a sense of attachment to my former school and a good relationship with the head teacher.

During my time on the trust board, Karen and another colleague asked me in my role as teacher educator academic to support a small group of teachers in constructing some impact studies of shared interventions over the course of an academic year. I did this gladly, and received some positive feedback from the board, and Karen, about the support I had provided for the group of teachers who had not felt confident in this kind of 'academic' work. This work with the trust could have influenced Karen's involvement in this research project, as she described in later conversations the high level of trust she felt in me as a researcher and academic, along with her perception of me as having a practical understanding of primary teachers' backgrounds and some of the challenges for teachers engaging in research.

Karen seemed to me particularly keen to engage with the research project. She was always first to be booked in for an interview and returned her videos quickly after requests were emailed out. She returned the greatest number of diary entries out of all the participants.

Figure 4.1 Karen episodic and configurational dimensions: teacher identity[ies] and researcher identity[ies]



4.2 Chapter 1, 'The beginning': an introduction to Karen

Karen and I met for our first meeting in December 2019, in my office on the university campus.

4.2.1 Karen as teacher

> I've been in education for more than 40 years unbelievably. Initially as a teacher, then I was a head teacher for 20 years in three different schools, and I also spent three of those years as a school advisor for the local authority. I retired from headship in 2014 but continued to work as school improvement advisor, consultant for a trust and I also facilitate NPQH and NPQ courses. I'm still heavily involved in teaching and working with teachers. Now I work with ten primary schools across the city, mostly in disadvantaged areas of the city, supporting teachers and groups of children, looking at how we can improve outcomes.
>
> Karen Chapter 1

Karen trained to teach through a polytechnic route, starting in 1974. It seemed an obvious choice in a climate of limited career opportunities for girls: she describes how she was not given the same careers advice as boys of her age, so attending a polytechnic and teacher training was a straightforward option for someone who did not perceive herself as particularly studious or academically able. Karen's parents had not gone to university and she did not have people around her who could guide her academically or professionally. Karen's perception of limited career choice is not surprising. As highlighted in the literature review, cultural scripts, or *habitus,* can provide individuals with narrow 'subject positions' (Bourdieu, 1993; Reynolds, 1996b), which, in England, tend to caricature teaching as a profession for white, middle-class women, particularly in primary schooling. The way in which such cultural scripts are influential in the [re]formation of Karen's, and other participants' teacher identity[ies] is considered further in the discussion chapter.

In recounting her time in teaching, Karen articulates her experiences in positive ways: loving her time as a teacher and being happiest as a head teacher. The social aspect of the profession is something she identifies strongly as both an attraction to entering teaching and an element that has sustained her long career; feeling part of a team and as part of a school family, working with others towards a shared goal, feeling a sense of warmth in the school community, and getting a lot back from working with others, including the children. She describes it as, 'a job for people who like people' (initial interview, 38:51) and as a form of social communication, through which you never feel isolated or bored.

Karen's daughter is a secondary school teacher and Karen attributes this professional choice in some ways to her own positive experiences, as well as her husband's experiences of teaching as a career. However, Karen worries about the current climate of teacher recruitment and retention, which she

feels is very different from that associated with her own entry into the profession and her early career. Karen is aware of ongoing issues of retention and high attrition rates of teachers within the first five years of their career as well as difficulties in recruiting new teachers[9]. Through her role with ITTE provision in School Direct she perceives that the academic quality of applicants to the profession is dropping and that the academic expectations of the role have been lowered, which potentially drives increased attrition rates for early career teachers.

Karen highlights workload as a 'received wisdom' cause of low recruitment and high attrition in the profession but believes there to be much more complexity. Through her previous studies for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), she discovered that one major cause for attrition is in lack of investment and support for early career teachers, alongside limited career pathways and a lack of structured professional development. She advocates teaching as a Master's level profession as she considers work at Master's level to constitute high quality professional development that could enhance teachers' career progression. Yet there is a conundrum at play here, as Karen herself did not complete her Master's until leaving headship and moving to part-time work and had not previously attributed much importance to this level of academic study in her career progression. It is not surprising that Karen identifies a lack of 'academic capital' in relation to the profession. As identified in the literature review, much has been written about 'de-professionalisation' of teaching in England and a narrowing of teachers' opportunities to engage in critical intellectual work (e.g. Ball, 2003; Beckett, 2016; Mayer & Mills, 2021).

Karen also has a significant awareness of the influence of social and print media in the [re]formation of social and cultural expectations of the teaching profession. As she describes it, teaching gets a bad press in general from all stakeholders (including teachers themselves) and talk of complex behavioural, social and emotional issues of students at all ages puts people off entering the profession. As a result she says, people tend to perceive teaching as 'too much of a slog, it's not seen as a career' (initial interview, 33:43). And while the pay isn't bad, she describes how there are no 'perks' as teaching is considered a vocational choice.

[9] A recent parliamentary report (House of Commons Library, 2021) into teacher recruitment and retention in England identified a persistent trend of under-recruiting entrants to ITT between 2015 and 2020, although there was a rise in 2020-21 which saw recruitment levels reach 115% of target. However, this increasewas not sustained with entrants to ITT in 2022 around 23% lower than the previous year. Retention rates demonstrate that, in 2021, out-of-service rates at all recorded levels (two, five and ten years post-qualification) were the highest they had been since 1997. Around one-third of teachers (32.6%) of teachers have left the profession within five-years post-qualification.

What can be said about the three yarns of Karen's teacher identity[ies] at this beginning point?

Personal:

- She displays a high level of personal investment and teaching is now the career of choice within her immediate family
- The social aspect of the role is very important, as is her perception of the moral endeavour of teaching as shared goals and rewards
- There is a significant affective fibre as Karen expresses high levels of enjoyment and engagement with teaching as a career

Professional:

- Karen has experienced a 'good' career trajectory
- She has invested in her own professional development: PGDip, NPQH, MA and has supported others, e.g. SENCo, ITTE School Direct lead
- Her leadership of ITTE and current role as a school improvement advisor suggests a will to invest back into profession

Political:

- Karen expresses concerns about social/cultural changes to conceptions of the teacher's role, not least through prolific 'bad press'
- She has lived experiences in her career of a lack of investment and resource to develop the profession from policy makers, particularly in relation to building academic capital for new and experienced teachers

It may also be that something can be said about Karen's long investment in teaching (40+ years) and therefore the strength of her identity[ies] as a teacher. In the discussion chapter, participants' experiences of [re]formation of their teacher and researcher identity[ies] is explored in relation to their length of service and experiences in ITTE and previous CPD.

4.2.2 Karen as researcher

> I'd always said that when I have more time, when I retired from full time work, I would do a further degree. It's something that's always been there, that desire to study further. I wouldn't necessarily have thought I would do a Master's in education, actually, although that would have always obviously been an option. I even did a postgraduate diploma, years ago in the 80s, while I was a young teacher and working full-time and I really enjoyed that. I studied two evenings a week and completed my work in school holidays, but at that time I had a less responsible job and no family. As my career progressed, I found I was working 65-70 hours a week, and I just couldn't find the time to study on top of that. I know some people manage it, but I needed that time outside of work to focus on things that were nothing to do with education! So, while I wanted to do further study, I knew I needed to be not working 70 hours a week if I was going to do it. And then, because of all that time taken up with the day job, I suppose further study just dropped off my radar- it became something I didn't really think about anymore.
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> Karen Chapter 1

Karen has always been interested in further study but now, working part-time, senses that she has the opportunity to give the time needed to complete successfully. It seems that, for Karen, a full-time teaching career and further study are incompatible, particularly in relation to the resource of time, which is needed to complete a Master's degree. This perception of a lack of time and space for full-time teachers to complete intellectual and high quality CPD, through M-level study or other accredited programmes, is a common issue which was explored in the literature review. However, questions could be asked about the extent to which the issue of time is related to deeper concerns about the value of Master's level study and critical research activity within the profession. Karen herself describes how she completed a PG Diploma early in her career and the challenges she experienced in completing this – sacrificing weekends, school holidays and family time. Yet she doesn't remember anything about the content of the qualification that she completed, nor does she recount any significant impact from engaging in this academic work in relation to the [re]formation of her teacher identity[ies] or in building her academic or research capital. It may be significant that Karen's key motivation for enrolling in and completing her Master's was 'a purely personal ambition' (initial interview, 04:47), again suggesting that while Karen recognised opportunity for personal growth and development through Master's study she perceived there to be little benefit to her professional role.

Karen describes teaching as not a research-oriented profession, but one where dipping in to research completed by others can be useful at times to corroborate practice or local policy decisions, 'it does feel that this kind of work [research] is almost part of another world than that practical day to day stuff in the classroom' (initial interview, 16:23). And while Karen would love to see teaching become

a Master's level profession, she recognises that this would require significant cultural change, not least from policy makers.

At this point in her Master's journey, having completed the first two-years of part-time taught modules and developing a proposal for an empirical dissertation, Karen describes herself as 'a novice researcher' (initial interview, 27:58). She feels she is supported in her academic and research work by others, particularly her dissertation supervisor and the Master's course leader, but has found the work required so far in the Master's programme to be (surprisingly) challenging and also very different to previous CPD experiences. She describes how Master's study has helped her become 'a more critical consumer' (initial interview, 29:28) of research, educational initiatives, and policies and practices at both local and national levels. As seen in the literature review, it is this level of intellectual challenge, emergent critical thinking and awareness of wider policies and politics in education which some suggest have the potential to be transformative for teachers (e.g. Beckett, 2014; Lofthouse et al., 2016; Williams, 2005)

What can be said about the three yarns of Karen's researcher identity[ies] at this beginning point?

Personal:

- Karen expresses a high level of personal investment as she frames her Master's degree as something for herself rather than as a career progression tool
- She expresses social justice drivers, related to her conception of teaching as a moral endeavour, and seeking to make a difference to disadvantaged children through her empirical dissertation
- She describes particular anxieties around the level of academic challenge, especially for 'someone like me'

Professional:

- In her experiences, the Master's programme is different to 'usual' professional development activities, most notably that it is less practical and functional and requires more intellectual and critical work
- Karen describes her perception of academic and research work as not being a common part of current cultures in teaching at micro- and macro- levels

Political:

- From her experiences so far in the Master's programme, Karen now expresses the belief that teaching should be an M-level profession, which she is aware contradicts current policy directions in ITTE in England
- Along with this, she perceives there to be a reduction in the academic attainment of new teachers entering the profession, something which she believes will lead to lower quality teachers and subsequently to poorer educational outcomes in the future
- From her taught modules in the Master's programme Karen has developed an awareness that centrally [government] directed policies and initiatives are not always grounded in research, or that the research selected to support decision making tends to be biased in some way. She has an emerging awareness of the way that decision making in educational policy has a political bent.

4.2.3 Dual strands: research is not a valued part of teacher identity[ies]

At this starting point Karen's identity[ies] as teacher and researcher seem quite separate; she makes some assumptions that the skills she has developed in the taught modules of her Master's programme, particularly the way in which she has come to reading and thinking more critically, are not valued in the teaching profession. This assumption is validated for Karen by her own lived experience of completing a PGDip earlier in her career and not experiencing any particular benefit or impact from this qualification in relation to her personal, professional or political yarns of identity[ies]. That Karen has put off completing her Master's – despite it always being an ambition – until she has retired from headship and moved to part-time work suggests that she sees higher level study as somehow incompatible with her professional life.

It seems as if Karen is grappling with some disquiet related to her personal and professional yarns of teacher and researcher identity[ies]. Karen recognises that she may have made different decisions, or acted differently, as a headteacher if she had engaged with the kinds of critical academic and intellectual work that she is now experiencing through her Master's study. This relates to her developing policy critique that is starting to emerge and she highlights some particular points that she feels are pertinent: the influence of Ofsted and the way initiatives are not questioned by schools; teachers being viewed as 'technicians' and the lack of critical thinking in the profession; limited research cultures in schools; and poor retention of teachers due to lack of investment in quality CPD. As she says, 'over 40 years, as you can imagine, I have seen **so many** initiatives come wheeling in and

out of schools.' (initial interview, 08:27). She perhaps feels somewhat cynical about how beneficial completing a Master's or becoming actively involved in research could be.

Karen also acknowledges some difficulty in engaging with Master's level study. That the Master's programme is different to previous forms of CPD seems positive but has also been a challenging experience; Karen has needed to develop a different approach, a different skill set, accept that things take longer. Karen describes her teacher work, 'I tended to do things quickly. I tended to be able to knock off a presentation quickly, or scan things and just go "Yeah yeah right okay, I can talk about that sort of stuff"' (initial interview, 13:04). But in her Master's work, 'when I did the first assignment, in my second year, I couldn't understand some of it and I thought, you know, what's going on here? Why can't I do this quickly? And I realised I had to have a different approach.' (initial interview, 13:20). It may be that some tension is emerging between Karen's emergent identity[ies] as 'novice researcher' and her established teacher identity[ies] as someone who has been, for over 40 years, effective, efficient and compliant with external policy directives.

4.3 Chapter 2, Video diary 1: 'I'm going to tell you about my dissertation'

Karen submitted her first video diary in February 2020. She was the only participant to submit an entry prior to the Covid-19 lockdown that began in March 2020.

4.3.1 Karen as teacher

> I'm *really* interested in the subject that I'm researching. A lot of schools that I'm working with are talking about curriculum revision and the knowledge rich curriculum, and my work on looking at metacognition and children's learning is directly linked. The cognitive science element is directly linked to curriculum design and implementation so I'm finding that I'm talking about that a lot more. This dissertation work really is impacting on me as a professional which is great.
>
> Karen Chapter 2

Karen starts her first video diary assertively, 'I'm going to tell you about my dissertation' and proceeds to explain the functional work that she has undertaken so far, which is mostly related to ethical approval and starting to gather her first data set. Although she identifies impact from the dissertation work on herself as a professional, Karen doesn't explain in any detail what this professional impact is. She only alludes to how her reading around the subject area of metacognition for her literature review is linked to some professional development work in the primary curriculum that she is advising schools on in her role in school improvement.

As we have already heard in Karen's introduction, she has begun this dissertation journey with a firm belief that teaching should be a research-informed profession. The majority of this diary entry is focused on her discussing her progress so far with her dissertation work, which she talks about in

procedural and functional ways. That she only spends a small proportion of time reflecting on the impact on her professional development suggests that, at this stage, there is no significant [re]formation in the fibres and yarns of Karen's identity[ies] as a teacher. Rather, her previously formed beliefs and commitment to engaging in research as a teacher have been reinforced.

Karen seems pleased that the 'research work' she is doing – which is mostly active engagement with research literature at this point – relates well to her professional work and is aiding in her professional conversations with senior leaders in primary schools that she advises. Would the same positive relationship with her professional development be felt if her dissertation subject were less relevant to her daily work? It is interesting to note that at this point Karen's functional work as a researcher serves to reinforce her professional beliefs and values and could possibly act to strengthen the professional yarn of her teacher identity[ies].

4.3.2 Karen as researcher

> I did my ethics clearance, and the form was a lot more detailed than I'd imagined and it took me a lot longer than I thought. Fortunately, I got good help from my supervisor and the ethics application was accepted straightaway so I was able to proceed with my first data collection in January. That went well and was really interesting and quite revealing but I now feel all concerned because I've got all this data: I've got my recordings, I've got my observations, I've got my checklists, but I haven't dedicated the time for looking into that yet. I've kind of parked it for a while which bothers me a bit. I've moved on to my literature review because I feel that's something that I can get started with.
>
> Karen Chapter 2

It may not be surprising that Karen focuses on the functional aspects of her research here, given her established identity[ies] as an efficient and effective teacher. Although Karen emphasised in her introductory interview how she felt that the academic and intellectual research related to Master's study was a different kind of CPD which developed her critical thinking, in this diary entry there is little to suggest that this criticality has become established or is supporting [re]formation of her fibres and yarns of researcher identity[ies]. Rather, the focus is on working towards tangible outputs: ethics approval, a completed literature review. She seems to feel some trepidation about working more critically with her research findings, suggested in the way she has 'parked' her initial data set. Instead of working with her own data and establishing herself as a researcher, Karen has shifted her focus back to the literature review and working with the research outcomes of others, as well as engaging with professional and policy documents. It could be surmised that this kind of work is 'safer' for Karen, as it is more attuned to her typical work and professional identity[ies] as a teacher. While Karen feels strongly that teaching should be a research-informed profession, it seems that she means utilising

research of others, rather than teachers developing their own research within their professional practices and engaging in knowledge building and knowledge transfer work.

4.3.3 Dual strands: Feeling worried

Throughout this first video diary, Karen seems quite hesitant, with lots of pausing and a number of moments where she seems to be searching for words. It may be that, in this first instance of recording her video diary, she was uncertain about the process itself; and she suggests this at the end when she says, 'I hope that's alright. I really don't like looking at myself on video!' (video diary 1, 08:35). But the times at which Karen is most hesitant are those when she is explaining her progress with her own research, suggesting that she could be resisting some [re]formation of the fibres and yarns of her researcher identity[ies]. As she starts to develop her own active research work she shifts back to safer territory, using the research work of others. Her lack of confidence in her own work as an active researcher is also suggested in the references she makes to her supervisor and Master's course leader, and how she has relied on both taught sessions and multiple meetings with her supervisor to make progress with her dissertation work.

Another significant factor that Karen raises is the issue of time, and how difficult it has been to create adequate time to work on her dissertation in relation to the time needed for her to focus on her professional work. She also expresses concern with feeling that she hasn't made enough progress in producing something tangible in relation to her dissertation work. This concern with her lack of progress is not only related to her uncertainty about dealing with her data, but also to the issue of time, which she has previously raised. '…I feel it it's not something that can be easily be dipped in and out of. I feel it needs sustained time and that's what I'm finding difficult within my working calendar at the moment and I was away part of the time at half term' (video diary 1, 08:15).

The way that Karen describes being away during the school holidays, meaning that the time she had set aside to work on her dissertation was lost, demonstrates that she perceives her Master's work to be something still beyond the scope of her daily professional work; something that is to be completed in school holidays or her 'spare time'. While Karen can see the importance and relevance of her dissertation work, and articulates some impact on her professional development, she has yet to fully engage in her own research.

4.4 Chapter 3, Covid phone call and video diary 2: Feeling isolated

Karen and I had a phone call in April 2020 to discuss her intentions for her dissertation study and continuing in the research project. Karen then submitted a second video diary in May 2020.

4.4.1 Karen as teacher

> Motivation at times has been hard, and it's interesting that, because I do think, if you want something doing ask a busy person. There are times when I'm busy with virtual meetings but it's much less than I normally would be.
>
> Karen Chapter 3b

The main focus of this video diary is again on functional aspects of her dissertation work and the progress made, but she also describes, as seen above, a change of pace in her professional life due to the lockdown and school closures. While learning has moved online and there are a limited number of children attending school, she is working from home and the demands on her time for working with children and staff in the schools she advises have reduced considerably. But she alludes to how this has led to a lack of motivation for her dissertation work; as someone who is now generally less busy than usual she has found it challenging to keep up the pace in her studies.

We are already well aware of how Karen has described the workload and pace of work in her teaching career so far. Her experiences of this sudden and unnerving shift in workload, particularly in relation to notions of time, during the first wave of the pandemic response could be considered as fairly typical, as indicated in the introduction and literature review. Karen describes how the change in her work was particularly significant in the first few weeks of the national lockdown. 'I would usually be thinking well I've got a report to write or preparation to do or… you know… but I'm, I'm not having that to do' (Covid phone call, 11:01) and it was 'nowhere near what I would normally be doing' (Covid phone call, 11:17). She goes on to describe how her dissertation work has, in some ways, replaced her professional work and that she feels grateful for that, given the discombobulating effects of the pandemic.

4.4.2 Karen as researcher

> The lit review I've found really challenging to do… I don't know why I particularly did, I didn't think it was going to be as hard it was really. It was very useful feedback but I did find it at first, probably more of a knockback than I probably would have normally found it, maybe I didn't know if that was because of the circumstances, you know, just everything feels a bit odd you know. I mean, don't get me wrong, there was lots of positive comments, it wasn't, **dire**, but I was surprised at how I had to really make myself get back in there and then sort of draft it again and then draft it again and then I began to see that actually it was so much better.
>
> Karen Chapter 3b

In Karen's first video diary, we heard of her shift to focus on her literature review, something that she thought would be easier than working with her initial data set. In our Covid phone call, she also reiterated that this was the piece of work in which she was investing time during the first couple of

weeks of the national lockdown. However, it turned out that the literature review was more challenging than she had expected. Karen explained in her first interview how academic writing had been a challenging aspect of her Master's study and at this point, receiving feedback on her literature review that was not as good as she was expecting, seems to have had a significant impact on the [re]formation of her personal yarn of researcher identity[ies]. It could be considered that the social and emotional impacts of the Covid-19 lockdown may have increased Karen's emotional and affective response to this feedback, an aspect of participants' experiences that is considered further in the discussion chapter.

Karen also returns to her anxieties about dealing with the more active elements of her role as researcher, which she raised in the previous video diary. It could be that her anxiety is now heightened further; she shifted focus from data work to her literature review previously, believing that it would be much more straightforward. But dealing with literature in a researcher capacity was different and more challenging compared to the way she has previously, efficiently, dealt with literature as a teacher, a school leader and a school improvement advisor. At this point in her dissertation, she seems to be repeating the same process, switching her attentions to what she considers a more functional aspect of her work to avoid working with her data set. Such emotional and affective responses are potentially influential here in [re]formation of her personal yarns of researcher identity[ies].

4.4.3 Dual strands: there's more time but feeling isolated

In our Covid-19 check in phone call earlier in April, Karen described how the reduction in work pressures meant that she was spending more time working on her dissertation, and particularly her literature review. She described working on this as, 'I feel, I feel like I'm in it now, and I'm… I can do the rest of it and I'm, I'm just going to crack on with it and I've obviously got more time than I would normally….' (video diary 2, 07:24). At this time, she described the Covid-19 lockdown as 'a good thing' (video diary 2, 09:01) as, '…last week there were times when… I really enjoyed being absorbed with it [dissertation work], and I didn't feel… all the pressures that I normally feel… you know… I didn't feel like, oh, I should be doing this or I should be doing that' (video diary 2, 09:10). Part of the reason being that, '… it's so different than, erm… than… *(stutters)* practical teaching stuff that… you feel like you enter another, another little world…' (video diary 2, 12:07). It could be that this significant investment of time and effort, in a world that seems strange and somewhat discombobulating, where the dissertation work has replaced her professional role, led to such an intense emotional response when Karen received critical feedback.

She has also been feeling isolated in her dissertation work, as taught sessions at the university have been cancelled and she is unable to use the library, a physical space where she laughingly says she

feels more 'intellectual'. Being isolated from her academic community of peers, tutors and the library possibly creates further barriers in in her [re]formation of identity[ies]. That Karen alludes to a sense discomfort and disorientation is not surprising in this context; her personal and professional roles have been compromised by the impact of the pandemic in relation to both her teacher and researcher identity[ies]. Her expectations of positive outcomes in relation to her dissertation have not been realised. She is still putting off work with her own data set, suggesting that she remains in a 'safe space' and her increased anxieties seem to be constraining, to some extent, [re]formation of her researcher identity[ies].

4.5 Chapter 4, video diary 3: resentful of 'other' work

Karen submitted her third video diary in July 2020, just before the end of the summer term for schools. At this point, her workload as a school advisor had increased and she was working back to her usual, pre-lockdown, hours.

4.5.1 Karen as teacher

> So first of all, I do feel that, if I were going to do this again, **which I'm not***,* I would prefer to do one-year full time than a part time MA because all the time that I'm not doing it I feel that I should be doing it. I just feel resentful almost of other work at the moment, that you know that I'm needing to do it, I wish that I could just prioritise this. So, yeah, something I would do if I could. Anyway, here I am.
>
> Karen Chapter 4

Despite Karen's optimism that her workload would be reduced due to the impact of the pandemic, the opposite seems to have occurred; the pressures of her teacher role seem acute at this point and she alludes to finding it difficult to prioritise time to develop her research. She feels resentful of her 'other work', by which she means her teacher work, suggesting that she *wants* to prioritise her dissertation but feels that she *can't.*

However, it is interesting to note that, in this video diary entry, Karen talks much more confidently about her dissertation work, including how she has made connections between her emergent findings and her professional work with other teachers. Karen identifies and describes some of findings which she sees as significant in [re]formation of the professional yarn of her teacher identity[ies]. One was about the importance and effect of teacher modelling, which she did not expect, and the second about pupil monitoring of their own progress which she has found is particularly helpful for disadvantaged pupils. She explains her findings with a clear indication of some impact on her school improvement role and building her knowledge of tackling performance and attainment issues related to pupils'

experiences of disadvantage. Both of these were important motivators for Karen's selected topic for her dissertation.

4.5.2 Karen as researcher

> And I think, you know, all my career, I've worked really hard, I've worked full-time until recent times. I've worked full-time for nearly 40 years, and also, just always worked really hard, like most teachers do, and I was always busy so everything was done pretty quickly and turned over quickly. And this, I've just spent much more time reflecting and thinking and that's taught me that it's good, I think it gives a better result. So that's been a big thing to learn, actually. I've always been more of a doer than a thinker and I think it's given me a bit more balance, you know, which I probably wouldn't have got, actually, had it not been for lockdown.
>
> Karen Chapter 4

Karen's tone when talking about research is much more positive and confident than in previous video diaries. She discusses data analysis and her excitement at finding conclusions, describing how, 'It's actually been really interesting you know being in the data …. It's … been more revealing than perhaps I anticipated…' (video diary 3, 07:07). So Karen's nervousness and anxieties about working through her data set have been unfounded. She goes on to describe how, 'I enjoyed, actually, working through the data and finding things out, coding it and so on… I think that's probably just my personality, really, I quite like organising things, so, I enjoyed that part of it very much.' (video diary 3, 07:32).

But then she steps back from this and returns to expressing uncertainty and anxiety related to the personal yarn of her identity[ies] as researcher, describing again her struggles with academic writing. She starts by describing her work as, 'It does feel, erm, it does feel a bit of a slog now, erm, on this last, this last bit… not because actually it's not very interesting but erm it just feels like, as I say, it's been sitting there a long time now' (video diary 3, 05:56). As she says this, Karen waves her hand around her head, as if signifying the work she is doing, the slog that is needed, is related to intellectual rather than physical work. Again, there is a return to what seems to be a particular tension of time and pace; Karen is used to working quickly, as she has described previously, 'churning out' reports and action plans, but this dissertation has required much more sustained focus. She describes the challenge: 'I haven't wanted to just do it either, I've wanted to do a reasonably good job of it which I'm sure most people do (*big intake of breath and sigh*) I do feel like, yeah, it's been a slog at times but, hey' (video diary 3, 07.47). Ending with that big sigh, and 'but, hey' suggests that Karen has resigned herself to accepting this tension and that she acknowledges some of the ways in which such challenging experiences may be significant in strengthening her yarns of researcher identity[ies].

4.5.3 Dual strands: 'I've always been more of a doer than a thinker'

Throughout this diary entry Karen seems to be beginning to detect more connections between her teacher and researcher identity[ies], suggesting that these two strands are now starting to draw more closely together. Now that she can see tangible outcomes from her research project and emergent findings related to her teacher work, the personal and professional yarns of her researcher identity[ies] seem to have undergone more significant [re]formation. However, in the final section of this video diary she reflects on herself as a learner and it is this personal yarn as both teacher and researcher that seems to give rise to the most discomfort for Karen.

Karen described previously how her dissertation had been 'sitting there a long time now' which, in the context of this reflection, seems more significant than just a perception of a lengthy piece of work. Karen suggests here that the whole way of working on her dissertation has been different to her lived experiences of work as a teacher. And this different way of working – thinking, reflecting, taking more time over things – has been more resonant in light of the national lockdown which has provided some specific opportunities for this slower-paced work to take place. Would Karen have invested so much time and engaged in so much critical reflection had it not been for lockdown? It is difficult to say, but the significance of shifts in time and space during the Covid-19 lockdown on the potential [re]formation of researcher and teacher identity[ies] for all participants is examined in greater depth in the discussion chapter. For Karen, she has already alluded to the way in which working on previous Master's modules had been a very different experience to her usual professional work or her previous experiences of CPD, suggesting that she would still have, to some extent, recognised the need to invest more time or develop a different skill set related to [re]forming her personal and professional yarns of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher.

4.6 Chapter 5, video diary 4: 'But how and why does it work'

Karen submitted her final video diary in early September 2020, just after completing and submitting her dissertation.

4.6.1 Karen as teacher

> I suppose what I'm trying to say is that I believe that teachers need to understand why they're implementing something, why they're doing something pedagogically. Not just because someone, some research somewhere, has told them it's a good thing to do. So my study is actually called, 'But how and why does it work'.
>
> Karen Chapter 5

The central theme of this, Karen's final video diary entry, was on the impact and implementation of strategies following outcomes from her dissertation as the new school year was about to begin. Karen

can see that there is opportunity for her dissertation work to now inform her school advisor role and she describes how the school which was the site of her research project has already benefited, 'I hope that, not only does it have an impact on implementing metacognition, but on… [4 sec pause] wider implementation ermmm for the teachers involved and for the school involved, the implementation across the school will be influenced hopefully by my findings.' (video diary 4, 04:43). Here she acknowledges the way in which the focus of her dissertation shifted across the academic year; she set out intending to look at the implementation of metacognition and self-regulation strategies and to review their effectiveness with a small sample of primary aged children from disadvantaged backgrounds. There were clear social justice motivations for her choice of dissertation topic and site for her empirical work as she set out in her introductory interview. However, throughout her dissertation Karen's focus has shifted away from impact on individual or small groups of children and towards working with teachers. She seems to have returned to her starting viewpoint with even greater conviction that teachers should be more research-informed; that they need to develop more critical and academic skills in order to work more effectively in the classroom. As she describes in the text box above, Karen believes teachers need to understand (and also question) why they're implementing particular pedagogical policies and practices,

> 'I suppose my…. *(clicks tongue, sighs)* … how can I say it…My driver would be… understand research more, look beyond the headlines, dig underneath it, find out why it's working with the kids, use that information, … er… in your implementation and in your… broader approaches in the classroom… think about why this works, understand it.' (video diary 4, 05:45).

Although seemingly still quite hesitant in making these recommendations, Karen emphasises each point with her tone of voice, pushing her hands forward as if wishing to physically put forward her recommendations to others. This could reflect a significant [re]formation of Karen's personal, professional and political yarns of teacher identity[ies]; she is no longer focused on working effectively, efficiently and compliantly within directives of others. Rather, Karen sees the opportunity to shift herself from a role as 'advisor' to 'critical friend'. It also interesting to note that Karen's professional concerns have become more outwardly focused, advocating for other teachers to have the same kinds of professional development experiences and outcomes that she has experienced herself through her Master's and dissertation. Here, Karen seems to be attuning to a more activist notion of the role of the teacher (Sachs, 2016), as explored in the literature review in relation to teachers engaging with more critical and emancipatory forms of research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) and forms of teacher-led knowledge creation and mobilisation (e.g. Philpott & Poultney, 2018).

4.6.2 Karen as researcher

> So I've finished. Yay! I submitted my dissertation yesterday, which is a good feeling. Although I will miss it, I will miss living with it, definitely, but it's done, it's finished.
>
> Karen Chapter 5

Karen seems quite jubilant; she has finished and submitted her dissertation, and she raises her hand in a celebratory gesture. Has submission of her final dissertation document consolidated and validated to an extent the value of Karen's research work within the teacher and academic communities that she is part of? She talks far more confidently about the outcomes and impact of her research, seemingly much more comfortable at this end point with the idea of sharing her findings with others and supporting implementation in school. She smiles throughout her description of some of the outcomes and talks at a more consistent pace, with fewer hesitations and pauses than in previous diary entries. It is as if she can now truly see tangible outcomes and opportunities for her to encompass this work within professional commitments this coming academic year; more comfortable now, maybe, as she perceives there to be greater correlation between her research outcomes and her teacher identity[ies].

But there is still some trepidation, it seems, in Karen's identity[ies] as researcher. She begins the diary entry talking about how the dissertation has been such a big part of her life and how she will miss it; affirming emotional labour as a significant fibre of the personal yarn of her researcher identity[ies] that we have seen emerging in previous video diary entries. Yet the way in which Karen describes the potential impact of her work is still somewhat apprehensive; she mentions 'hope' four times in her description of what the potential impact could be for the school that is the site of the research. And when she goes on to explain in depth some of the findings from her empirical work, she ends with a (literal) rider: 'This is what **I** think (*emphasis on I, gestures to self*) I'm sure lots of people could drive a coach and horses through, through it but this is what **my** study showed…' (video diary 4, 08:28).

Karen even apologises near the end of the video diary. 'I've gone on a bit now…' (video diary 4, 11:13) and, 'I'm sorry if I've rambled on but I've got… , ... I've got quite passionate about, about it' (video diary 4, 13:45). So even though she has completed her project and feels validated by the submission of it, even though she can see tangible outcomes in the school site of research, even though she can see potential for further impact in this coming academic year with a wider range of schools, Karen still seems to feel that she is not wholly credible as researcher, that knowledge creation and mobilisation are not yet fully formed as fibres and yarns of her researcher identity[ies].

4.6.3 Dual strands: teacher and researcher knotting together

In this final diary entry it seems that Karen's teacher and researcher identity[ies] are more closely drawn together than at any of the previous points. Although Karen apologises for the passion and length at which she describes findings and outcomes from her dissertation, she is now much more confident in articulating impact and she recognises that this project has become something that directly motivates and informs her teacher role. But there are still some areas of tension between her identity[ies] as teacher and researcher or 'academic'.

Karen has consistently described aspects of her dissertation work as 'challenging', and in this case, it was the final writing up and academic presentation that proved to be difficult. In each of the video diary entries Karen has talked about some of her struggles with what could be conceptualised as 'traditional' academic skills: writing a literature review, applying for ethical approval, data analysis, and so on. She acknowledges that she 'should have known' about some of these challenges that she would face, but for Karen, who has described herself as following a 'non-academic' route into teaching, how could she have pre-known the academic conventions which she would need to work towards? And while we can see that Karen seems to be pulling together some yarns of her teacher and researcher identity[ies], it appears that some elements of what Karen may consider to be 'academic' ways of working remain problematic.

Yet, at the same time, Karen describes how the dissertation has 'fundamentally' changed the way she thinks about the teaching profession and the way in which teachers engage with research (whether it is their own research or that produced by others). As Karen describes it, she now feels able to critically challenge other teachers and senior leaders in their decision-making processes.

At this stage, we could make some conclusions that Karen's sustained active engagement in acts of research - the reading and synthesis of literature, gathering data, analysis of data - have enabled some her to build fibres and [re]form personal and professional yarns as researcher, especially at points in which there has been some congruence with some personal and professional yarns as teacher, such as improving outcomes for disadvantaged children and supporting others to work towards school improvement priorities. But that some of the more 'technical' or 'traditional' academic activities such as writing and presenting work in particular formats remain somewhat detached from her identity[ies] as teacher and researcher suggests that Karen has not yet completely knotted together the two strands of her identity[ies] as teacher and researcher.

4.7 Chapter 6, member check discussion: cultural changes

Karen and I met online early December 2020, around three months after she had submitted her dissertation. She had received her mark and feedback at this point and was pleased with her outcome. Prior to the meeting, I sent Karen some sample notes from the detailed transcript (see Table 3.3 Member check notes sent to Karen, pre-meeting, p.58) and asked her to review my initial interpretations; I also asked her to look back through the video diaries she had submitted and to identify any moments that she thought were particularly significant for her.

4.7.1 Karen as teacher

> For teachers to do this there needs to be a big culture change. Ed Balls was pushing teaching as a Master's profession... Was that something that was meant to be done along with the job? People couldn't get a secondment for it could they? There was funding though.
> Teachers tend to think that sometimes, that we're the only people who have a hard life. But maybe the only way it could be done, is if, as you say, there's a culture change so it's an expectation. And then you also had a dedicated day per week or something like that if you were embarking on further study. I think, though, and this is a personal view, if that was going to be the case they've got to raise the academic bar a bit, in terms of people they're letting into teaching.
>
> Karen Chapter 6

For much of the discussion Karen focused on cultures of teaching and how she felt the profession was currently – and had been in her 40+ years of lived experience – driven by technical work which was completed without questioning and at a consistently fast pace. As she describes it,

> 'teaching is so much about getting the job done isn't it, and, erm… you know, erm, getting results on the table, but, erm… you know, I can hugely see the benefits of,…. erm, of taking time to stand back from things' (member check interview, 09:29).

And although Karen has now started to see how outcomes from her dissertation have had tangible outcomes and impact in her teacher role, she still feels that Master's level study and research is quite separate for many in the profession: 'Would I encourage somebody in a full-time job to do an MA? I'm not sure… [3 second pause] Because… [3 second pause] because it's hugely time consuming, Amanda, I just don't know how, how you marry it' (member check interview, 14:07). Karen has sustained the perception that time and perceived lack of impact in relation to their professional lives is a great barrier for teachers to study at Master's level or engage as active researchers.

She goes on to point out, 'the job you're getting paid to do has to come first doesn't it?' (member check interview, 17:09). So here we see that Karen, despite such positive outcomes from her own Master's completion and research project, feels that higher level study and active research is not part of the 'paid job' of teaching, that it is something that sits outside the accepted part of the teacher role.

In order to align this kind of intellectual and academic work within the profession, she reflects that a 'big culture change' (member check interview, 18:42) is needed for the teaching profession. She raises a previous Labour government policy of teachers being a Master's based profession which, as discussed in the literature review, was subsequently dropped by the Coalition government under Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove. But she also believes that, for teaching to become a Master's level profession, 'we've got to raise the academic bar a bit' (member check interview, 20:09). She describes her experiences of working with young teachers as a school head and as leader of a School Direct ITTE programme in a consortium of schools, 'I am **staggered** sometimes at the uhm at the **low** levels of literacy, let's say, in some of the people' (member check interview, 21:32). She raises concerns with current education policies and the changing criteria for applicants to ITTE, where she perceives there to be a significant reduction in the academic expectations for entrants which leaves them less able to access higher (more critical) levels of professional knowledge and skills. She sees this as an issue particularly related to teachers and teaching quality, 'It's such an important job, isn't it, Amanda, that you've got to get good people doing it and people who, who are **thinkers,** who, … erm,… you know, who are going to erm shape the future for young people' (member check interview, 25:34).

But at the same time Karen reflects on and recognises a conundrum: she raises her own background of training to teach through a polytechnic route and entering into teacher training without a particularly high level of academic qualifications. However, the point she makes is that it is not necessarily the entry level qualifications of future teachers that are crucial, but their potential and the subsequent quality of training and investment in professional development they experience that makes the difference,

> 'They need to be given the **right development** and so on… that not just… tells them what… you know… worksheet to use but that really gets them to grapple with thinking that's behind that so that.. erm so that they develop in that sense.' (member check interview, 24:54).

And this is not just for teachers in the initial stage of their teacher training. Karen goes on to note that she has been reading research about staff and school cultures and has come to the conclusion that 'teachers are more likely to stay in the profession when they are **invested in** as, and their development is is **invested** in.' (member check interview, 27:08). And for her, this means quality professional development courses that are 'something that challenges, I think, rather than just just… *(stutters)*… **reinforces** on a practical level (member check interview, 28:30).

As highlighted previously, it is clear that at this stage, Karen has shifted focus from her own professional development that she described at the beginning of her dissertation journey, to more

broadly contemplating how the profession as a whole can undergo significant change so that critical research and academic work is embedded in cultures of teaching.

4.7.2 Karen as researcher

> So, I would think that I'd be just, right, I've got this dissertation to do, I'm going to do it on this, I'm interested in that, get on with it, der-der-der. And then, over time, I gradually thought, ooh, gosh, this is really interesting. Wow! I've actually found this out! Oooh, crikey there's a pattern there. And so that became the thing that I found interesting and exciting and it became something that lived with me.
> I would say that was a change; initially it was something you did a bit of and left it whereas latterly it lived with me. I thought about it. It was always there, whenever I was out for a walk or going to sleep at night, I was turning things over. It was odd when I finished it. And I kept wanting to read it again and again. It's funny. I didn't think I would think like that, but I did.
>
> Karen Chapter 6

Karen seems very well aware of how her relationship with research, and subsequently her yarns of researcher identity[ies], have [re]formed over the course of her dissertation. One of her surprises was how such a small-scale study in one school site could yield such meaningful outcomes,

> 'Because just, you know, all I had in this in this one study is six children, which is like nothing. And in one school, and honestly the amount of information that I got from that through having the opportunity to talk to them, talk to their teachers. Err… Look at what they were doing, and stand back from it was absolutely fascinating, you know, there must be so many things out there that a teacher could, could really investigate and find out.' (member check interview, 33:21).

It appears that Karen has come to embrace active research as part of her own identity in relation to her professional and personal development but is now also advocating this kind of work for all other teachers. There is a close connection here with her advocacy for teachers to engage in more academic, critical research work as part of their professional development as outlined in the previous section.

But here she also muses on perceptions of teacher research in individual classroom contexts as being limited or limiting in some way; she compares individual teachers' 'toy-town' (member check interview, 35:41) research to much larger-scale national research projects (and randomised control trials) such as those produced by the EEF. However, as she points out, that is not to say that there is a binary choice in the kinds of research that teachers engage with; rather, she argues, larger scale studies and associated literature should be viewed as a tool to support and develop individual teachers' action research or practitioner enquiry projects, 'I don't think there should be an argument, for one, *(stutters)* you know, academics v. teachers in the classroom, I think… I think we should be **working more closely together**.' (member check interview, 36:12). It is interesting that Karen leans towards the screen as she says 'working more closely together', suggesting that she views herself and

myself as the 'we', Karen representing the school and I representing the university. But Karen seems to also consider her dissertation work as exemplifying bridging in some way that perceived gap between schools and universities. This again reinforces the notion that Karen has now strengthened and is sustaining the personal and professional yarns of her researcher identity[ies] following completion of her Master's. Yet Karen also defines herself as having 'imposter syndrome', suggesting that personally and professionally her identity[ies] as researcher is not yet fully secured and embedded.

It could be said, at this point, that Karen recognises some of the challenges she has experienced in [re]forming her identity[ies] as a researcher. She describes how her personal investment in her dissertation grew across the dissertation, and this is seen in her increasingly affective responses to her research throughout the sequence of video diaries. In the professional yarn, she can recognise how research – and the tangible outcomes of her project – have impacted on her role as a teacher, but is also able to articulate how this is still challenging given dominant cultures in teaching that often give little value to 'academic' research or to individual, small-scale research projects. And, as with her descriptions of cultures of the teaching profession as a whole, she advocates for closer working relationships between universities schools to develop research cultures that will raise teacher quality and support new teachers in the profession. That these developments are out of kilter with current policies and practices in teacher education is something that Karen is well aware of, so it is maybe unsurprising that she positions the responsibility for taking these actions with universities rather than schools, reflecting the perceived lack of autonomy or power that schools have in influencing teacher education policy (and the belief that universities hold power and agency in this realm).

4.7.3 Dual strands: stripping back the mystique of the university

In this meeting Karen took great care in articulating some of the challenges she had experienced in developing identity[ies] as researcher. At the heart of this could be her perception of the university (and academics) as 'other' in some way, with a substantial gap between the world of universities and research and the world and work of teachers. Thus barriers are created and sustained which make it difficult for an individual such as Karen, with deeply embedded personal and professional identity[ies] as teacher, to transition into research work. As such, she believes that universities and academics (as well as those engaged with large research bodies, such as the EEF) have an important role to play in bridging this perceived gap, 'I think also, and again academics have got a role here, you need to strip back that mystique a bit…' (member check interview, 43:20)

Yet, she also recognises that her persistence in developing a peculiar set of skills as researcher has significantly altered her identity[ies] as both teacher and researcher, '… you realise you're developing you're learning you're becoming something that's a bit bigger and better than you were' (member check interview, 46:35) and, 'I do feel like **in here** (*gestures to chest)* I felt like a different person when I finished it than when I started it' (member check interview, 47:02). And this, she says, is because of the reading and digesting of others' work, but also the way in which her critical reflection and thinking skills developed, along with her confidence to engage with her own and others' research. Although by the end of her Master's study Karen could start questioning and challenging literature that she read, she still had a little voice in her head that said, 'Who are you to say that?' (member check interview, 47:28). She labels some of these experiences as 'imposter syndrome' but at the same time she details how her research became a significant part of her personally and professionally, drawing together these yarns of the dual strands of her identity[ies].

4.8 Chapter 7, 'The end': our 12+ month interview

Perhaps 'the end' is not quite the right phrase: Karen and I met online late November 2021, almost 12 months since our last meeting and just under 15 months since she had submitted her final dissertation project and completed her Master's. This was 'the end' of our time together in this research project, but certainly not the end of Karen's journey as teacher and researcher. It seems logical in my role as researcher to reflect, at this 'end' point, on the ways in which Karen's personal, professional and political yarns of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher have undergone [re]formation leading to revision and transition over the previous 24 months.

4.8.1 Karen as teacher and researcher

> I look at where schools have come from, from basically, when you're doing history, geography and everything else, as long as you're having a good time, you've got nice looking topic books and a nice display, we're happy. That was all we cared about. To having this rigour of sequenced knowledge and skills and concepts that's progressive and that's been built on previous learning, *and* we've had a pandemic. All the schools I work with, they've taken all that on, completely rewritten their curriculum. But if you said to a lot of classroom teachers, where was this research from? Why are we doing this? I don't know how many of them would be able to tell you. They'd say, 'because Ofsted said so'. And then you'd say, 'Well, why are Ofsted saying this, they didn't pull it out of the sky'. I'm always saying that, 'they don't just pull it out the sky you know, they don't just think, oh, let's do this. It's not on the back of a fag packet.'
>
> Karen Chapter 7

I've been asked to speak at a conference about it in March, and, you know, things like that. I just think that people are sort of seeing you as a little bit of an expert in a particular field, and I've never been an expert in anything, I'm not an expert, for God's sake, I'm really not. But it's just given me that bit of status, really, which is good. So, it has had an impact… And also, the whole thing about academic research is that in the past it was just like, an unknown world, it was just like a thing out there. And now I feel much more of a connection with it.

Karen Chapter 7

4.8.1.1 Personal yarns

It seems that Karen's sense of personal investment in both her role as a teacher and in her Master's research has been sustained, but some focus has shifted from her own connection with teaching and research to seeing how she can support others to make similar connections. In the way she describes it, her perception of the moral endeavours of teaching, particularly in relation to improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, is now less about vocational drivers and more about utilising critical intellectual work. She explains how, in her role as school improvement advisor, she is concerned about a lack of personal investment from teachers and senior leaders in developing policies and practices. As she says, teachers need to 'buy into' initiatives but that they can only be truly committed and invested if they 'believe in it', if they can see where it has come from and understand the broader context. So while Karen still acknowledges the vocational, 'common good' fibre of the personal yarn of teacher identity[ies], she understands this to be related to more critical and emancipatory practices and understandings (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Sachs, 2000).

Throughout the research, as seen in the illustration of the configurational dimension of Karen's narrative and experiences (Figure 5.1), Karen has sustained a significant affective fibre related to her experiences as teacher and researcher. At times this has been associated with discomfort in her role as teacher, particularly her experience of personal resentment of the commitment and time needed for her teacher role when she wanted to invest in her research. We have also seen how Karen's elevated level of personal investment and emotional labour has developed over the course of the dissertation. In this final meeting, she expresses significant sense of pride in her achievement,

> 'I was so happy about my results, I was. I think, like, one of the things is, it just gives you like… confidence isn't the right word, but it's… I quite like the fact that I've done it. You know, like, "Oh when I did my masters". I don't go around saying that, but there's just something about having studied something like that. It gives me something that I didn't have before.' (12+ month interview, 03:20).

Here, there is a sense that Karen's confidence as researcher has developed significantly from the beginning of her dissertation. She has also experienced further external validation with an article that has just been accepted for publication in a professional journal. Her tone is joyful as she describes

sending off her submission and finding out it had been accepted with no changes needed, and how she feels 'dead chuffed' (12+ month interview, 05:36) with this – no greater praise in northern terminology! And while, as seen above, she still doesn't perceive herself to be an 'expert', that she now has a platform through which to mobilise the outcomes of her research seems to have affirmed the personal investment in her Master's.

4.8.1.2 Professional yarns

Karen has sustained her role as a school improvement advisor but seems to have shifted her focus from being outcomes led to becoming a 'critical friend' who challenges thinking and decision making and advocates for senior leaders to be more critical of local and national policy and practices. As seen above in the first text box (p.106), Karen uses her role in evaluating school curricula to challenge educational thinking, making sure that teachers think about 'what lies beneath', rather than 'accepting the headlines'. But she acknowledges that there is still a 'gap' between research and common cultures of the teaching profession, 'I'm always saying to people, well, you know, there was research and it said this, and I'm sure people think, you know, like, who cares? But it means more to me' (12+ month interview, 21:20). Karen has sustained a perception that research work – particularly related to her own action research – requires teachers to be more critical, curious and reflective. She acknowledges that this requires a different set of 'tools' but she clearly articulates how she has made connections between her role as teacher and role as researcher, and how these positively influence each other.

Through investment in her Master's and dissertation research, Karen has sustained the 'good' career trajectory that she described in our introductory interview. But again, as in the personal yarn, we can see that at this end point Karen's focus has shifted more outwards. In her work as a school improvement advisor, she has experience across a range of schools, something which she considers to have broadened her understanding of how other teachers engage in their professional roles and how the connections they make with research. She considers that there is now a greater connection with research for some in the teaching profession, 'I'm **sometimes** impressed by things that people have read and thought about and considered. Whereas I'm not sure that that was ever really, you know, the tools of the trade as it were, when I was a younger teacher' (12+ month interview, 13:10). However, Karen describes how some teachers are 'immensely practical' and 'vocational' (12+ month interview, 14:26) and expresses concern at those who perceive the role as 'someone tells you what to do, you take those tools, you deliver them, you do a good job' (12+ month interview, 13:56).

4.8.1.3 Political yarns

In our discussion Karen recognises a level of political influence in even basic assumptions in teaching, such as making curriculum decisions, as well as in the selection of research that Ofsted use to base

decisions or recommendations on. Would Karen have articulated explicitly a political bent to education without completing her Master's? She describes how the taught experiences on her Master's programme have been in much greater depth than other forms of CPD and how she has thought more about the political landscape of education and the direction of travel in response to some of the critical teaching and discourses with her tutors and peers. And she would advocate for more teachers have these kinds of experiences: 'I think it's a shame probably that, you know, the world of higher education and the world of teaching doesn't meet a bit more except for ITT level' (12+ month interview, 17:53). Following this, she champions increasing the intellectual and critical demands of teachers, but sees that this would require a significant culture change driven from 'the centre' (government), 'maybe if teachers were more interested and curious about why we're doing things, they wouldn't necessarily be as compliant as a work body. That would cause a few problems for the government, wouldn't it' (12+ month interview, 20:20). She continues,

> 'But, you know, historically, it's not at all the way that the teaching profession has been, has it really? And why is that? Is that because it's not particularly seen as an academic role? Is it because people are just too busy? And they just think, 'Oh, for God's sake, just tell me what to do and I'll do it'. Is it? I don't know. I don't know why. Is it because we're all scared stiff of the accountability that things like Ofsted bring?' (12+ month interview, 24:45).

But here Karen also articulates a tension in the politics and policies of the teaching profession,

> 'I genuinely think, having been a teacher since 1977, would you believe, that things improved. The game was raised definitely when we had more accountability and disadvantaged children got a better deal on the whole. I do think one of the things that data gave us was less of an excuses culture, 'these children can't'.' (12+ month interview, 23:16)

So Karen has come to locate herself and others in an area of tension between accountability agendas and the need to engage in critical intellectual research work which would lead to less compliance and more challenging of the status quo in the profession.

4.9 Concluding comments on Karen's experiences

Karen's story has provided insight into key moments of transition and revision of her identity[ies] as teacher and researcher; examining the dual strands within each episode of Karen's dissertation journey has revealed moments of both congruence and tension. A significant, though at times subtle, shift has been exposed in the way she began her dissertation with a strong sense of being and belonging as a teacher and some trepidation about herself as a novice researcher. But, 24 months after our first meeting, we can see how she has come to [re]form indent[ies] and some consciousness of belonging as a researcher, particularly in relation to validation of her academic work through

publication. This journey for Karen is probably best summarised in her own words: ‘you're developing, you're learning, you're becoming…, you're becoming something that's a bit bigger and better than you were’ (member check interview, 07:01).

But these transitions are not just about Karen as an individual. Over time we can detect a shift in Karen from conceptualising her dissertation as a means to an end, or a piece of functional work where she could prove her worth as academic or researcher related to Master’s completion, to her determination and actions to advocate for more critical research in the schools she works in. That Karen has now adjusted her gaze as researcher more externally suggests that there is potential for her not only to sustain but to continue to [re]form her identity as researcher, continuing to strengthen the bond between her dual strands of identity[ies] and to embody a sense of being and belonging as both teacher and researcher.

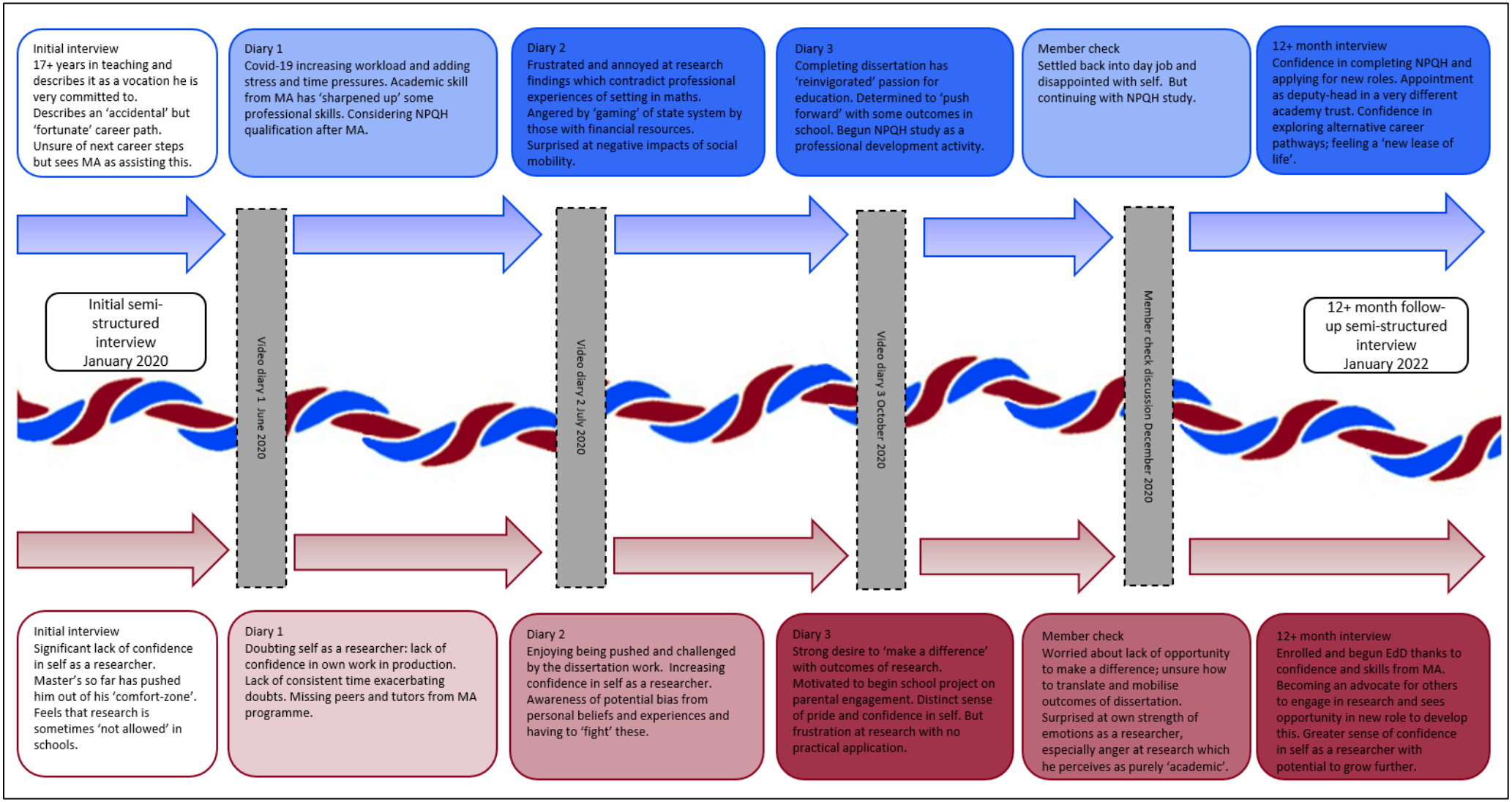
Chapter Five: Nigel

5.0 Preamble: an introduction to Nigel and our relationship

I first met Nigel at the Master's dissertation presentation session that I attended at the beginning of the research project. In my dual role at the event as researcher-dissertation tutor, I spoke with Nigel about his planned dissertation, and he asked me about the research project and expressed an interest in participating. His dissertation presentation at the event focussed on perceptions of social justice and social mobility in his secondary school setting. We talked about our shared interest in social justice themes and our experiences of working with students from disadvantaged backgrounds. At the time, I hoped that Nigel would join the research, as I was keen to find out how his social justice orientation played out across the course of the dissertation. On reflection, I sensed that we had shared interests and motivations for further study, along with a similar background in teaching. This meant that as a researcher I needed to be reflexive throughout my contacts with Nigel, considering my positionality and political views and being aware of potential bias in his responses through the direction of my questioning or responses in interviews.

Nigel was keen to participate in the research project but struggled with time throughout. He was generally the last participant to schedule an interview or to return a video diary. He returned the smallest number of video diaries during the project, but each video tended to be lengthier than those of the other participants. I was always aware that he was juggling a senior leadership role in school, a family and other work commitments outside of education, as well as his own research and participation in mine. In our email exchanges, he often joked that he did not mind being 'told off' or 'chased' when he was slow to respond. Although time and other commitments constrained his temporal engagement in the project, Nigel seemed to be one of the participants most affected by the reflective opportunities that arose from the interviews and video diaries. At every point he commented on the significant impact the chance to reflect on his Master's journey had on him and at the end of the project, we discussed the potential for including similar reflective opportunities for future Master's cohorts.

Figure 5.1 Nigel episodic and configurational dimensions



5.1 Chapter 1, the' beginning': an introduction to Nigel

Nigel and I had our first meeting in January 2021 in my office on campus.

5.1.1 Nigel as teacher

> I suppose didn't really know what I wanted to do when I was younger. I did a degree in psychology and towards the end of it I started to read a lot about educational psychology. I decided that I'd become an educational psychologist but at that time I needed to teach for two years and then do a master's degree training. So I did a maths conversion course and then a secondary maths PGCE and got a job and just really enjoyed teaching, I loved teaching, so I forgot about the educational psychology thing and stuck with teaching and I've been in the career for 17 years now.
>
> Nigel Chapter 1

Nigel sums up his teaching career as having 'bumbled my way through' (initial interview, 03:25). Having not been drawn to the profession, he found that his initial plans of teaching as a gateway to a career in psychology did not pan out; but having invested in the profession he then sustained a long career despite having no long-term plans to do so. Even after 17 years in the profession, Nigel is not sure whether we wants to continue on the traditional pathway of career progression into deputy-headship and then a head of school role[10]. He is frequently self-deprecating in the way he describes his career, suggesting a lack of confidence or some kind of unease in the professional yarn of his teacher identity[ies].

The notion of 'stumbling' into a teaching career is in some way counterintuitive to the dominant discourses in England of teaching as a vocational profession. As discussed in the literature review, the majority of teachers in England tend to be drawn into the profession for reasons related to social and moral imperatives; some kind of altruistic urge to 'make a difference' related to children's lives and futures as much as their schooling experiences (e.g. Alexander et al., 2020; Fray & Gore, 2018; Heinz, 2015). However, when asked about what has kept him in the teaching profession for so long, Nigel finds it quite difficult to answer. His response is full of long pauses, sighs, and hesitations. In the end, we can determine three main reasons, which seem closely related:

- Working with Y11 and Y13 pupils in his current role and seeing the 'end point' assessment outcomes and perceptions of success for young people;

[10] At this point of the interview I felt a connection with Nigel having had the same career pathway. Similar to Nigel, I felt that I had taken up opportunities as they came along rather than having a clearly-defined career plan and now felt myself having 'fallen' into an academic career. This made it difficult not to empathise with Nigel throughout this first interview and to remain objective in my questioning (and also not to overshare my own experiences).

- In his current school, acknowledging social disadvantages and deprivations that many pupils experience and having opportunity to mitigate for some of this in his teaching and pastoral roles;

- Seeing pupils transition from schooling into further or higher education, apprenticeships, employment, etc… and feeling that he has 'made a difference' to their life pathways.

What seem to be consistent in Nigel's articulation of his career in teaching are his strong commitment to social justice, his positioning of teaching as a moral endeavour and his focus on making a difference, consistent with key literature in this area. And at the heart of Nigel's discussion about teaching seem to be particularly strong emotional and affective fibres related to personal and professional yarns of his teacher identity[ies] strand. These play out in his description of 'tough times' when dealing with pupils and their vulnerabilities or challenging circumstances (initial interview, 07:17). Such a distinct child-centred connection suggests that during his career Nigel has [re]formed a strong personal yarn of his teacher identity[ies], despite not having a clearly defined motivator for joining the profession, nor a clear future career pathway.

In this interview, Nigel does not identify or discuss politics in education either through his school-based work or his experiences of critical study in his Master's so far. This could suggest that he positions teaching as apolitical, which, as described in the literature review, is not an unusual stance in the English profession. Sachs (2000) describes how traditional or orthodox views of teaching have tended to side-line the political act. As a result, many teachers view themselves as apolitical, despite much literature which emphasises the ways in which teachers' daily acts and activities tend to be related to political endeavours (e.g. Cochran-Smith, 2005; McVee, 2014; Reay, 2020).

What can be said about the three yarns of Nigel's teacher identity[ies] at this beginning point?

Personal:

- He displays a high level of personal investment in the profession, related to his emotional and affective responses to experiences of working with disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils

- He situates the teaching profession as a moral endeavour and cites social justice reasons for his 17+ year-long career

- His personal commitment to teaching has developed after entering the profession rather than him having altruistic and intrinsic motivators for joining the profession

Professional:

- Nigel has experienced an 'accidental' but 'fortunate' career pathway
- He does not have long-term plans and doesn't have a defined expectation of his future, although he considers a move to deputy-head and potentially headship as an outcome from Master's study
- He seems to lack confidence in some fibres of his professional identity

Political:

- Nigel does not have a strong political yarn in his teacher identity at this point. There is no reference to politics in education or distinct critique of policies at a local and/or national level.

5.1.2 Nigel as researcher

> *Do you see yourself as a researcher?*
>
> Not at the moment, no. That's not to say I don't think I can do it, I suppose once I start doing interviews, I suppose at that stage I will but if I'm being honest, no, not at the moment. I've, you know, done my assignments and I've done literature reviews but I don't consider that I've done any **actual** research at the moment, I suppose.
>
> Nigel Chapter 1

What is interesting in this interview is that Nigel speaks much more about his experiences on the Master's course and his dissertation, and also speaks more fluently and more confidently compared to his discussions about his role and experiences as a teacher. This could be related to proximity in time – the fact that Nigel, at the point when we met, was invested in beginning his dissertation work.

Yet, Nigel does not perceive himself as a researcher at this point and he describes how he felt that he had 'held off' completing a Master's. As he described in his teaching pathway, Nigel had initially intended to complete a Master's after two years of teaching (albeit in educational psychology). He explains how it has been something that he has always wanted to do, how it has always been in the back of his mind, but how it then 'went away for a while, well for quite a while' (initial interview, 08:33). He was encouraged by a friend who works outside of teaching to consider Master's study, and felt inspired after seeing what this friend had achieved – personally and professionally – through his Master's and then completing a doctorate. Linked potentially with Nigel's lack of career plan, he started to think a Master's would be a positive change for him,

> ‘And then I started to think well actually, yeah, it might be quite nice just to... kind of … get … [2 sec pause]… erm, I can’t put it into words erm [4 secs] you get into, I wouldn’t say daily grind, but you just get into this routine and I I I … I suppose I wanted to … think about education rather than just do it. If that makes sense. Erm… And I saw it as a... you know... getting outside my comfort zone a little bit really and a bit of a challenge, well, a lot of a challenge’ (initial interview, 09:27)

It is notable that Nigel was not encouraged by his peers or senior leadership in school, nor by academics in the field, but by someone outside of the profession. Nigel situates the Master’s as a ‘challenge’, as something quite different to his teacher role and work and something that involves thinking rather than doing. Here we see the emphasis on the separation of research – and academic or intellectual work – from the ‘usual’ world and work of teaching. This is not uncommon in England, given that teachers’ engagement with research at multiple levels is perceived by some as problematic and indeed to some extent undesirable (e.g. Beckett, 2020; Cochran-Smith, 2016; Leat et al., 2015). Indeed, Nigel speaks frequently about the challenges so far in his Master’, related in particular to both academic skill and subject content,

> ‘The first module that I did, that we did was about action research which, up to that point, I’d never heard of and then it it appears that this was, this had been a massive thing in education for years (*laughs)* which has just passed me by completely. And that in itself made me think, well, yeah, I think I have made the right decision here because I’m finding out about stuff that I probably should have known about a long time ago.’ (initial interview, 11:42)

Here we see emphasis on how Nigel perceives Master’s study as quite different to usual forms of CPD activity, but also we can identify some conflict as he describes how action research may not necessarily be ‘allowed’ in some schools or academy trusts (initial interview, 14:35). And it may be that this new-found interest in action research contributes to Nigel not framing the critical and intellectual work he has completed on his Master’s so far as ‘research’. He considers work such as submitting a proposal, engaging in a literature review could be *kind of* research, but then decides against this and goes on to describe ‘actual’ research as actively being engaged in some kind of empirical work. This positioning of research only being authenticated if it involves systematic data collection and analysis could be related to the DfE’s inclination in recent years towards favouring randomised control trials and meta-analyses of empirical work to inform policy and practice, along with the promotion of large research bodies such as the EEF and a commitment to the positive paradigm implied by a ‘what works’ approach to education research (Wrigley, 2018).

What can be said about the three yarns of Nigel's researcher identity[ies] at this beginning point?

Personal:

- Nigel describes similar affective and emotional responses to engaging in Master's study and research as he does to his teaching career, particularly in being challenged and pushed out of his comfort zone
- He portrays a significant lack of confidence in his academic worth and in himself as a researcher; he acknowledges that he is actively seeking validation from academics
- Personal relationships with peers and tutors on the programme have been significant in helping Nigel feel part of a developing academic community

Professional:

- Nigel perceives that completing his Master's may be beneficial to his career but he is unsure how this will play out
- He has been encouraged into Master's study by a personal friend rather than through professional associations, suggesting a significant separation of research from his professional role in teaching
- He acknowledges how his research may have limited impact in a MAT environment where school improvement is top-down rather than bottom-up

Political:

- Nigel alludes to policies and practices in schools whereby teachers engaging in research is 'not allowed'
- He perceives the role of action research as having potential to have a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils and in some ways to challenge the status quo but does not link this concept to the previous point

5.1.3 Dual strands: conflicts about teacher research

At this starting point, Nigel seems to consider his teacher and researcher identity[ies] as quite separate, and acknowledges that he does not feel like a researcher at all. Some of this separation, maybe, is rooted in Nigel's previous and current experience in schools where, 'it's never been discussed about teachers becoming researchers' (initial interview, 11:42). But he articulates a significant change that has already occurred in his perception of teachers as researchers: after his year

of Master's study, including learning about the potential of action research as a bottom-up school improvement strategy, he thinks that engaging in research is something that *all* teachers should be offered through regular, quality school-based CPD, not just via Master's programmes or other accredited forms of professional development.

But then he goes on to explain further conflict. In his experience, school improvement is very much top-down, particularly in the context of working in a MAT where trust-wide decisions, policies and practices are led by trust directors and senior leaders and then executed by teams in each individual school. In his context, he can see some benefit of this approach; however,

> 'Going back to, to just being a bit conflicted, I I I I do really like the idea of action research, but I don't know necessarily whether it's got a place in... **I feel it should** have a place in all schools... it's just whether it would be allowed to have a place in certain schools and certain academy trust' (initial interview, 14:35)

Even if teachers were allowed to engage in action research, he is uncertain what outcomes would be welcomed by senior leaders, 'but what impact it would have and whether it would be... whether they would be allowed to... or whether changes would happen as a result of that...' (initial interview, 15:10). Although he describes this viewpoint as a bit 'sceptical', there is a clear sense of power imbalance here. Nigel describes, from his own professional experience, how the structures and hierarchies of schools and MATs position teachers as implementers of strategic and structural decisions made by senior leaders, some of whom are far removed from classroom practices, both figuratively in their job role and geographically in the case of national MAT leadership structures. Herein lies the conflict: Nigel wants *his* research to have an impact in school but perceives the power dynamics of policy and practice development to be set against him at the outset. It is plausible to suggest that some of these subtle but significant social and cultural hierarchies of power in his MAT have been influential thus far in creating barriers to Nigel's [re]formation of identity[ies] as a researcher or to feeling a sense of agency and autonomy in utilising research in his professional role.

5.2 Chapter 2, Covid phone call and video diary 1: 'The research is going ok'

Nigel and I had a phone call in April 2020 to discuss his intentions for his dissertation and participation in the research project. I sent multiple requests after this time for a video diary and Nigel, the last of the participants to submit, sent his video (with an apology for tardiness) in June 2020.

5.2.1 Nigel as teacher

> I can't complain about the amount of time that I've had in work as a senior leader [during Covid lockdown], there are three of us on a rota so we have a week each [in school] and then I have two weeks working at home… Right at the very start, I was in school in the first week of lockdown and then worked from home for the next two weeks, the first of which was quite light really in terms of what needed to be done. I was working on work-work but I could get some dissertation work done as well. But as time's gone on those periods of working from home have become busier and busier... And again, I can't complain because I've only been at work [in school] one week in three, but we've worked through the holidays, I worked through Easter and it was half-term last week and I was in school.
>
> Nigel Chapter 2

The impact of Covid-19 and a shift to his working patterns has greatly impacted on Nigel's 'usual' routine as a teacher. In his Covid phone call in April, he described how demands from work had increased due to Ofsted, a work complaint/investigation and now the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although he was now working from home for two weeks out of three, the pressures on his time as a professional were greater than ever. This continued as he described in his video diary, submitted in June, how he had worked through the Easter holidays and summer half-term break, times when he would usually focus on his Master's work. In both his phone call and video diary, the emphasis is very much on his dissertation and how 'work-work', as he termed it, continually got in the way, seeming somewhat resentful of this situation. There is an implicit suggestion here that, as described previously, he does not perceive a strong relationship between his Master's academic and research work and his day-to-day work as teacher.

However, in his video diary, Nigel does highlight two positive impacts of the dissertation and Master's work he has completed on his professional role. Firstly, he describes how the academic skills he has developed through Master's study so far, particularly literature reviews and dealing with more challenging literature, have 'sharpened up' his ability to pick out key information from multiple texts. This has been of significant benefit during the Covid-19 lockdown and for Nigel's leadership role in which he has had to read, digest and disseminate frequent communications from the DfE, exam boards and senior leaders in the MAT. Would Nigel have felt so confident in dealing with this material had he not been part-way through his dissertation? It is not possible to determine cause and effect, but the way in which Nigel had previously described his discomfort and the challenge of dealing with academic texts and literature, and how he has overcome this, suggests that his critical, academic research work thus far has had a positive bearing on some fibres of the professional yarn of his teacher identity[ies] within this context.

Secondly, Nigel is now considering studying for NPQH, something he had not previously considered as he was doubtful about following a career path into school headship. However, he now recognises that the NPQH is not just a qualification for aspiring head teachers, but a further study option that gives him opportunity to develop his knowledge and understanding in a particular area of education. So, although he is still not committed to becoming a head teacher, he is applying for this qualification so that he can continue studying after his Master's is completed. While this seems positive, highlighting Nigel's commitment to continuing academic and intellectual professional development, there may also be an assumption that the Master's alone is not entirely professional or practical in relation to career progression into senior leadership. This further emphasises how the professional yarns of Nigel's strands of teacher and researcher identity[ies] continue to be disconnected in some ways.

5.2.2 Nigel as researcher

> I'm kind of, horrible phrase, bitting and batting. I'm spending maybe a weekend or a few nights on the trot really getting into it, and then having to go back and sort things out from a work point of view and then coming back and just kind of flicking between work and dissertation… When I'm in it [dissertation] I'm really enjoying it. I feel really strongly, really passionately about social mobility. And, yes, it's frustrating at times having to do the day job, it gets in the way. But hey-ho.
>
> Nigel Chapter 2

In both the Covid phone call and first video diary, Nigel describes multiple challenges that he has faced in establishing his dissertation, including a change of supervisor and a shift from empirical work to a 'major study' (the term within Nigel's Master's programme for a non-empirical dissertation) predominantly grounded in existing literature. Of particular significance seems to be this latter switch. Nigel describes himself as frustrated multiple times, mostly frustrated at himself for not realising the extent of the ethical issues that he would have to address to engage in interviews around social mobility with young people and their families. He labels himself as 'naïve' for not considering the ethical and power issues that would be involved in examining individuals' experiences of social mobility. But what could be considered most significant is the way that Nigel has previously described his conceptualisation of empirical work to be 'actual' research that involved collecting and analysing empirical data. Could this then potentially hamper Nigel's emerging identity[ies] as researcher? However, Nigel also says that moving to a major study had been 'like a weight lifted' (Covid phone call, 14:07), suggesting that his plan now for his dissertation work is much more within his comfort zone. But it should be asked if not having to push against these boundaries of comfort as a researcher could further hamper the [re]formation of personal and professional strands of his researcher identity[ies].

This is apparent at the start of video diary one, where Nigel refers again to 'relief' at not having to engage in empirical work, but also feeling 'disappointed… I would have liked to work with some people' (video diary 1, 01:31). During this section of video Nigel speaks quickly but with lots of pauses, hesitations and gazes off camera, suggesting there may be some discomfort and dissonance, possibly almost convincing himself that it's as good to complete a major study compared to his original plan of empirical work. This is further emphasised in how he describes his new supervisor as 'directing' and 'nudging' him along, suggesting a continued lack of confidence in his personal yarn of researcher identity[ies]. But as he talks more about his experiences, there seem to be three things emerging that could be identified as important fibres related to developing his confidence and yarns of identity[ies] as researcher: time, peers, and physical space.

Due to the increased pressures of work, Nigel has not had sustained time to spend on his dissertation which seems to disrupt his development of confidence in his personal yarn of researcher identity[ies], 'When I have a bit of time away I start to… **doubt** myself…' (video diary 1, 08:17). He is also missing contact with peers and tutors on the course, and although he mentions being surprised about this, it is well-established in the literature that communities of practice are highly influential in the [re]formation of teacher and researcher identity[ies]. Physical space also seems important; Nigel describes how 'I wish I'd… *(big intake of breath)* maybe spent a bit more time… maybe in the library, just doing the kind of student thing I guess of… doing a bit more research and a bit more study' (video diary 1, 13:32). Facing so much time alone, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, has may have made Nigel more aware of his need for an academic community to enable and support [re]formation of personal and professional yarns of his researcher identity[ies].

5.2.3 Dual strands: highs and lows

Across the video diary Nigel seems to shift from descriptions of functional matters related to progress (or not) in his dissertation, along with challenges of time and priority management, to then opening up about his emerging identity[ies] as a researcher and expressing some of his more emotional responses. Much of his description of practical experiences seems related to difficulties: the disappointment of moving away from empirical work; frustration at 'losing' time; panicking at the scope of the subject area, regret at not having made the most of his previous studies, and doubting his ability as a researcher. But some positive responses are also captured, where he describes how much he enjoys the subject matter and feels passionately about social mobility and his enjoyment of time spent 'writing in earnest'. He describes feeling as if he is on a 'cycle', where sustained space to work on his dissertation creates positive feelings, but then feelings of doubt and anxiety creep in when

he is away from his dissertation and 'losing' time due to work pressures. But despite these challenges Nigel can perceive a change in himself,

> 'I've finally got to the positive, that's been one of the positives to come out of doing the Master's, is that it's kind of given me that love I suppose, ermmm, love or desire to study and to find out more and to ermmm I suppose that was one of the… one of the aims when I first started doing the Master's was to just have that time just to sit back and reflect, reflect on education, investigate it a little bit more rather than just turn up and doing it on a day-to-day basis was to, you know, to try and find out more and and I suppose it's been a success in that respect' (video diary 1, 15:38)

So it seems that Nigel *is* experiencing some [re]formation of personal and professional yarns of teacher identity[ies], and there is potential for further drawing these yarns together with the researcher yarns and strands of identity[ies].

5.3 Chapter 3, video diary 2: 'There's been some surprises'

Nigel submitted his second video diary in July 2020, near the end of the summer term for schools.

5.3.1 Nigel as teacher

> I've started to read about the negative impact of setting. And I'm a maths teacher, we set – we have always set all of our classes in the three schools that I've worked at. I'm a big believer in that, having taught across the full ability range, I'm a big believer in setting. I think it supports and challenges students of all abilities. So I wouldn't say I was frustrated, just surprised and a bit annoyed, I suppose, at being told that what we've been doing all these years is wrong, when again, anecdotally, I have seen the impact of it.
>
> Nigel Chapter 3

Nigel starts out in this first video diary by explaining he has found some things as expected but has also encountered some surprises. Although he chooses such a mild word to characterise his experience, as he details some of the findings emerging from his dissertation, it becomes clear that there has been significant impact on all three yarns of his teacher identity[ies]. Perhaps what is most significant is that Nigel's established beliefs and experiences as a teacher have been challenged as he has discovered 'unwelcome truths' (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015). As seen in the text box above, this has been a significant challenge to Nigel's values, beliefs and experience as a teacher. Throughout his explanation he shakes his head, grimaces, raises his eyebrows; it seems as if these findings have been particularly uncomfortable for Nigel as he has to now find a way to reconcile tensions between his research and his everyday teacher work.

This discomfort has potentially been compounded by Nigel's engagement with research findings that demonstrate a negative side to social mobility, where individuals may feel 'like a fish out of water' in their new circumstances. As Nigel explains this finding, he seems quite downbeat, with his eyes

downcast and a low tone of voice, speaking at a slower pace than usual, compared to his usual eye contact with camera and quickness of speech. He explains how, 'I think I went into this project thinking that social mobility should be the aim of everybody, that it's a really good thing' (video diary 2, 00:45). This contradiction to his embedded beliefs is furthered by literature that suggests that schools have limited impact in terms of supporting social mobility for students. But Nigel explains how this is contradictory to his own experiences,

> 'having worked in schools for 20-odd years… ermmm I've seen it happen… and just for [2 sec pause] just to see the amount of… academic… research that's that kind of suggests that schools have a very very limited impact on social mobility… that's been quite surprising and quite… ermmm… contradictory (*raises eyebrows)* I suppose to what ermmm to what my experience has been' (video diary 2, 01:53)

He then continues with a shift to how social mobility can be manipulated by some families with greater access to financial, cultural and social capitals, exacerbating inequalities in state education and how, 'I I I knew it went on… I think I've just been surprised at how… prevalent it is, how widespread that is' (video diary 2, 03:11). He describes feeling frustrated and annoyed as he expected this 'kind of thing' in the independent sector, which he describes as more money-driven, but he had no previous awareness of such manipulation within the state sector.

He also explains how his strongest reaction was to research findings which suggest that disadvantaged students typically experience poor schools and poor teaching which leads to poor outcomes. Again, he shakes his head and speaks quite hesitantly as he describes how such statements about poor-quality education have affected him. There is something to be said here about significant challenges to the personal, professional and political yarns of Nigel's teacher identity[ies], as he comes across research which locates himself, his colleagues and the schools in which he has worked as poor quality and to blame for poor student outcomes, rather than acknowledging the multi-faceted and complex interaction of social, cultural and historical dimensions which lead to persistent attainment gaps for particular groups of students (e.g. Emery et al., 2022; Farquharson et al., 2022; Ivinson & Thompson, 2020). That Nigel has, until this point, been unaware of such complexities is unsurprising given criticism levied at the system of initial and continuing teacher education in England which places teachers as technical and instrumental, rather than as moral, ethical and politicised (Back et al., 2018; Biesta et al., 2015). Thus, it would not be unexpected for Nigel to experience some discomfort and challenge as he begins to build more critical knowledge and understanding of how education interacts with wider social and cultural systems, [re]forming the political yarn of his strand of teacher identity[ies].

The way that Nigel fronts up this section in his video (the first six minutes of a 13-minute video are spent explaining each of these contradictions in research that he has come across and how he has related emotionally to them) suggests that this has been a highly significant experience in relation to [re]formation of his personal, professional and political yarns of teacher identity[ies].

5.3.2 Nigel as researcher

> I've been quite surprised I think by how strongly I've reacted to some of the research. I suppose my first reaction was to think, right, I've got to find some research that contradicts that and backs up what I believe. But I've had to fight, I suppose, quite hard to not go down that route. And just to try and be as objective as I possibly can.
>
> Nigel Chapter 3

Nigel is acutely aware of some tension between the dual strands of his teacher and researcher identity[ies], particularly in relation to the personal and professional yarns. But he also has a distinct awareness of his emerging identity[ies] as researcher, which encompasses a need to 'fight' to remain objective and not allow his personal yarns, grounded in lived experiences, to influence his approach to his dissertation. He explicitly acknowledges his attempts to ensure that he does not go down the route of 'celebratory' research and instead brings to the fore and finds ways to reconcile discomfort with the 'unwelcome truths' he has encountered (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015). To an extent, this is exemplified in the way Nigel uses some combative language to describe his work with research. He talks about having to fight his personal urges, but also how he has enjoyed being 'pushed' and 'challenged' by the research work on his dissertation.

Although we see some [re]formation of Nigel's identity[ies] as researcher, he does hesitate at using the word 'intellectual' to describe some of the work has been doing. This suggests that confidence in his academic and intellectual endeavours has not formed a distinctive fibre of his personal and professional yarns of teacher and researcher identity[ies]. But here there is also an indication that an academic community has been an influential factor in the potential for [re]formation of Nigel's identity[ies] as researcher. He describes how, 'I found things, to start with, I found it quite taxing quite difficult and I thought, is it just me, have I just been out of it for so long. But then actually having spoken to other … errr… peers on the course it wasn't just me' (video diary 2, 08:40). As indicated previously, a sense of isolation as a researcher has been somewhat problematic in Nigel building and sustaining confidence in the personal yarn of his researcher identity[ies], but to some extent this struggle seems to be mitigated by shared experiences with others. And, at this stage in his research, Nigel feels that he is building in confidence in his academic ability, reinforced by validation from his supervisor and from previous feedback on his Master's assignments. He even reflects back to his

experiences at school and how he now feels more comfortable in his return to academic study. Of note is the way in which Nigel's experiences between leaving full-time education and starting his part-time Master's are not included in this reflection, suggesting that his experiences in 17+ years as a teacher are not considered to be academic or intellectual.

5.3.3 Dual strands: the dissertation has added stress

It is interesting that Nigel's confidence in himself as a researcher seems to have developed at a time during which his beliefs and experiences as a teacher have been significantly challenged. He talks about how the dissertation has added stress in general, particularly related to time and physical space: having 'lost' time in school holidays and at weekends and being unable to use library facilities or meet with peers who are part of his academic community. But this could also allude to additional stress forming through his emotional and affective responses to challenging and contradicting literature and research that he has come across. We could ask, are such tensions acting as a force to draw his dual strands of identity[ies] closer together into a more tightly knotted rope, or are they acting in the opposite way, separating the strands and causing the rope to fray?

The way in which Nigel articulates his responses to the conflicting literature and his 'fight' to remain objective suggest that his researcher identity[ies] are [re]forming through inter-related personal, professional and political yarns. Personally, he has had to reconcile his frustration and desire to counter uncomfortable literature. His values and beliefs that social mobility is good for everyone have been challenged. Professionally, he has had to accept research findings that suggest setting is not beneficial for all students, despite years of experience telling him that the opposite is true. And politically, he has come to understand more about schools' positioning in maintaining the status quo of advantage and disadvantage, and how 'poor schools' and 'poor teachers' are blamed for the attainment gap. This emerging critical understanding means that Nigel has to challenge well-established social and cultural messages about meritocracy and the role of educational attainment in being a 'silver bullet' for tackling inter-generational patterns of poverty and disadvantage. In response, it seems that Nigel is flexing and adapting his yarns of teacher identity[ies] in order to accommodate these new understandings that are strengthening the yarns of his researcher identity[ies].

5.4 Chapter 4, video diary 3: 'I'd like it to make a difference'

Nigel completed and submitted his dissertation in mid-September 2020 and his third video diary was submitted in November 2020. Again, I had sent several requests for a submission related to his completion of his dissertation and he sent a video diary with his usual apology for being late.

5.4.1 Nigel as teacher

> It [Master's] really reinvigorated my passion for education and that was one thing that I really wanted the course to do. I think I'd maybe become a little bit 'on the treadmill'. The MA was about just taking a step back and looking at the bigger picture, having time to really think deeply about education and education matters. And I think it really did do that for me. I can start to feel myself slipping back towards the treadmill but I'm determined that that's not gonna happen.
>
> Nigel Chapter 4

In this video diary we can see Nigel reflect on some of the ways in which completing the Master's programme and his dissertation have led to some [re]formation of the professional yarn of his teacher identity[ies]. As seen in the text box above, he locates much of his work as a teacher as functional and procedural, and recognises that engaging in critical and intellectual research work has given him opportunity to think more deeply. However, there is still an implication here that Nigel experiences such critical and academic work as separate to the daily 'treadmill' of his professional work in school. He also describes some separation as related to physical time, for example in how he had to use his long summer holiday to complete his dissertation and how this needed to be done and submitted at the start of the school year as he knew that he needed to prioritise professional work at this time.

But at the same time, Nigel describes how some of the outcomes of his dissertation are related to his developing professional practice and how, in his role as vice-principal, he is fortunate that he can potentially influence policy and practice more widely in his school. But the way he describes taking this research work further seems laborious in his choice of words and expression,

> 'I'm thinking parental engagement might be the strand that, the strand from my dissertation that I might… might really push, push *(emphasis on words, leans forward slightly)* on this year… out of anything out of it. I'll still continue working… on the other elements but I think, yeah, parental engagement at the moment seems to be the frontrunner in terms of… ermmm [2 sec pause] what I could really make a difference on in the school that I'm at' (video diary 3B, 03:51)

Both his choice of words and his body language – the way he leans forward at times and emphasises force – suggests some kind of toil or deep-rooted labour in embedding this research work both in his own role and in the practice of others. This aligns with his comments about teaching as being on a treadmill and how Master's study has reinvigorated his wider knowledge, understanding and interests as a teacher, including how he is now reading books and literature and engaging in more news and current events around teaching and education than he has done since he qualified as teacher. That it feels laborious in some way to continue this work without the supportive framework of Master's study and his academic community, and to encourage others in this work too, is not surprising considering that Nigel has had 17+ -years' experience as a teacher and that this kind of intellectual and academic

work has not previously been a considered or accepted fibre of his personal or professional yarns of his teacher identity[ies].

5.4.2 Nigel as researcher

> I don't want to sound, I don't know, pompous - I don't know what the word is - but I'd really like it to make a difference. I'm really proud of what I put together… really, really pleased with what I had created and I like to think that it's not a case of that's it, it just gets put on a shelf and then you move on and never touch it again. And I still feel really strongly about social mobility, I'm still really passionate about trying to make a difference.
>
> Nigel Chapter 4

In this diary entry Nigel seems more comfortable in his identity[ies] as a researcher and the majority of his time is spent discussing his investment in his dissertation and his pride at finishing, as well as his hopes for applying some of the outcomes in his own school setting and finding ways to 'make a difference'. As we have seen previously, Nigel has experienced particular internal conflicts and tensions in his response to his emerging research findings and this has [re]formed strong emotional and affective fibres of his personal and professional yarns of researcher identity[ies]. Such emotional responses are sustained here. The first part of his video diary describes his feelings at submitting his dissertation, and how this went from 'relief' to feelings of 'loss',

> 'I think initially it was a huge huge relief *(pinching top of nose)* ermmm I suppose that's obvious but yeah huge relief. It it just opened up loads of free time. I was usually *(small shake of head)* using towards the end of it I was just using ah all **all** available time kind of *(big breath in, swallows)* every waking hour really' (video diary 3A, 01:07)

> I really got into the study ermmm and then really missed it and I still do to be honest, really miss ermmm…. the study and just being so errr interested in something ermmm and looking into it in so much detail errr becoming *(raises hands in a circle gesture)* consumed by it I guess, all-consuming to some extent… ermmm *(frowns and scratches head)* but at the same time I felt very motivated to to put it into practice (video diary 3A, 02:54)

The 'time' spent on completing and then submitting the dissertation does not seem to be a matter of the hours spent, but rather a significant investment of the self and emotional labour for Nigel, indicated by his description of the way in which it became 'all-consuming'. It could be that these emotive and affective responses to the final part of completion of his dissertation have been most significant in [re]forming fibres of his personal and professional yarns leading to more secure identity[ies] as researcher. This is reflected in his explicit pride of what he has achieved, although he presents this in his usual self-deprecating way of not wanting to seem 'pompous'. And this has translated into his more confident approach to his current NPQH studies and active participation in sessions, a significant contrast to how he portrayed his initial engagement in his Master's study.

5.4.3 Dual strands: I'm just not sure how to use it…

Although Nigel is proud of his outcomes from his dissertation and can see impact in his professional role and immediate school context, he is still searching to 'make a difference' much more widely. It may be that this new-found confidence as a researcher is context-dependent: his confidence is limited to his immediate surroundings and locus of control where he *does* have agency and autonomy to mobilise and translate his research findings; but in a wider context his identity[ies] as researcher are still very much emergent. It could be this lack of confidence in himself as a researcher beyond the bounds of his school and school environment that underpins some of his frustrations at research that he feels has little or no impact for the teaching profession in general,

> 'I found myself becoming really frustrated with some… some of the research that I read for my dissertation. Ermmm… I felt that some of it was just, just for the sake of it… no real outcome, no useful recommendations you know for for practising teachers or people working in education' (video diary 3B, 07:01)

> 'doing a a a wider study takes up a lot of time and effort and resource. If you're gonna use all that there needs to be something useful at the end of it… ermmm even if it doesn't provide all the answers' (video diary 3B, 08:33).

It may be that some of this frustration is linked to his recent experiences of lacking resources during his dissertation, such as physical resources and spaces for research, time for completing research, having a supportive academic community of practice. If others have these resources in abundance, then why should they not be having the wider impact with their research findings that Nigel is searching for at this stage? There is a sense here that Nigel continues to feel hindered to an extent due to his circumstances as a teacher and researcher trying to 'make a difference'; if only he had access to such rich resources his identity[ies] as a researcher would not only be more fully [re]formed but also potentially more closely aligned to the yarns and fibres of his teacher identity[ies].

5.5 Chapter 5, member check discussion: 'Where does my research fit?'

Nigel and I met online in February 2021. Prior to the meeting, I had sent Nigel some detailed transcripts with initial comments and interpretations for us to discuss (see Appendix D) and had asked him to review his own video footage before we met.

5.5.1 Nigel as teacher

> I feel like I've just kind of settled back into the day job… maybe that's just me, I just kind of fall back into 'revert to type' I suppose. And that disappoints me, especially in this [dissertation] where I was so happy with what I've done. I'm disappointed that I've just kind of gone, 'Right, okay. Right, back to the day job'.
>
> Nigel Chapter 5

In this member check discussion, it could be considered unsurprising that the main focus is on Nigel's experiences, work and identity[ies] as a researcher. There is little that Nigel highlights or brings into conversation about his role as a teacher but, as we will see, Nigel relishes this opportunity to 're-focus' on his identity[ies] as a researcher although he berates himself somewhat for what he describes as reverting to type. He repeats several times in this discussion how he has settled back into the day job, how he has not been 'great' at continuing to develop his research work and how time has been a challenge but how that is 'not a good enough excuse'. As discussed in the literature review, time can be considered a proxy indicator for value, and here we see a suggestion that the school culture in which Nigel is well-established is not supportive of teachers' critical research activity, although it is open to 'evidence-based' school improvement. Again, this aligns with work in the literature review which highlights significant tensions in the English context of the rhetoric of 'evidence-based' and 'research-informed' practice which positions teachers as passive recipients of other's research rather than as active researchers in their own right (e.g. Biesta, 2010; Cain, 2015; Slavin, 2008; Wrigley, 2018).

5.5.2 Nigel as researcher

> My worry is that it won't make a difference, I think. And I don't think I ever really knew exactly how much of a difference it could make. And I'm still unsure. I'm hoping that the piece of work that I'm doing at school at the moment on parental and community engagement will be part of that, will be one thing that comes out of it. But I'm still kind of, I'm still wondering where I can take it next. But at the same time, I've not really done a great deal, I've not done much about where to take it next, to be honest, whether that's… I don't know, I suppose it's been a busy time. But that's not a good enough excuse. If it's something that I feel so passionately about and care so much about, then I'd be making time really. So watching the videos has been good in terms of giving me a bit of a kick up the backside to say, 'Well, come on. You feel strongly about it, do something about it'.
>
> Nigel Chapter 5

Nigel seems to enjoy this opportunity to examine and discuss the yarns of his researcher identity[ies], although he highlights multiple episodes in his dissertation experience which were uncomfortable and where he experienced tensions or conflict that he had to reconcile in some way. As he says, after reviewing his video diary entries, 'It was really nice to… I suppose **relive** relive that that time ermmm which at the time was *(raises eyebrows)* **stressful** which I think I did talk about in one of the videos ermmm *(scrunches face up)* but also there was a a a tinge of sadness' (member-check discussion, 02:39).

He also expressed surprise at having had such a strong emotional response to working with not only his own research, but the research of others,

> 'I wasn't expecting to feel such strong emotions I I I think, although it's an emotive subject, you know, social mobility, and anything, I guess most things to do with education are are emotive. *(Big intake of breath*) But I wasn't expecting that particularly the, the kind of annoyance and frustration that I found… with some of the research' (member-check discussion, 04:48).

This annoyance and frustration played out in two ways for Nigel. The first was through research findings that were contradictory and with which Nigel disagreed, as he explained in detail in video diary 2. But the main source of frustration came from outcomes – or lack of outcomes – from research,

> 'I'd forgotten about that… **annoyance** at people spending all that time and resource *(scrunches face up)* and not really seeming to produce anything of worth that could be applied… in the educational setting, in the educational world ermmm yeah that was a big surprise *(shakes head gently)* I wasn't expecting that' (member-check discussion, 06:02).

It was this dimension of research that actually 'angered' Nigel in a surprising way, and may therefore underpin some of his discomfort as he reflects on the way in which he hasn't had opportunity to mobilise and translate outcomes of his own research work in order to make a difference in the way he had intended. But over time he has come to reconcile some of his anger and frustration through the way that he purposefully set out to, 're-establish faith that there are people out there, errr wanting to make a difference rather than maybe just being involved in academic exercises' (member-check discussion, 08:17).

However, at this time Nigel perceives his dissertation to have been not much more than an academic exercise,

> 'I I I still think there's part of me, a big part of me that doesn't know what to do really. I don't know what to do *(half-laugh)* It sounds… I don't know… it sounds ridiculous. But I don't know I just don't know what what to do with it outside outside of ermmm… my job… I'm not sure what to do' (member-check discussion, 15:51)

But should it be up to Nigel as an individual to find ways to mobilise and translate his research? It is apparent here that without an established academic community Nigel feels isolated in his attempts to sustain personal and professional yarns of his researcher identity[ies]. And he is aware that, 'I can just keep doing qualifications qualifications but… if I want to do something with it I need to really' (member check discussion, 16:35), suggesting that he perceives the only way to become part of an academic community and have support in mobilising his research is with the structure, backing and justification of being engaged in further academic qualifications. There is something to be said here about systemic issues in schooling in England which some would argue lead to teachers facing 'epistemic injustice' (Fricker, 2007) and the side-lining of their voices as both critical, intellectual researchers and

knowledge creators (e.g. Beckett, 2020; Dixon & Ward, 2015; Philpott, 2013). This certainly seems to resonate with Nigel's personal and professional yarns of his researcher identity[ies] which seem to be very much frayed and separated from his teacher identity[ies] at this point.

5.5.3 Dual strands: 'I've reverted back to type'

Nigel does acknowledge that he has undergone further [re]formation of the personal and professional yarns of his teacher and researcher identity[ies] since the submission of his dissertation. He describes his reaction to my initial interpretation notes where I indicated that at times I perceived there to be some separation of these two strands of identity[ies],

> 'Yeah, that kind of separation of teachers and researchers I found really interesting, actually… Ermmm… I think it was food for thought in terms of what I've just been talking about recently about that thing of… errr not knowing where to go next. And that actually, maybe it is, that actually being a, working in schools is possibly the really good vehicle for continuing. Ermmm and you talk a lot about the two identities being being separate. And the frustration of the job getting in the way of research and… I think maybe that's, again, food for thought for me that I need to think l, actually, they don't have to be mutually exclusive. They can… they can work together.' (member-check discussion, 24:19)

Nigel seems to embrace the discomfort and challenge of exposing how his research work has lapsed and how his researcher and teacher strands of identity[ies] have separated now that the Master's programme is no longer an imperative to draw them closer together. But Nigel seems comfortable in a way with such dissonance, giving examples of how he reconciled his anger and frustration at some research findings during his dissertation. And he leaves the discussion determined to re-connect with his dissertation work, to embed it into his school improvement project on parental engagement and to find ways of ensuring that further [re]formation of his personal and professional yarns of his researcher identity[ies] is possible, along with affirmative action to draw more closely together the two strands of his identity[ies] as researcher and teacher.

5.6 Chapter 6, 'the end': our 12+ month interview

Nigel and I met online in January 2022, 13 months after our previous meeting for the member-check discussion and 16 months after his submission of his dissertation. Much had changed for the Nigel in the time since we had last met: he had applied for a number of new roles – including an unsuccessful application as a school head – and had been appointed to a deputy- head role in a local Academy trust, which he would take up at Easter 2022. He successfully completed his NPQH qualification in the autumn term of 2021 and had successfully applied for and enrolled into the first year of an EdD degree at a local university.

5.6.1 Nigel as teacher and researcher

> I think I'd reached a stage where I really wasn't sure what [to do next professionally]; I was, and still am, a deputy head. I'd been doing that for maybe, I don't know, four years I think it was by the time I started the Master's. I wasn't really convinced I wanted to go for headship, although I did apply for a couple last academic year, but I think that was more because I felt I needed to at my stage of career and my age. But actually, the Master's and latterly the EdD has kind of really made me think outside of - not outside of education because I'm, you know, I'm a huge believer in education, I want to be part of it - but it's made me look outside the more traditional career paths I suppose. Which has been good for me personally, it's really freshened my approach up. And I think therefore it's maybe, in turn, helped my day-to-day role. I wouldn't say it's given me a new lease of life, but I think there's been a few things: I've moved schools, I've got this view that there's much more out there than just going Deputy Head, Head Teacher.
>
> Nigel Chapter 6

> I've got a stronger belief that practitioners have got a really big part to play in research, I think. I'm not necessarily saying me personally, but just in general, I think, before starting the Master's, I probably just regarded research as just being in the realms of academia and being done just purely within universities and academic establishments. But I think the Master's really developed this kind of belief that that shouldn't be the case, it shouldn't be the sole preserve of academia, you know, just within universities.
>
> Nigel Chapter 6

5.6.1.1 Personal yarns

Throughout Nigel's journey we have seen the emergence of significant emotional and affective fibres in the strands his teacher and researcher identity[ies]. At times this has reinforced his commitment to social justice, shown in his anxiety to 'make a difference', particularly within his locus of control in his own school setting. But at times this same desire for making a difference has led to disappointment, sadness, frustration and even anger with others engaged in educational research who don't seem to hold the same beliefs and values as Nigel. At this end point, he seems to have reconciled some of this discomfort, demonstrated in how he now personally advocates for others to engage in research and his transition into further study through an EdD route.

A further significant fibre in some [re]formation of Nigel's personal yarn of identity[ies] is related to his growth in confidence in his academic and intellectual work. He describes his recent transition to EdD study as, 'a bit daunting but then at the same time… quite exciting actually and good to be… good to be back in it' (12+ month interview, 02:58) and how '*(shaking head)* I never… I never thought that… I would end up… that I would be doing this' (12+ month interview, 04:16). He also expresses how his personal confidence has been influential in applying for and transitioning well into a leadership role in a new school. As he describes it, 'I think I think a lot of it has been about confidence, just building confidence to be able to, you know, venture into areas that… maybe I wouldn't have done a few years

ago' (12+ month interview, 11:14). It would seem that such personal experiences and accumulation of emotional and affective fibres as teacher and researcher have been particularly powerful in [re]formation of these personal yarns of his identity[ies]

5.6.1.2 Professional yarns

As well as continuing into further study through completing the NPQH and beginning EdD study, Nigel has also successfully moved jobs, re-locating to a different academy trust and taking on a more senior leadership role. As seen in the first text box above (p.130), Nigel considers his experiences on his Master's pathway to have been influential in his career decisions, not least in opening up his eyes to potential career trajectories outside of the 'usual' promotion track in school senior leadership. The potential to develop his professional yarn of researcher identity[ies] could have been imperative in this move to a new academy trust. He describes how he had considerable discussion with the CEO of the trust before applying and taking the role, ensuring that he would be supported in developing research activity not only in his own school, but also in schools across the trust. He describes his ambition in this new role to,

> 'position it [the school and trust] in the kind of forefront of the research community and ermmm… in terms of practitioner research. And… it's something I really want to push within the school and see, you know, try and get colleagues and…, you know, maybe on a small scale to start with, just little little, maybe some action research projects' (12+ month interview, 30:24)

Here we see Nigel's enthusiasm for engaging in research reignited, and not just for himself. As he says,

> 'I think advocate's a good word. I'm really enthusiastic about… getting people involved ermmm and trying to… get rid of this idea that [3 sec pause] it… it should only… should only… research should only be done kind of in this, kind of academic world, that it needs to be brought even more into the… you know, into the… into the practitioner world,' (12+ month interview, 30:57).

It might be that, at this point, in a more supportive school culture and at the start of his EdD journey, Nigel has created spaces where he can draw back together more tightly the professional yarns of his teacher and researcher identity[ies].

5.6.1.3 Political yarns

At the start of his journey, it was clear that political yarns were least influential in relation to Nigel's strands of teacher and researcher identity[ies]. Political yarns have continued to be the least evident and mostly implicit in each episode, although at this end point Nigel does explicitly discuss some of his thoughts related to politics in education.

> So I think maybe… there was… and is, a frustration there that, I guess, the more - maybe I've not really… either noticed it or realised prior to prior to really getting stuck into the dissertation. But I think [4 sec pause] maybe with… I suppose it's more about, politicians, you know, maybe that's been the change really, the frustration there that they've kind of used education just as a [4 sec pause] again, I can't think of the word – but, you know, just… just just talking in sound bites, using social mobility and levelling up as just just nice to throw in there, but without actually… putting the resource or structures in place to… to make it happen, to make it a success (12+ month interview, 21:25)

Here we can see an influence in relation to his dissertation work which has made Nigel more aware of the underlying politics and influence of policy-makers related to his area of study. We have already seen how passionately Nigel feels about social mobility, and he has grown to be more aware of political limitations in the potential for teachers and schools to make a meaningful difference without intervention from central government. Again, this provides a source of frustration, suggesting that the affective fibres are the ones that have had the strongest effect on [re]formation of his political yarns of identity[ies]. The way that Nigel stutters and hesitates a great deal during this part of the discussion also suggests that this is an aspect of education that he is less familiar, comfortable and confident in discussing with others. Again, this relates back to previous points raised about the expectation in England of teachers to remain apolitical alongside the inaccurate and inappropriate positioning of students' aspirations to be socially mobile as the responsibility of schools and individual teachers. That Nigel is now more politically aware is not surprising, given the wealth of evidence covered in the literature review which suggests that critical intellectual and research work, typical of Master's study, often leads to teachers developing significant insight related to issues of power, agency and decision-making across the educational landscape (e.g. Beckett, 2020; Elliott, 2015; Philpott & Poultney, 2018; Sachs, 2000). So Nigel has, at least, now come to acknowledge issues related to the status quo in relation to teachers' research and critical knowledge work, which he may well have further opportunity to challenge through his leadership role and EdD study.

5.7 Concluding comments on Nigel's experiences

Nigel's story provides insights into key moments of [re]formation of the strands, yarns and fibres of his teacher and researcher identity[ies]. One thing that maybe stands out most is the influence of the affective and emotional fibres of Nigel's personal and professional yarns; it is these yarns that that underwent most [re]formation during the course of his dissertation, as well as drawing together at the point of dissertation completion but to then fray and separate just a few months later. It is notable that just over 12 months after our member check discussion, during which Nigel expressed sincere regret and disappointment, that he has managed to undergo further [re]formation of all three yarns

of his teacher identity[ies] and, in personal and professional yarns, has begun to draw the two strands back more closely together. This could be related to at least two factors; his new professional role in a school culture supportive of teacher research activity and becoming part of an academic community once more through his EdD study. It is clear that, for Nigel, it is not enough to have an individual concern for teacher research, but that systems and structures as well as a community of practice need to be in place in order to sustain activity and researcher identity[ies].

Nigel openly acknowledges the lasting impact that his Master's study and dissertation have had. But this comes with some regret at not having made the time and space for this kind of study earlier in his career, 'I definitely wish I'd, at least done the Master's earlier, I think. I think that would have… that may may have changed my view and perception on education' (12+ month interview, 26:25). But for now, Nigel has found a position where he can continue to further his researcher identity[ies] as well as to advocate for others' research, and in doing so may well find opportunities in the future to make a difference in education that he has been so sorely seeking.

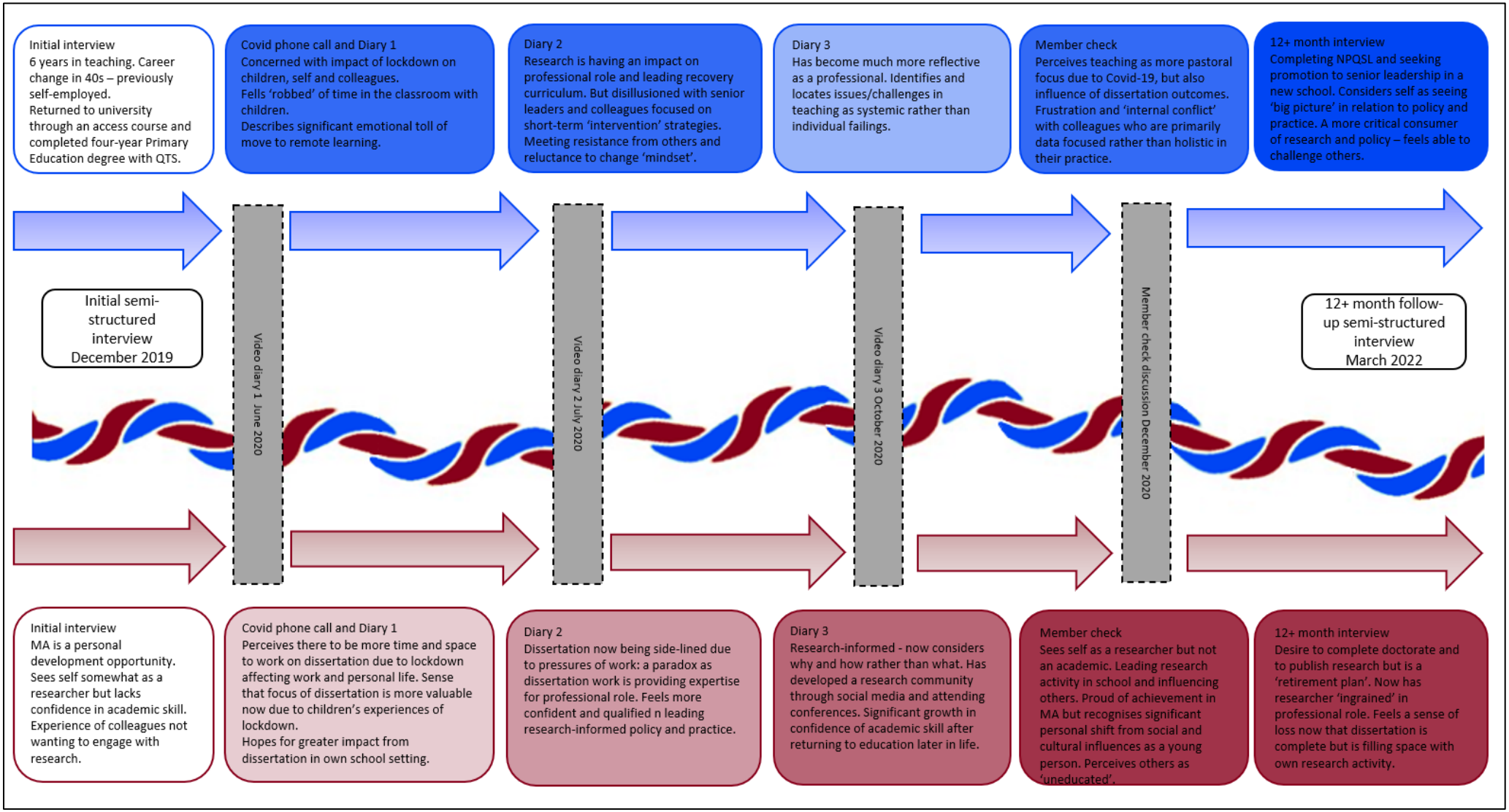
Chapter Six: Jane

6.0 Preamble: an introduction to Jane and our relationship

I first met Jane at the Master's dissertation presentation session that I attended at the beginning of the research project. In my dual role at the event as researcher-dissertation tutor, I reviewed Jane's poster but we did not engage particularly in any discussion of her intended research or of my own research project. Jane contacted me afterwards via email to express an interest in joining the research project and we only really had our first proper conversation at our first meeting for Jane's initial interview.

When we met, I was a bit surprised that, as a mature professional, Jane was so recently into her career as a teacher. It can be unusual for career changers to enter the primary teaching profession, particularly as there are limited financial incentives and support for primary ITTE. Jane was keen to participate in the research but also struggled with time. She had a busy family life and a long commute to and from school – around an hour each way. Jane often needed a few reminders to send video diaries or to arrange a meeting but she was always invested in the project and seemed to open up as our time working together progressed. Jane was another participant who experienced highly emotive responses at times and she was significantly affected by the disruption and circumstances of Covid-19 lockdowns. At the end of the research project, I reflected on how I felt very privileged with some of the personal and sensitive experiences that Jane became willing to share with me. In our final two meetings, Jane did express how she felt that engaging in the research had been a positive experience in reflecting on and learning from her dissertation journey and Master's experience as a whole. I felt that we had built a relationship of high trust and some sense of shared values.

Figure 6.1 Jane episodic and configurational dimensions



6.1 Chapter 1, 'The beginning': an introduction to Jane

Jane and I had our first meeting in December 2019, in my office on campus.

6.1.1 Jane as teacher

> …one of the main drivers is my son didn't have a very good experience of primary school because at that point he had undiagnosed ADHD. He found it really hard in school, and going through high school, and I just felt that children should enjoy school, it should be a good experience, it should make them feel secure and make them want to succeed. 'Giving them a better start' sounds a bit noble but it was a reason. I know some people think it's because of the holidays and all that sort of thing, but it wasn't anything like that for me.
>
> Jane Chapter 1

Jane had been in teaching for six years at the point at which she joined the research, and so could be considered as relatively less experienced than Karen and Nigel. Unlike the other participants, Jane had not had a life-long career in teaching; in this initial meeting she described how she had previously owned her own, successful, business which she sold when someone approached her with an attractive offer. After selling her business, she describes how she was 'floating around for a bit' (initial interview, 02:38) and then went to help out at her son's primary school. Not only did she really enjoy the experience, but had positive affirmation and encouragement from the class teacher who, she says, talked her into becoming a teacher. Jane went on to complete an access to education programme, and then a four-year primary education degree programme with a QTS qualification. Jane is keen to emphasise that she had offers from all the universities that she applied to for her degree; sharing a sense of pride in this academic achievement, about which she opened up in more detail later in our conversations together.

At this starting point, Jane's initial, and ongoing, motivations for teaching seem very much focused on principles of social justice and moral imperatives to provide not only good outcomes but also a safe and supportive education experience for children,

> 'The academic side of it of course is obviously important and that's why children…primarily come to school is to learn. But I also think it is… about building that **safe** and **secure** environment that children can **thrive** in. And that for some children we work with that is the only safe secure environment. And to me that's really important and that's what really drives me forward is to, making sure that **every** child can achieve **regardless** of what their background is, **regardless** of what's going on' (initial interview, 04:18)

She feels that she has already developed as a teacher through her experiences on the Master's programme so far, mostly related to developing more critical, reflective practices, which she is keen to share with colleagues and the ITTE students that she mentors. She sees that critical reflective

practice is beneficial, particularly when working with challenging pupils, 'I'm more looking at looking at the root cause of the problem first and then dealing with it… [break] whereas sort of more traditional is dealing with the behaviour' (initial interview, 10:01). It is interesting that Jane uses the term 'traditional' to describe functional and procedural systems of praise and consequence which are promoted by the DfE and influential edu-researchers, prominent in social media, such as Tom Bennett (former Behaviour Management Advisor to the DfE, and commonly referred to as the 'Behaviour Tsar') and Katharine Birbalsingh (headteacher of the Michaela School and former chair of the Social Mobility Commission). This aligns with persistent debates around a false dichotomy between 'traditional' and 'progressive' approaches to school cultures and behaviour policies and practices (e.g. Hargreaves, 2000; Thomson & Riddle, 2018; Watson, 2020).

It could be argued that Jane already has a more nuanced understanding of the way teachers position themselves, and others, in relation to such debates. She recognises that her senior leadership team are supportive of the way she wishes to develop more critical understandings of the some of the challenges experienced by disadvantaged children and their families and describes the ethos of her school as quite 'therapeutic'. She acknowledges that her engagement with the Master's so far has enabled her to change her mindset to an extent, and now has a desire to support others in doing the same, to promote a shift away from teaching as a technical endeavour and towards involving more critical understandings of the complexities that children and families in her school community experience.

What can be said about the three yarns of Jane's teacher identity[ies] at this beginning point?

Personal:

- Jane demonstrates a high level of personal involvement in her teaching career, related to her own experiences of struggling in education pre-16 and her son's experiences of difficulties due to a disability
- She situates teaching as a moral endeavour and cites social justice as a key motivator for joining and continuing in the profession
- Her personal commitment to teaching has developed after a career change and encouragement from an existing teacher

Professional:

- Jane entered the profession in later life, following a career change but had not had any previous intention or desire to teach

- Jane is very committed to career development, hoping to gain a leadership role in the near future
- She has quickly gained confidence in her professional ability following positive encouragement and feedback during her degree studies and ITTE

Political:

- Jane does not have an explicit political yarn at this point. She does not discuss politics related to education but does raise some concerns with education policies that are focused on attainment in maths and English at the expense of a broad and balanced curriculum and a focus on educating 'the whole child'.

6.1.2 Jane as researcher

> *Do you see yourself as a researcher?*
>
> Yes and no. Yes and no. I tend to think of people who are researchers, as people like Professor Robin Alexander, and the team around there. People who work for the Sutton Trust, I tend to think of them more as researchers. But on the other hand I do think that yes, I am a researcher because I'm doing a lot of research and I'm reading and doing and that's research in a very very small scale. Yes. But I suppose I see research as more as like professors and these people that have done these massive great big pieces of research.
>
> Jane Chapter 1

There are multiple instances where Jane describes strong links between her Master's and research work and her professional role and professional development. However, she seems doubtful about labelling herself as a researcher, describing her concept of 'researchers' as white, male professors in universities or large research bodies, such as Sutton Trust and EEF, who tend to be promoted as the 'gold-standard' by DfE and Ofsted. This is a fairly typical stance of teachers in England, as seen in the literature review, where social and cultural dialogues, including powerful messaging by policymakers, situate research as a macro-endeavour which is the sole preserve of universities and research bodies (e.g. Philpott, 2017; Wrigley, 2018; Wyse et al., 2018). But although Jane only conceptualises herself somewhat as a researcher, she talks frequently and in-depth about her desire to engage in research to build knowledge and to develop herself and others in their practice, and the way in which it has already changed her professional practices. This is perhaps linked to her motivations for engaging in a Master's degree in the first place,

> 'After doing my degree, I really found that I really had this **thirst** for knowledge and… and wanting to know more around certain areas ermmm so I would do a **lot** of reading

> ermmm… And I was getting a bit frustrated because I wasn't getting CPD from the school that I was at I felt I wanted more (*intake of breath)* and I wanted to learn more *(intake of breath)* and I wanted to get better (*all three points in very quick succession)* and so the only way to do that was actually to take control of it myself. So I thought 'Right, okay, I'm gonna, but how do I do that?' and then I researched and I thought, 'Okay, I'm going to go and do a Masters' because I thought that would really, that would sort of like fulfil that need that was there as well to get **better** and to get **more knowledge** and to, yeah, to make a better teacher to be able to do my job **better**. And I felt that wasn't… that just wasn't getting that from the school' (Initial interview, 04:55)

There is some sense of frustration here in the way Jane has had to find her own opportunities for critical research and knowledge building work, and she describes how her previous CPD through school had been entirely technical or subject focused. For example, development activities on 'wellbeing' of pupils had been reduced to Team Teach[11] and safe handling when faced with challenging physical behaviours, rather than on building knowledge and understanding of the potential causes of such behaviours and how to address these.

But then a conundrum arises, as Jane explains, 'I've learned a lot… which that that really did surprise me ermmm… and when I look back now over sort of like the previous two years' (initial interview, 06:06). Jane sought out a Master's programme in order to build knowledge, so why experience surprise at how much she has learned? There is something to be said here about the narrow range of teachers' professional work that may lead to assumptions that there is not much more to be learned from educational research and intellectual work beyond the frameworks of CCF in ITTE, ECF for new teachers and NPQs for experienced teachers, as indicated in the literature review (e.g. Boylan et al., 2023; Peiser et al., 2022; van Katwijk et al., 2019). And Jane can already see how many of her colleagues do not consider academic work or research to be important, 'I think research is important**. I know it's not for everybody.** And, erm, I say to people sometimes at work I've read this really good piece of research, 'I'm going to let you have it' and I can see their faces going, 'Oh my goodness… No thank you, I don't really want it' but, you know, they get it anyway' (initial interview, 24:28). But despite this, Jane does seem to have an emerging researcher identity[ies] related particularly to her personal and professional yarns, and her desire to 'make a difference' in some way to the children and families in her school.

[11] Team Teach is an accredited provider of 'positive behaviour management training'. It is a common professional development activity in schools in England. Teachers and support staff are taught ways to deal with challenging situations and behaviours, including safe forms of physical restraint of children. See www.teamteach.co.uk

What can be said about the three yarns of Jane's researcher identity[ies] at this beginning point?

Personal:

- Jane describes personal motivations for beginning Master's and engaging with research literature, taking ownership of her professional development personally rather than through professional channels
- She describes research as 'a way of developing myself' (initial interview, 22:48)
- She makes jokes about not being academic enough to complete a doctorate, suggesting some lack of confidence in research and academic ability

Professional:

- Jane describes her professional motivation for engaging in research as wanting to become a better teacher
- She considers that the MA programme will increase her career opportunities and potential promotion to leadership
- She has already seen impact on her own professional development and acknowledges colleagues' reluctance to engage in research

Political:

- Jane perceives that most teachers and schools do not provide supportive space or time for research – an implicit criticism of common policies rather than politics
- She describes the impact of research and its potential in challenging the status quo, in ways that are related to issues of social justice, but does not make explicit links to these terms or relate to current politics of education or politics more broadly

6.1.3 Dual strands: changing relationship between research and teaching

At this staring point Jane has already begun to change her conceptualisation of how research is relevant to her teaching practice and career, 'When I was at university, doing the doing the honours degree, I think it [research] was a means to be able to get to be a teacher and to get your assignment But now I see it more as a way of developing myself' (initial interview, 22:40). From her previous study on the Master's programme, and at the beginning of her dissertation journey, we see that Jane is already beginning to [re]form the professional yarn of her researcher identity[ies]. However, there are significant tensions within this. Jane identifies time as a particular challenge, and we have seen

previously how time is a proxy indicator for the perceived value of research in the teaching profession. The challenge of prioritising has been further exacerbated by her personal life and a long daily commute. Here we also acknowledge the way that women in the UK, as in many other cultures, tend to shoulder the burden of unpaid work in relation to domestic and caring responsibilities and attempt to balance this work along with professional lives and careers (Moreau, 2020). Jane speaks frequently of how she is well-organised, but this involves carving out particular time at weekends and in the school holidays for academic and research work. So, although Jane does position herself as an active researcher to some extent, her strand of researcher identity[ies] seems distanced from her teacher identity[ies] through the separation of working time and practices.

Such separation of Jane's dual strands of identity[ies] may also be exacerbated by her experiences within the culture of teaching in England which positions teachers as passive recipients of research from accepted research bodies and academics. Jane alludes to this in the way that she describes researchers in the previous section, and how she considers that research, 'just sort of like confirms actually that some things that you're doing, yeah, you're right to be doing that. And that is the right way of doing it and that is good practice' (initial interview, 24:15). So although Jane considers herself to be an active researcher in some ways, she still perceives that the role of research is to back up her professional decision making and justice, a simplistic but enduring construct of 'theory into practice' which is prevalent in England's system of ITTE and CPD (e.g. Biesta, 2010; Cain, 2015; Korthagen, 2017). It is here that a tension emerges; despite her enthusiasm for critical research activity Jane still seems reliant on the research of others rather than actively engaging in utilising her own research to build theory or engage in theory-practice dialogue. It is this particular conceptualisation of teacher-research that provides potential space for Jane to [re]form her personal, professional and political yarns of researcher identity[ies].

6.2 Chapter 2, Covid phone call and video diary 1: feeling worried

Jane and I had a phone call in mid-April 2020 to discuss her intentions around her dissertation and if she was able to continue in the research project. She then submitted a video diary just a few weeks later in early June 2020. Unfortunately, due to technical failings, Jane's first video diary submission became corrupted and unrecoverable after 1 minute 19 seconds of recording. However, this video diary was submitted soon after our Covid-19 phone call and the brief comments in the video diary reinforce Jane's discussion of her research experiences that occurred during our phone call. This means that, for the purpose of this findings chapter, I have treated Jane's phone-call in a similar way to a video diary entry. For both Karen and Nigel, their video dairy entry was forefront in this chapter of their narrative, with their phone-calls used to add further detail in relation to the impact of Covid-

19. For Jane, due to the limited video diary data at this stage of the research, her phone call is foregrounded as the main data source but this is justified due to the proximity of time in relation to submission as well as the corroboration between the brief video diary commentary and commentary from the previous phone call.

6.2.1 Jane as teacher

> We've all gone into teaching to teach children and that's been a really really difficult thing. Because I've had my class already for a year and I've gone up with them, I've done so much work with them anyway and built up that attachment and being pulled away from them has been hard. It's been really really emotional and hard, when you get emails from children who are telling you how much they're missing you and how much they love you and how much they want to be with you.
>
> Jane Chapter 2a

In our Covid phone call, Jane describes the significant emotional impact of lockdown on her personal and professional yarns of teacher identity[ies]. As can be seen in the text box above, Jane's close personal relationship with the pupils she works with and her commitment to social justice and the wellbeing of children has possibly made the sudden and unexpected shift to remote learning particularly painful and acute. She raises multiple worries related to affective and emotional fibres of her yarns of teacher identity[ies]: children's and staff wellbeing; the potential long-term impact on children's academic progress and transition; uncertainty about the new academic year; which class[es] she will work with; and how she can support multiple classes and children that she has already built relationships with. She frames teaching as predominantly a caring profession and how 'that hurts that I can't do my job to support those children' (Covid phone call, 08:51). She considers that others feel the same way to an extent too,

> 'All the colleagues that I speak to ermmm and my friends that are teachers, we're feeling **robbed** ermmm if that makes sense, ermmm… we're feeling robbed of time that we should be spending with the children. We're… we're feeling robbed of being able to celebrate **academically** with them.' (Covid phone call, 11;15)

It is interesting to note how Jane frames her experiences as being 'robbed', suggesting in some ways that she feels a victim of circumstances and that she lacks power and agency to reconcile challenges to her teacher identity[ies]. The significant personal and emotional responses of teachers during the first lockdown in March 2020 is highlighted in the literature review, and the impact of lockdown experiences on yarns and fibres of all three participants' teacher and researcher identity[ies] are considered in greater depth in the discussion chapters. But what is clear at this point in time is that,

for Jane, this sudden and significant shift to remote working with children and their families is putting intense pressure on her personal and professional yarns of teacher identity[ies].

6.2.2 Jane as researcher

> I feel that it [research] is very much more **valuable** now, especially with the up and coming stuff when we go back to school and how we're going to be dealing with children in school, over the COVID-19, and how their social and emotional, mental health will be affected. So for me it's given more purpose to my dissertation which has **helped** me with the reading, especially long-winded policies from the government. I found that that has sort of inspired me a bit more and really helped me to get on with it.
>
> Jane Chapter 2a

In her video diary, submitted about four weeks after our phone call, Jane seems much more upbeat about her dissertation and research work. At the time of our phone call she considered that there could potentially be more space and time to focus on her dissertation as some of the intense pressures of her teacher role had abated due to the lockdown situation, 'I think it will be quite a productive time so I think it will be a lot **easier…** ermmm that I have got the time to sit down rather than trying to do it at the weekend trying to do it in the evening. Ermmm when I've got all the other pressures of ermmm sort of like life' (Covid phone call, 04:45).

What could be most significant, as seen in the text box above, is that Jane feels that her dissertation is now more relevant and purposeful than ever. As she discussed in our phone call, in the first few days and weeks of lockdown she could see a significant impact on the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of children and staff, including herself. It is therefore important for Jane that she recognises how her dissertation could potentially be highly influential in supporting others in her school community,

> 'I'm really, really aware of… ermmm obviously as well doing the dissertation on social, emotional, mental health, I'm really aware of how that how this sort of trauma is going to affect the children in the long run and our staff in the long run as well what effect is it going to have on staff' (Covid phone call, 03:36)

It seems that at his point Jane is highly motivated by the perceived value, relevance and purpose of her dissertation, suggesting that there is potential here for significant [re]formation of the personal and professional yarns of her researcher identity[ies].

6.2.3 Dual strands: the dissertation is tricky

In our Covid phone call, Jane had described how she felt the dissertation aspect of her Master's was already 'tricky' as it was less structured than previous Master's modules and assessments, 'With the dissertation it's **all on us**.' (Covid phone call, 01:22). This is not surprising, considering how Jane, along

with other participants, has been very much focused on functional and procedural aspects of Master's study and dissertation work up to this point. Again, this relates to how teachers in England tend to be positioned in technical and performative spaces, resulting in a focus on the 'output' of CPD rather than engaging in more meaningful personal and professional development activity (e.g. Burstow & Winch, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Lindvall & Ryve, 2019; Pedder & Opfer, 2011). The situation of lockdown has compounded Jane's feelings of the dissertation being 'all on us' as she is now detached and distant from her emerging academic community of peers and tutors from the Master's programme. The combination of her particularly affective and emotional response personally and professionally to the lockdown situation along with the isolation from the academic community could be placing significant tension on her teacher and researcher identity[ies]. As she says, 'It's ermmm… it's a confusing time and sort of that has had an impact on me ermmm ermmm emotionally… definitely, **definitely…** definitely had a… not a good *(small laugh)* not a good effect.' (Covid phone call, 10:53).

But then we see in Jane's video diary how she has shifted to a more positive response to the situation, suggesting that she has managed to reconcile some of these tensions. It could be considered that a renewed focus and investment in her dissertation has provided some kind of stability while her teacher role has been discombobulated, meaning that there is potential for these two strands of identity[ies] to draw together while under the pressure of Covid-19.

6.3 Chapter 3, video diary 2: 'My research has informed my practice'

Jane submitted her second video diary in July 2020, towards the end of the summer term in schools.

6.3.1 Jane as teacher

> Since I last spoke to you I have gone back to work full time now, working with a bubble of six Year 6 children, and I am still doing online learning with the Year 5 children as we haven't got those in. And trying to do the dissertation as well as moving class, and also taking over the key stage one lead, which has been really interesting sort of trying to juggle all these different pieces and with my dissertation as well.
>
> Jane Chapter 3

In this video diary, Jane describes how her teaching role has changed again significantly following a return of more children to school. This has increased pressures on her time as she is now managing multiple roles and classes, meaning that her research work has come to a 'standstill' although she says she is happy with the progress made so far. What seems most significant in Jane's work as a teacher is how she recognises and articulates the way in which her dissertation work is influencing her professional role, particularly in how she has taken on leadership of the Covid 'recovery curriculum'

across the school. But this has also led to some tensions and conflict with policies and practices at both a local and national level,

> 'But there seems to be this… again, with the same with anything in education, there seems to be these buzzwords *(shaking head gently)* and it just seems at the moment the buzzword is recovery curriculum. So ermmm every school wants their own recovery curriculum well, actually, it should be, which is what my I expressed to our senior leadership team and our leadership team when we had our meeting was, isn't this something that we should be doing anyway? And should be running through a thread through our whole curriculum anyway *(shakes head gently)* and… in my role as curriculum development I would like to see that more… across the **whole** *(smiles lightly)* of the year, rather than this is the first two weeks in, this is what we're going to do for the first two weeks *(raises eyebrows and shakes head)*' (video diary 2, 07:52)

Of concern here is the way in which Jane considers the planned interventions to be superficial and focused on short-term academic attainment rather than the whole child and wellbeing. As we have seen, a particular focus of Jane's work as a teacher during the Covid-19 lockdown was supporting children (and staff) in relation to their mental health and wellbeing. Now there is a sense of disappointment that the importance of this wellbeing focus, magnified by her dissertation research, is now being neglected in what could be perceived as a return to 'business as usual' in her school. That Jane understands there to be broader dialogue and 'buzzwords' that influence local policy and practice suggests that she is undergoing some [re]formation of the political yarn of her teacher identity[ies]. We see that Jane is beginning to understand that some of the critical issues and challenges she faces in her classroom and school, with her colleagues and senior leaders, are linked to broader social, cultural and political debates about education.

Jane continues to describe her disappointment with colleagues who seem happy to return to a performative system and don't see a need to challenge the status quo,

> '… but changing those mindsets – and coming across so much, so much resistance, ermmm… has been interesting, and, you know *(sighs slightly)* and how people are different, ermmm, and you think of people being in primary education as being caring nurturing people when actually a few quite a few of them are just data driven … machines *(shakes head)*' (video diary 3, 09:25).

Maybe this sense of frustration is exacerbated as Jane describes how much her critical research work has changed her own practices, values and beliefs,

> 'And when I reflect on myself as a practitioner it really has changed the way my practice is *(nodding head, reinforces point made)*… Ermmm… and… you know… *(speech slows, looking up as if in thought)* sort of like I go into classes and I, I cringe when you almost see this traffic light system up of naming and shaming children *(shaking head)*. Ermmm and I just thought, mmm, eek, you know, it does make me want to stop and go, you know, there's other ways. So, when I reflect on my own practice yes it has changed it

has changed my own practice, erm, quite a lot in the way that I think things like that, I think, think, thinking more as the whole child, ermmm rather than just the academic things that we do in school' (video diary 3, 10:43)

Here we see some kind of representation of a common dichotomy in education debates whereby teachers feel they need to choose a position for their practice between a 'traditional' focus on academic attainment or a 'progressive' approach to wellbeing and educating the whole child. But through her critical academic and research work for her dissertation Jane's own mindset has undergone significant transformation. However, she now recognises that not everyone in teaching perceives the profession in the same way and that many others are not as focused on social justice as she is, leaving her disappointed and disillusioned to some extent. In our first meeting she highlighted her experiences of how some colleagues were unwilling to engage with research and here we see some extension of this unwillingness now related to perceptions of need for change or challenge to current educational ideology and practice.

6.3.2 Jane as researcher

> So my dissertation is actually coming on. The one thing I have found is I have probably done a lot more reading than I should have done; not what I should have done, what I **needed** to do. I have also had a tutorial with Alan, which really gave me a boot up the backside to get going and get it started.
>
> Jane Chapter 3

Jane begins this video diary with a short introduction to changes of her teaching role and then goes on to describe at length progress she has made with her dissertation. It is interesting to note that she has needed input from her supervisor and course tutor to make progress with writing; in our Covid phone call, she described an organised approach and commitment to getting the majority of her dissertation complete before the summer holidays. However, it seems that she has continued reading the work of others and has possibly felt a barrier to getting started with her own writing. This is not surprising, given her lack of confidence in her academic skill and the perceived level of challenge of the dissertation module that we have seen previously, along with the separation from an academic community of peers and tutors that she alluded to in our Covid phone call.

However, Jane goes on to explain how she now has a structure in place and is feeling more confident in drafting her work with support from her supervisor, although work on 'writing-up' has now had to stop until she has time in the summer holidays to refocus. It is interesting that although Jane clearly articulates the impact that her dissertation is having on developing her professional practice, as well as in leading staff development for colleagues, she still has to put this work to one side due to the time pressures of her professional role and commute to and from school. There is a conundrum at play

here: Jane is leading the recovery curriculum work in her school because of her expertise built through her dissertation work, but leadership of this project has now meant that she has had to sacrifice working time on her dissertation.

Despite this, Jane talks about how her dissertation work has improved her confidence and identity[ies] as a researcher,

> 'I've made connections with people that I would never have never have dreamed of that I would make connections with *(shaking head)*. And actually being able to converse and talk to them (*speech slows, looking up)* ermmm in a way that I'm quite confident with that I know they're not going to look at me thinking, 'Oooh, who does she think she is?' Because I know that I know now that… that I'm more confident *(smiles broadly)*' (video diary 2, 12:28)

Jane becomes quite hesitant at this point, which is noticeably different to her usual speed and easiness of talking to the camera. Is there still some significant self-doubt and lack of confidence personally and professionally as a researcher? While the critical research work she has completed so far seems to have buoyed her confidence and provided a vocabulary to articulate what she wants to achieve or change in professional practice, it could be that this still needs to be validated by an academic community or through completion of her Master's qualification.

6.3.3 Dual strands: becoming a research-informed teacher

As seen in Jane's description of changes to her practice, at this stage in her dissertation it is clear that outcomes from her research are having a significant impact on her own practice, as well as on how she views the practice of others. And this is having an impact on the [re]formation of her professional yarn of teacher identity[ies], 'Ermmm it's given me confidence to be able to ermmm to do things that I wouldn't… that I wanted to do but ermmm always felt that there was somebody better… qualified to do' (video diary 2, 14:03).

There is a sense across this video diary that Jane's engagement with her dissertation is influencing some [re]formation of all three yarns of her teacher identity[ies], along with the personal and professional yarns of her researcher identity[ies]. And although she has experienced some frustration and conflict with colleagues, it seems plausible to suggest that the tension[s] that this has exerted has resulted in the dual strands of her identity[ies] drawing more tightly together in some ways. Jane now positions herself as a research-informed teacher, and describes her desire to continue this work so that she can support others in experiencing some of the [re]formation of professional yarns of identity[ies] that she has experienced, 'I want to… do more research I want to do… ermmm I want to help others ermmm reflect on their own practice. And, you know, sort of like looking at going even higher up in leadership' (video diary 2, 14:50). Herein lies a suggestion that for Jane moving into a

more senior leadership role will provide opportunity to influence the culture and values of school, shaping the practice of others and helping her to make more substantial challenges and potentially changes to the status quo.

6.4 Chapter 4, video diary 3: feeling empowered

Jane submitted her video diary in September 2020, just a couple of weeks after submitting her dissertation. She apologised for taking so long to return her video diary but described the pressures of returning to school after lockdown and the summer holiday, and the additional support that pupils and their families needed.

6.4.1 Jane as teacher

> It was really interesting doing the dissertation and doing the Master's over the last three years has been very, very interesting. It's helped me reflect as a practitioner; it's helped me look at different things that I've been doing and the way that I do them, my teaching and the way I teach, and learning from others has been really important
>
> Jane Chapter 4

The focus of this diary entry is very much on how Jane's experiences throughout her Master's and dissertation have led to some [re]formation of the personal and professional yarns of her identity[ies]. Here, we see that Jane recognises how she has developed critical reflection alongside a greater knowledge and understanding of what she terms to be the 'big picture' and how this has helped her to 'improve' practice in some way. As we have seen previously, Jane has tended to be quite self-deprecating and self-critical, feeling at times that she is less qualified than others in her teaching role. However, what is significant here is that Jane has come to re-locate presumed individual and personal deficits in external factors, such as management and working cultures, rather than perceiving them as failings in herself. As she explains, 'Discussions with others that I've had over gave me the confidence to **leave** a position that I was in, that I wasn't very happy in ermmm and move on to another place where I was happy which has managed to build my confidence. And I think doing the Master's also **helped** me have the confidence to be able to do that' (video diary 3, 01:17).

What also seems significant here is Jane's work with others, including a developing academic community through networks gained from her Master's and dissertation experiences. Working with and learning from others seems to have been instrumental in not only building her self-confidence as a teacher but also in developing awareness of systemic and systematic issues which affect the way in which she works and relates to colleagues in school. While not explicitly relating this to politics and policy-making, there is an implication here that Jane has shifted in some ways from complying with procedural and technical directives in her role as teacher and is more willing to question practices of

herself and others, '…that to me was **really helpful** to see **how** it is and **why –** why we do something in a certain way' (video diary 3, 03:23). And we see that Jane recognises some [re]formation of her professional yarn, through developing more critical and questioning fibres, but also acknowledges that her values and beliefs may now be different to many of her colleagues, 'research-informed practice really is the best way **for me**' (video diary 3, 03:02).

6.4.2 Jane as researcher

> I learned a lot through doing it, I learned a lot through doing a dissertation, that to me was really helpful, really looking at research and how research can inform your practice and how research informed practice really is the best way for me. It showed me the importance of when something is really researched and looked into that you can see **why** it is important and **how** it is important.
>
> Jane Chapter 4

It is notable that at this point, just after submission of her dissertation, that Jane seems more willing to talk about her experiences as researcher; the majority of this video diary is spent discussing her investment in her dissertation, her pride (and relief) at completing and submitting it, and considering how she has changed her position and understandings of research in education. Key to some significant [re]formation of the personal yarn of her researcher identity[ies] are her experiences of education as a young person which she describes briefly,

> 'I was somebody who left school through illness with… not very many ermmm qualifications so when I came to go to do my **original** degree I had no qualifications so I had to take those qualifications on top of doing my assignments so and doing my degree. So for me I never thought that I was… had the **intelligence** to complete a Master's *(shakes head)* the **stamina** to complete a Master's *(shakes head again)*' (video diary 3, 06:07)

There is an implication here that Jane has been receptive to implicit (and at times explicit) messages and ideologies of fixed intelligence which have been sustained in education for much of the 20th century, which led her to seemingly assume that she did not have the required intelligence to gain academic qualification. Her sense of pride and achievement in completing and submitting her dissertation is an aspect that threads through this final video diary.

Part of Jane's developing confidence has possibly been enabled in some way through an academic community of tutors and peers from the Master's programme and through joining online communities, including conferences and other networks,

> '…the people that I have **met** through… errr different social media platforms through doing the research that **I've done** and making those connections, which is really good, so that's something I can build on as well is building that network *(circles hand around)*

around myself ermmm which has been that's that's been quite a high too *(nodding head)*' (video diary 3, 05:19)

Would Jane have [re]formed the personal yarn of her researcher identity[ies] without a strong academic community to support her? We have seen previously how she has struggled with teaching colleagues who are reluctant to engage in research, to ask questions and challenge the status quo, or who do not share her social justice drivers. It could be considered that Jane's high level of personal investment and desire to undergo significant [re]formation of self as academic and researcher have led her to not only seek out and establish such an academic community, but to also willingly draw from this world to develop herself further. As she now describes it, 'I feel empowered that I can… I don't have to do it for a course, I can actually just go and get a piece of research and read it' (video diary 3, 04:20).

6.4.3 Dual strands: being a research-informed teacher

As we have seen, a distinct [re]formation of the professional yarns of Jane's identity[ies] as teacher and researcher is embodied in the way she describes a shift in her approaches to policy and practice; rather than following directives on 'what', Jane is now more concerned with 'how' and 'why', demonstrating a more critical stance. As such, these yarns of her identity[ies] seem more closely drawn together, particularly in the way Jane perceives herself now to be a research-informed teacher.

But then another tension is emerging, in that Jane is relieved and happy to have completed her dissertation but also feels an emptiness and a concern that she will not able to continue to develop research work without the framework and validation of a Master's programme,

> 'But also there's also now like… almost like an emptiness ermmm *(looks up)* that that's finished that that's completed that I haven't got **that** to do *(looks directly at camera, says these three in quick succession)*. Ermmm *(puts hand to face)* and I don't know if in the future that's gonna be something that I really miss…' (video diary 3, 04:20)

Here we gain a sense of Jane's personal investment in her dissertation and a suggestion of the significant emotional labour attached to this. However, there is also a sense of loss, indicating how Jane's emergent identity[ies] as researcher have been attached to her Master's and dissertation work. Without these she is left with a gap, a space which she potentially wants to fill with further research, although she is unsure how to manage this. So while Jane *is* drawing together yarns and strands of her teacher and researcher identity[ies] at this point, it is questionable whether she can sustain this without the Master's framework or academic community to support her.

6.5 Chapter 5, member check discussion: 'I see myself more as a researcher now'

Jane and I met online in January 2021, just over 4 months after she had submitted her dissertation. She had taken several weeks to respond to my meeting request and I had been concerned that she may have received a disappointing outcome from her dissertation. But when we met she was very positive and proud of her achievements; however, Covid-19 meant that she was under acute pressures in her role in school and had struggled to commit time to the meeting. I sent Jane some transcripts and notes to review before our meeting (see Appendix D) and asked her to re-watch all of her video data.

6.5.1 Jane as teacher

> Definitely being a teacher is changing. I think our role has become more pastoral care at the moment, rather than educators? Definitely. I think that's the priority now, the pastoral care side of it.
>
> Jane Chapter 5

Jane begins our discussion with a lengthy description of her current role as a teacher during another Covid-19 lockdown. She describes how both children and parents, particularly those who are home-schooling again, are experiencing a lack of motivation for learning and that she spends a great deal of her time supporting parents who are struggling with the set school-work. But while Jane prioritises the pastoral side of her role, she is aware that not all of her colleagues in her school and beyond are as invested in this aspect,

> 'I think I desc- I think I described some of them as data-driven machines *(nodding)*. Yeah. And ermmm and *(nodding head)* I still have very much that thought that, you know, in some respects, that there… are definitely two strands ermmm in the teaching profession where you would expect **primary** to be very **nurturing** and that is **not** always the case' (Member check discussion, 14:25)

Jane has previously expressed frustration and tension with colleagues as she understands that not everyone shares her beliefs and values in developing the whole child. It seems that this is a conflict that she has not managed to reconcile, 'I do *(nodding head)* find that very, very frustrating ermmm to the point that ermmm I do do have an internal conflict where… I could… really become quite… angry about it *(laughs)* because I do get quite passionate about it!' (Member check discussion, 16:53).

What is interesting is that there is a sense of Jane being apologetic for her frustration and anger. She re-positions this as feeling passionate, suggesting that such feelings and responses are not perceived as desirable in the teaching profession. Indeed, as seen in discussions in the literature review of teachers in England being positioned as apolitical, it could be considered that common social and cultural expectations of teachers are as servants of others, vocationalists who comply with external

demands in an uncomplaining way (e.g. Davies, 1996; Kraft et al., 2022; Skinner et al., 2019). But Jane has undergone significant [re]formation of the personal and professional yarns of her teacher identity[ies], and now seems more willing to openly and explicitly challenge policies and practices that do not align with her values.

Similarly, one of the outcomes of her dissertation has been to acknowledge the differing positions of schools and teachers in relation to children's social, emotional and mental health,

> '…not everybody thinks the same way… ermmm and it's it's good actually to have a mix. It's good to have a mix in a school that… people that are behind and you know kind of like pushing data and and really… **driven** in that way and it's good to have other people that come you know that sort of are there that are the go-to people if people are feeling upset.' (Member check discussion, 23:31)

So one of the key responses to her dissertation is in finding some way to reconcile the tension that she feels with her 'data-driven' colleagues by acknowledging that there is space in school cultures for different kinds of teaching professionals to work together for the common good.

6.5.2 Jane as researcher

> Somebody at work, one of the ladies at work, described me as an academic which I thought was really… that was really interesting. I still don't see myself as 'that' you know, even now, I still don't see myself as that. A researcher more so now, yes, but I certainly don't see myself as an academic. A couple of my husband's friends have described me, when they've been talking about me to other people, have said, 'Oh, Daniel's wife's an academic' and I'm like, 'Not really.' It's interesting that they would choose to use those words to describe me and describe what I do. It doesn't feel real, it doesn't feel like that's me, they must be talking about somebody else – it's not me.
>
> Jane Chapter 5

It's interesting that although Jane seems to have undergone significant [re]formation of her personal and professional yarns of identity[ies] as a researcher she still feels uncomfortable in being labelled as 'academic'. There is a suggestion that her concept of academics, discussed in our first meeting, positions them as white, male, university professors, and Jane cannot perceive herself as such. There is potentially a link here too with Jane's previous experiences of education and how she considered herself as not intelligent enough to complete higher education, let alone to become a validated 'academic'. But, at the same time, Jane describes setting about looking into developing language and vocabulary as part of the developing Covid-19 recovery curriculum that she is responsible for. The way she expresses this, makes it seem very much like an academic process – critical, intellectual work that has led to some kind of small-scale action research in her setting. She seems pleased that the critical research skills developed through her dissertation are being used in her practice as a teacher,

> ‘I haven't stopped researching! *(laughs)* I'm just researching now *(laughs)* I’m just researching on sort of closing the gap and ermmm how to close that gap. And it just points everything's pointing to vocabulary, you know, regardless of whether it's errr… the core subjects or whether it's foundation subjects. It's all… all vocabulary vocabulary vocabulary *(moves head to emphasise each repeated word)*. It’s just it seems to be the… the thing that its pulling me too at the moment so… *(laughs)* So you know I haven't given up! *(smiling broadly)* I think I’ve sort of… it's ingrained in me now. I'm sort of ermmm I’m like, ‘Oh, that'd be really interesting piece of research’ you see *(laughs)*. ‘Oh, I’ll just, I’ll just go on this course!’ *(laughs)*’ (Member check discussion, 08:53)

Jane’s strengthening of the fibres and yarns of her personal and professional teacher identity[ies] might have been reinforced by her perception of influencing the mindsets and working practices of colleagues who may previously have been reluctant to engage in research or research-informed practice. She describes working with one colleague in particular, who had previously been focused above all else on academic attainment in core subjects for her class. She says,

> ‘I feel like I've had a positive impact on her and she said to me, last year she learned so **much** ermmm just from working alongside and you know I was bringing in stuff that I was learning… and the research that I was getting from the the dissertation and I was bringing that into… school as well.’ (Member check discussion, 19:02).

And although Jane is aware that she has limited opportunity, power and agency to lead the development of colleagues, she considers how influencing one or two has potential for wider impact, ‘I I I know definitely I've impacted two people… in school. Ermmm which doesn't sound a lot but it’s you know it’s… it’s little. It’s but if those two then go and influence two other people then… you know it grows doesn't it? And it gets it goes out there.’ (Member check discussion, 22:23). There is something to be said here about Jane considering her influence differently to the usual CPD activity that she might lead with colleagues. Rather than delivering ‘best practice’ or interventions for academic attainment, she describes a process in the development of colleagues as whole-persons, changing mindsets and engaging them in research as a way to develop more holistic teaching cultures. This approach is comparable to Jane’s values and beliefs of working with children, whereby the focus on the whole child rather than outcomes, attainment or fidelity to a particular practice or process is seen to be of greater importance and potential influence.

6.5.3 Dual strands: ‘There’s been twists and turns’

When we consider Jane’s recount of her personal and professional yarns of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher, we see that she feels more confident as a ‘research-informed’ teacher and more established as a researcher, but does not yet perceive herself as an academic. It seems that the extent of such [re]formation of her strands of identity has been somewhat unexpected for Jane and she

describes how her journey through her Master's, and particularly her dissertation year, has been full of twists and turns, with unexpected events, unexpected challenges and unexpected changes to herself. There's something to consider here about the significance of the affective and emotional fibres of Jane's identity[ies], which relates particularly to developing her self-confidence as both teacher and researcher and embracing some of her [re]formed yarns and strands of identity[ies],

> 'So I think yeah my confidence my confidence definitely grew, definitely definitely grew. Ermmm and I do see myself more as a researcher **now**, whereas at the beginning I did definitely have a have a conflict ermmm within myself about… about that, whether I saw myself as a researcher *(smiling)*. But no and I mean I must admit that I cried when I… when I got my results.' (Member check discussion, 26:59)

What may be most telling is when Jane opens up about her previous experiences and challenges in schooling, both academically and socially,

> 'I was I was somebody who left school with, through health reasons, not an **awful** lot of qualifications. Ermmm… didn't really know what I wanted to do for a very very long time. Fell into a sort of a career that I **loved**, that I really enjoyed… ermmm did it for probably longer than I really wanted to do. And then went to university, which is something that I'd alw- I'd wanted to do for a very, very long time but… had been told… by parents and um um… I went to a comprehensive school and people like us didn't go to university you know. I I I remember being out of the out of the whole year group of of my there was only child went to university out of it. And he was sort of like the geek, you know, he was expected right from the word go that he would always go but none of the rest of us.' (Member check discussion, 27:25)

There is something significant here about Jane's labelling of herself as 'people like us', which speaks to class-based notions of expectations, aspirations and perceived limitations in regards educational outcomes, careers and social mobility. It is not just that Jane felt her education was stymied and curtailed by ill-health and school absence, but also that a limit on her potential as a working-class woman existed socially and culturally in her family, friendship group and community,

> 'I look at what I've achieved and I think, you know, it's so so different *(shaking head gently)*. It's so so different. And… I'm pleased that I did break away and I'm pleased that I did go to university and I did ermmm… I did embark on that journey which took me away from away from home. So… yeah…. 'cos I don't yeah *(shaking head and smiling)* people like us *(shrugs shoulders up, shaking head)* don't we don't do it we certainly don't get Master's. I don't none of my friends have got it.' (Member check discussion, 28:39)

But along with a distinct pride in her achievements, there is also a sense of discomfort in the way that Jane has 'broken away' from her roots. She describes how she views her childhood friends' activity on social media and 'commits the crime' of thinking them to be 'uneducated'. There is a sense here that Jane feels she no longer fits so neatly with her previous social group and childhood community,

demonstrating lived experience of what Diane Reay (2018) terms the 'cruelty of social mobility'. Jane perceives that teaching itself is very much a middle-class profession, as she says 'And it's just a shame that, because of money or because of pressures people like us **don't** do that. That these children **don't** go into… into professions really, ermmm and I think that's really sad, that's really, really sad'. So here we see more twists and turns for Jane as she experiences tension between her past experiences and identity[ies] and the [re]formation of herself personally and professionally as a critical, intellectual and academic teacher and researcher.

6.6 Chapter 6, 'the end': our 12+ month interview

Jane and I met online in March 2022, 18 months after she had submitted her dissertation and 14 months since our last meeting for our member check discussion. Jane had taken several weeks to respond to my request for a meeting but, when we met, was keen to continue to talk about the changes to her teaching role and the lasting impact of her Master's completion.

6.6.1 Jane as teacher and researcher

> I'm definitely a much more evidence-based teacher. I definitely look more for the impact of stuff, especially when I'm working alongside trainees, because I mentor trainees as well. And when I'm working alongside them, I'm always aware and say to them, 'But what was the impact of that?' So that's definitely sort of changed because I'm more research based.
>
> Jane Chapter 6

> I'm much more critical with what I read now. If I'm reading an article, I'm much more critical and look and question it a bit more and look for the bias in it. Which, again, that's come from the Master's and being reflective in that sort of way, like, 'Wow, okay, let's have a look. Where's this research coming from? Where's this article from? Who's written this article, why have they written this article?... I read more, I read more articles than I did before the Master's. I think the reading side of it is had probably had the most lasting impact on me.
>
> Jane Chapter 6

6.6.1.1 Personal yarns

During Jane's journey through her dissertation we have significant [re]formation of the personal yarns of her teacher and researcher identity[ies], not least in her building confidence as a qualified teacher and as an emergent researcher. At various points, and particularly during the Covid-19 lockdowns, Jane has expressed highly emotional and affective responses, sometimes quite challenging in her expressions of feeling hurt, feeling robbed of time with pupils and their families, feeling anger and frustration at some of her colleagues. It is possible that such strong, affective fibres have been particularly influential in this [re]formation of her personal yarns. She certainly is aware of the

personal investment that she has placed in her dissertation, and her pride at completing it despite the challenges she has faced,

> 'But it's [Master's] worth it *(big smile)*. It's worth it (*nods head)*. It's worth it, for me (*puts hand to heart)* it was really worth it. Ermmm [2 sec pause] and I'm very proud of the fact that I managed to get through it 'cos so many people don't. And you know sort of like when I've spoken to people about it, and they've said, 'And you worked full time as well?'' (12+ month interview, 25:05).

But such meaningful personal investment in her dissertation has also become problematic now that it has ended. Jane describes her Master's dissertation as, 'It becomes your baby. Because... it it you ha- you put everything into it [3 sec pause] ermmm [3 sec pause] yeah' (12+ month interview, 27:11). The way she hesitates throughout this moment suggests some kind of difficult emotional response or a struggle to articulate her feelings; Jane usually speaks so quickly and confidently that this is a significant change in her conversation. But then she goes on to explain,

> '…it was almost like empty nest syndrome *(laughs)* like I'd lost my baby when I finished, quite emotional. I remember, actually, sort of how emotional I felt when... I submitted it. Because it's **personal**, it's so much of you and you're handing it over to somebody and I thought, what if they say this is absolute rubbish, what if they say, ermmm you know, this is no good whatsoever.... ermmm but no, thankfully, it was okay *(laughs)*' (12+ month interview, 28:52)

Such a high level of personal investment in an academic qualification has possibly been amplified by Jane's previous educational experiences and feeling that 'people like me' – by which she means working class women – do not achieve higher level qualifications. She expresses some regret that she did not return to higher education or complete a Master's degree earlier in her life, comparing how she felt as a young person

> 'to **now** have you know an MA in education ermmm I just feel like you know sort of going, 'Yay!' *(lifts hands up and wiggles from side to side, smiles)* Going back and saying I, you know, you were right, I did have it in me, and... I here I am you know I have done it. So I wish I'd I wish I'd done it years ago, I wish I'd ermmm yeah I wish wish I'd stayed and and sort of like slugged it out' (12+ month interview, 29:34)

And although Jane has described some struggles in her sense of how she has 'broken away' from her childhood friends and community it is clear that at this point she feels much more secure in her personal yarn of her researcher identity[ies], so much so that, '…but in the future? I would love to do a PhD? Ermmm whether that would have to be when I'd retired? *(laughs)* I **would** like to write articles ermmm but again, whether that would be... after I'd retired?' (12+ month interview, 32:14). Although Jane perceives that any further research and academic work may now take place at the end of her career, the very fact that she perceives herself as capable and wanting to engage in further intellectual

and academic research work shows the degree of self-confidence that has now been established within this personal yarn of identity[ies].

6.6.1.2 Professional yarns

Jane has now completed an NPQ in Senior Leadership as well as her Master's, and describes not only feeling more qualified as a teacher but also confident in seeking a more senior leadership role in schools, ideally as a deputy-head teacher. The [re]formation of her professional yarns of teacher and researcher identity[ies] seem to have been complemented by the dual qualifications she has completed and she describes how each qualification provides a different perspective, with the Master's very much focused on personal development and research, and the NPQSL as developing wider perspectives on policy and practices in school. But it is the Master's and her dissertation which she positions as having had most impact on her development as a teacher and on leading and supporting the development of colleagues in school. As seen in the text box at the start of this section, Jane positions herself as much more critical in relation to literature, policy and practices. But she feels that this is quite a discreet change, 'So I think it's... it's not really [2 sec pause] ermmm... explicit 'out there' sort of like, oh yeah it's developed me as a researcher, I'm now a researcher. But I think very discreetly, without realising it, I do a lot more research than I ever did before' (12+ month interview, 21:23).

But Jane is quite explicit about her desire to advocate for others to engage in research, as seen in the text box and how she uses her researcher development to influence her work with student and newly qualified teachers. She acknowledges that many teachers do not value research in their daily practice,

> 'I think I **am** more of research based, definitely evidence, research-based practitioner ermmm now. And I see the importance of it which a lot of people don't see the importance of it. It's just to some people, 'Oh, it's just another piece of reading. Erm, I've always done it this way' *(raises eyebrows and wry smile)*' (12+ month interview, 23:50)

But she also feels confidence in challenging colleagues, and senior leaders, by using research and research findings to justify her professional decision-making. She relates an incident with a senior leader in school,

> 'she [deputy-head] went off and she got this piece of research and she came back and she went, 'This is what I want us to be doing'. Ermmm... and I did have to say to her, and I did, I did say to her ermmm 'This is one piece of research. And yes, it is very good'. I wasn't sort of rude or I was quite professional about it but I said, 'I have got other research that will tell you other things as well. And that's how I implement it in my class'. Ermmm... so... yeah, it's it's it's interesting. It is interesting *(smiles and small laugh)*' (12+ month interview, 23:03)

Here we see significant [re]formation in the professional yarns of Jane's teacher and researcher identity[ies] and the way in which these dual strands are drawn tightly together to inform and give her confidence in her decisions and a greater sense of agency in the way she responds to policies and practices at a local level.

6.6.1.3 Political yarns

It has been clear that throughout her dissertation Jane's political yarns of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher have been the least significant and have undergone the least [re]formation. At this end point, when asked directly about her thoughts on politics in education, Jane does describe how both her NPQSL and Master's qualifications have made her more aware of the broader context of politics and central policy making in education,

> 'Doing the NPQSL rather than the Master's... has definitely made me more aware of **day-to-day** school politics and the policies in the school. The Master's gave me an insight to sort of like the attrition and what sort of wider government policy and things like that which errr yeah I can't say I agree or not agree with *(laughs)*' (12+ month interview, 12:53)

As discussed previously, it is a commonly accepted narrative that teachers' work in England should be apolitical and such positioning has clearly influenced Jane's reluctance to engage in wider policy and political debate. She does discuss how she thinks it is wrong of the government to 'throw money' at schools and teachers in order to address issues of recruitment and retention in the workforce, demonstrating how she positions the teaching profession as a vocation. This is not surprising given her focus on her dissertation on supporting children's social, emotional and mental health and her own experiences of education. But it is within this field that Jane makes some implicit criticism of policies and practices, and media narratives, related to children's broader educational experiences. She describes her response to a quite inflammatory newspaper article[12] published around the time of our meeting,

> 'I read the article *(shaking head)* that everyone was reading about the 'don't send them take them to museums that has no impact on GCSEs' and... I think that those life experiences *(nodding head to emphasise)* are equally as important and the impact on those children of having that experience, and that outside that knowledge other than teaching just what they need for the test *(points forward with hand to emphasise)* is also important too. And I think that you it it's made me look at **how** I value impact as

[12] 'Musuem visits do not improve GCSE results, study reveals' The Observer, 12th March 2022. Museum visits do not improve GCSE results, study reveals | Education | The Guardian

> well what impact is it having? Is it having an impact socially, as well as... academically' (12+ month interview, 06:13)

So we can conclude that although Jane has not undergone significant [re]formation of the political yarns of her identity[ies], her Master's study and dissertation have made her more critical of central policy and practice dialogue and she is more aware that her stance and desire to educate the 'whole child' is in conflict with some directives in the current education system.

6.7 Concluding comments on Jane's experiences

Jane's story provides insights into particularly significant episodes that have led to some [re]formation of the strands, yarns and fibres of her teacher and researcher identity[ies]. Personal yarns of each strand of identity[ies] seem to have been the most significant throughout, particularly in relation to her researcher identity[ies] where she has undergone significant transition and revision in 'breaking away' from her past and reconceptualising herself as a researcher and an academic. Here there is also a sense of regret at not having committed to this earlier and some disquiet at recognising how her expectations and aspirations as a young person were limited by herself and by her parents, teachers and friends. Perhaps this sense of regret is in some ways exacerbated by Jane's desire to continue in higher education to a doctorate and to develop academic research outputs, but feeling that she cannot prioritise this over her move into senior leadership at this late stage in her career.

At the same time Jane has [re]formed in some ways the professional and political yarns of her teacher identity[ies]. The way she talks about changes in her professional role – becoming more critical, more research-informed, confident in using research, confident in challenging others and advocating for others to engage in research and critical knowledge work – suggests that she no longer positions herself as a 'technical' teacher. That she now wishes to move to senior leadership and to help others develop in the same way that she has suggests that completing her Master's and dissertation has in some way validated her identity[ies] as a professional, as well as providing confidence and a greater sense of agency as these two yarns of her teacher and researcher identity[ies] have become more tightly bound together. It is interesting to note that this drawing together of her two strands of identity seems more developed 16 months after completion of her dissertation. There is something that could be considered here about the depth and longevity of such transformation that Jane has experienced,

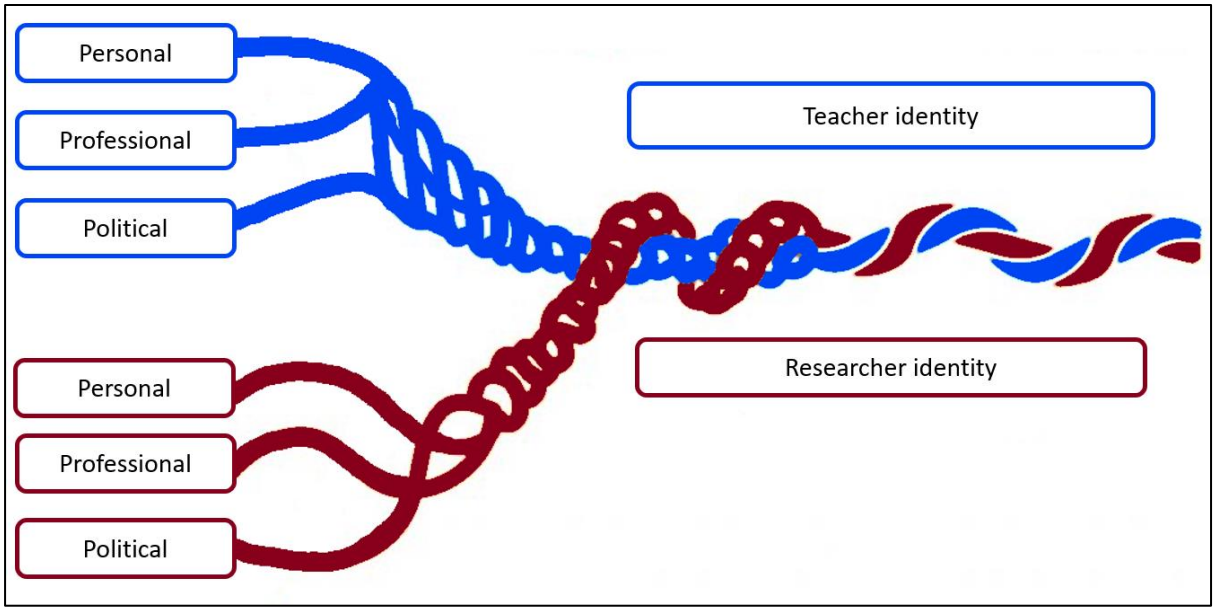
> 'It did have it did have a lasting it **will** have a lasting impact on me. Errr I think if you come back in ten years' time I'll probably still be talking about it, and saying, 'When I did my Master's I did this research and this research.' *(laughs, wiggles head from side)*' (12+ month interview, 34:16)

Chapter Seven: Introduction to Discussion and Discussion of Episodic Dimensions

7.0 Introduction to discussion

In the previous findings chapters, we discovered insights into Karen, Nigel and Jane's lived experiences throughout the time working on their dissertation and any further impact they described 15-18 months after completing their Master's degrees. Following Goodson (1992), I acknowledge that in studying teachers' lives there is a distinction to be made between the telling of an individual's life story and understanding how this relates to the broader context, not least their life history and the history of others. As Goodson puts it, we can be audience to teachers who share 'the story we tell about our life' (1992, p.6) at a particular moment in time and in the previous chapters we were privileged with the sharing of three narratives, constructed in participants' own words through video diaries and co-constructed in semi-structured interviews. But although such stories give us particular insights that otherwise we would not have gained, what is crucial is the way in which we interpret and find meaning from these stories shared. Goodson (1992) goes on to remind us that an individual's story can be developed into a wider account by collaborating with others, co-creating interpretations, which draw on the location of the story in its social, cultural and historical context. In the context of this research study, the framework for building interpretation of these stories and lived experiences lies in the conceptual rope model of teacher and researcher identity[ies] shared again in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 Teacher-researcher identity[ies] rope model



Teachers' identity[ies] are a framework for shaping their sense of how to be, how to act and how to understand in their professional practice and beyond (Sachs, 2005). As we have seen in the preceding chapters, each of the three teachers involved in this research have experienced significant [re]formation and, at times, transformation, of how they are, how they act and how they understand their role and position to be, not just as a teacher but also as a researcher. [Re]formation of their identity[ies] has involved what could be described as a delicate balance of realising potential while also attempting to maintain the authentic self (Reay, 2018). As Rodgers & Scott (2008) tell us, self is both the meaning maker and the meaning made, even as identity[ies] [re]form and transform over time, and that identity[ies] are an evolving yet coherent dimension of self, that consciously and unconsciously construct and *are* constructed, reconstruct and *are* reconstructed through interaction of the self with social and cultural contexts, actions and people.

In what follows, in this and the next discussion chapter, I return to the main research question of this project, '**How do teachers experience [re]formation of teacher and researcher identity[ies] during and after their Master's level dissertation research?'** and the sub-questions designed to interrogate teachers' descriptions of their experiences through a lens of [re]formation of identity[ies]:

What experiences during and after their Master's level dissertation do teachers describe as significant?

a) What is the significance of these experiences in relation to individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' (after Hattie, 2004) of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
b) How do these experiences affect the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
c) What, if any, experiences of the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies] are common across participants?

Moving on from the findings chapters, which sequentially exposed individual participants' experiences, we will focus on the final question posed here in terms of interpreting and analysing episodic and configurational dimensions of each participants' experiences. In the episodic dimension, we will consider what, if any, experiences common across participants, related to sub-question a) *What is the significance of these experiences in relation to individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?* Shared themes at particular moments in times, or episodes, of each participants' experiences will be drawn out related to the personal, professional and political yarns of their strands of identity[ies] as teachers and researchers. In the configurational dimension, we will consider what, if any, experiences are common across participants, related to sub-

question b) *How do these experiences affect the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?* In considering shared experiences of [re]formation of identity[ies] over time I return to the conceptualisation of episodic and configurational dimensions described by Ricœur (1980) in the methodology and research design chapter. Thus, in the configurational analysis, I have followed Ricœur's reminder that when we consider the significance of experiences over time, linear causality cannot be assumed. Rather, I examine significant wholes made up of events over time, framed as a 'beginning', an 'in-between' and an 'end'.

7.1 Introduction to the analysis of whole-case episodic (thematic) dimensions

Within this analysis of episodic dimensions, I systematically examine themes related to participants' experiences in individual episodes. As described in the methodology and research design chapter, multiple level thematic analysis of each individual episode through detailed transcripts with interpretative commentary (see Appendix B) led to the development of particular codes and themes (see Table 3.6 Development of themes and codes). Several of these themes are explored here, in relation to the [re]formation of personal, professional and political yarns and fibres of the strands of teacher and researcher identity[ies] at certain episodes. Each section begins with a quotation chosen from each participant's narrative which gives insight into key experiences which were considered influential in [re]formation of that particular yarn of each participants' teacher and researcher identity[ies]. I felt it was important to begin with participants' voices, aligning with my stance explored in the Methods chapter to prioritise each individual's narratives of their lived experiences. This is followed by analysis of key themes related to participants' shared experiences alongside relevant literature.

7.2 Personal yarns

> I must admit that I cried when I got my [MA] results…. I went to a comprehensive school and people like us didn't go to university… I'm pleased that I did break away and I'm pleased that I did go to university and I did embark on that journey which took me away from home.
>
> **Jane, Chapter 5**

> I was so happy about that [dissertation results]. I was. One of the things is, it does give you… confidence isn't the right word, it's… I quite like the fact that I've done it, like, "Oh when I did my Master's" *(posh voice).* I don't go around saying that but there's just something about having studied something like that that gives me something I didn't have before.
>
> **Karen, Chapter 7**

I wasn't expecting to feel such strong emotions, I think, although it's an emotive subject, social mobility… But I wasn't expecting that kind of annoyance and frustration that I found with some of the research. It angered me at times, which I was quite surprised at…
And now some of the frustrations at the moment are that I'm not making a difference with it [dissertation] I was so happy with it and I've just kind of gone, 'Right, back to the day job'.

Nigel, Chapter 5

7.2.1 Personal struggles and emotional responses

As we saw in each of the findings chapters, in many of the episodes of these teachers' narratives there were experiences of personal struggles related to personal yarns and fibres of teacher and researcher identity[ies] being placed under tension, along with evidence of a wide-range of affective and emotional responses. All three participants described challenges related to perceived lack of confidence in their academic self. What is interesting to note is that both Jane and Karen, but perhaps more keenly felt and articulated by Jane, expressed across a number of episodes how working towards a higher degree was not for 'someone like me'. There are significant links here to notions of gender, social class and education, particularly for Jane who discusses how starting a degree later in life and subsequently completing her Master's led to her perception of a 'break' away from her past: her family, her community and the peers that she grew up with. To an extent, Karen also portrays how completing a higher degree makes her feel that she has somehow entered a higher echelon, indicated by the way in which she talks about her Master's in a put-on, 'upper-class' voice.

Much has been made in recent years of the need for diversification of the teaching community in England, as in other Anglosphere nations, to address concerns about mismatches between the social, ethnic, cultural and language backgrounds of pupil and teacher populations (Department for Education, 2018; Education Policy Institute, 2020; Hutchinson et al., 2020) . In regards to social class, teaching has, historically, been seen as a socially mobile career, providing accessible routes into a profession for individuals from working-class backgrounds (Heinz, 2013). But, as seen in analyses which suggests that schooling has a key role to play in [re]producing class inequalities in wider society, it is not just students but also teachers who experience potential harms in education systems which are considered to be classist, as well as patriarchal and racist (e.g. de Saxe et al., 2020; Hall & Jones, 2013; Reay, 2018). Jones (2019), in her empirical work in England with 11 novice teachers, identified how those with working-class or lower-class identities recognised that they had to engage in crossing social class boundaries at several points in their personal and professional experiences. Many of these teachers described such experiences as troubling and as creating tensions, with some actively avoiding potential sites where they perceived there to be barriers as well as having a keen sense of their [lack

of] cultural and social capital compared to their more middle-class colleagues. There is resonance here with some of the experiences articulated by Karen but perhaps more significantly by Jane, of transitioning into a new habitus related to personal [re]formation as researcher and academic. Such personal experiences and difficult emotions related to class identity[ies] tend to be solitary and unexposed acts for many individuals (Friedman, 2016), so it is significant that these experiences have been articulated as well as shared by two of the participants in this particular research project.

For the third participant, Nigel, it could be considered that although he expressed particular emotional reactions to some of the research he engaged in during his dissertation, he did not express some of the personal identity[ies] challenges that Karen and Jane experienced. Nigel was less forthcoming and less descriptive about notions of class or his previous personal histories, but we should note a gender difference here; could Nigel's maleness have meant that he felt less of a shift or 'break' in attaining a higher degree? Or could his personal and professional circumstances have exposed him to more aspirational and experienced peers? He is also the only one of the three participants to have subsequently enrolled in doctoral study and he explains how he has been supported in this through a personal relationship. Jane also described her ambition to do so but felt she had to wait until the end of her teaching career to make this step. Nigel, however, sees continuing to doctoral study as an important part of his continuing career progression into higher levels of senior leadership.

Concerns related to gender, as well as class, ethnicity and other dimensions, are enduring strands of debate in teacher identity and teacher education literature. The relationship between women and teaching is often presented as unproblematic, given that in statistical terms, globally, women tend to dominate the teaching profession (Moreau, 2020). Indeed, this is the case in England where 76% of the teaching workforce is female (DfE, 2022)[13]. Many would point to numbers of women in leadership roles in schools in England – currently nearly twice as many as men – as evidence not only of a feminised profession with career opportunities for women, but of a femininely socialised profession, where women are more likely to succeed. However, when proportions are considered, there continues to be a significant disparity in terms of the gender balance in school leadership, with males almost twice as likely as females to hold head teacher roles (DfE, 2022), and females in England over-represented in less prestigious and less financially rewarding roles in education (Moreau, 2020).

Morley (2012) points to polarised gender identities in relation to personal and professional domains in education. Dillabough (1999) urges us to consider the relationship between male power and

[13] School workforce in England: November 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

conceptualisations of teacher professionalism and even teacher identity as a whole. She identifies particular tensions in the way in which 'neutral' standards for teachers tend to exclude personal perspectives as well as political dimensions of teachers' work. Thus, women's (and men's) range of emotional experiences, values and beliefs (including the political) are repressed. That women are typically associated with feminine 'codes' such as being more caring and vocational (Davies, 1996) is not just a common social and cultural assumption in England but has been demonstrated in action in empirical work; for example, female teachers have consistently demonstrated greater levels of conscientiousness and socialisation compared to their male counterparts when measured in situational judgement tests on various classroom-based scenarios and dilemmas (Bardach et al., 2021). Davies (1996) argues that such traits are not only excluded from teachers' professional expectations but are frowned upon as part of a 'masculine cultural project' that celebrates personal and professional traits associated with authority, bureaucracy, power and control. Similarly, women working in academia as teacher educators have described feelings of 'outsider status' and of tensions in awareness of their lack of political agency and desire for recognition (Dillabough, 1999).

It could be considered that, for both Jane and Karen, completion of their Master's degrees, along with their emerging sense of identity[ies] as a researcher, relates to their personal goals to gain recognition and agency in an authoritarian and standardised professional regime, where male traits are prized, especially in leadership roles. For both of these teachers, it would seem that the intersection between their sense of social class, personal histories and gender have driven their desire for personal development and their commitment to continue and to be successful in their research and academic work despite their keen sense of personal struggles at several points in their journey. While Nigel may not have had the same drivers, feeling more at ease with his place as a male school leader, his emotional responses to his research also provided a significant site of tension that he came to reconcile in some ways.

The emotional labour described and experienced by all three participants at various episodes was related to multiple aspects of their Master's study, but what seemed to be most significant, most common and most frequent was commentary related to their sense of personal investment in their dissertation research projects. This was felt quite keenly in relation to both personal and professional yarns of their identity[ies] and, as such, it can be challenging to distinguish between the two. This is not uncommon when scrutinising teachers' identity[ies]: Wenger (1999) claims that teachers' identities consist of both personal and professional aspects which are not only closely interrelated but could be considered 'mirror images of one another' (p.149). And the emotions that teachers experience, and in some cases may be encouraged or discouraged from experiencing in certain

contexts, may 'expand or limit possibilities' in their personal and professional lives (Zembylas, 2003, p.122). In addition, as literature tells us, many moments in teachers' professional lives, and in particular when enacting significant educational reform, may be highly emotive and therefore transcend both personal and professional realms of identity[ies] (van Veen & Sleegers, 2006). Although I have spotlighted emotional responses of these participants in relation to their personal yarns of identity[ies], it should be considered that their emotional descriptions, experiences and responses will span and therefore influence [re]formation of professional and political yarns of their identity[ies], *as well as* personal yarns. MacIntyre (1985) reminds us of the significance of emotional disruption, as he claims that, 'it is through conflict and sometimes only through conflict that we learn what our ends and purposes are'. As we will see in the configurational analysis, for these participants, negotiating these personal struggles has led to some [re]formation of their personal yarns and fibres of identity[ies]as teacher and researcher over time, but has also potentially influenced some reformation related to their professional and political yarns too.

7.2.2 The importance of an academic community

In several episodes of their narratives, each participant indicated the importance of an academic community and noted how the disruption of Covid-19 to this emerging community had increased to some extent the personal struggles and emotional labour associated with their dissertation work and emerging identity[ies] as researcher. While the term 'academic community' can include a multiplicity of actors and sites, within this research and for these three teachers it is considered to encompass their Master's and dissertation tutors, their peers in the Master's programme and the physical university site and services, including the library facilities and student support services.

Jane had the most recent and profound experiences of an academic community and gave detailed descriptions of how her confidence related to academic tasks of reading and writing had grown throughout her first-degree studies. Beginning her Master's study as a more recently qualified teacher than the other participants, she could, and did, draw on her knowledge of higher education in relation to the expectations, functions and challenges of the Master's programme. But Jane was impacted with a sense of isolation in a very similar way to Karen and Nigel.

All three participants began to articulate a sense of 'losing' their academic community in the spring and summer of 2020, around six months after the beginning of their Master's dissertation year. It was at this point that they were bound to the independent research work involved in their dissertation, but the impact of Covid-19 also meant that any face-to-face or on-campus participation with their academic community had abruptly stopped. Both Karen and Nigel expressed surprise at how they missed both their peers on the course and face-to-face contact with their tutors. For Karen, being

unable to utilise the library as a space for academic work also exacerbated some of the sense of personal struggles with notions of an emergent 'academic self'. Nigel, in one of his final episodes, expressed regret that he had not made more use of the university campus and facilities, and that he had not built stronger relationships with his peers on the programme. He took these concerns forward into his doctoral study, determined to behave differently and build stronger links to this new academic community.

Taking a turn back to identity work, explored in the literature review, reminds us of the way in which an individual's position relates to their knowledge, participation and recognition within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Knowledge differs for an individual as they [re]locate themselves in various positions within one or across multiple communities of practice and, as such, knowledge must be reconstructed when an individual moves from one position to another. In this research, we can see how knowledge of each participants' research area was reconfigured as they moved from positions as a teacher to positions as a research-informed teacher or a teacher AND researcher. But such reconfiguration of knowledge is very rarely an individual endeavour, completed in isolation from others. Beijaard (1995) considers teacher identity[ies] to be not only the meanings that individuals attach to themselves, but also the meanings that are attributed to them by others. Within communities of practice, it is the role of others alongside the role of both physical and abstract artefacts that evokes relevance and positions individuals with respect to relevant perceptual, cognitive, affective and practical frames of activity (Holland et al., 1998). As we see for these three teachers, their experiences of isolation from their academic community seemed to provoke awareness of their potential to use artefacts to affect themselves; for example, use of the physical library as a space to feel academic and informal discussions with peers to test out knowledge in an academic space. Thus, it seems as if these descriptions of the loss of an academic community relate to a lack of self-control in these teachers' relationship with this new community of practice.

Such a notion of self-control – or its lack – is related to the concept of the 'authoring self' (Holland et al., 1998, p.63) whereby individuals awake new possibilities for becoming and potential to expand their capacities. But here again we need to balance a conceptual dilemma of socio-cultural and socio-constructive constructions of identity so that the individual is neither trapped by cultural logics nor straight-jacketed by an individual subject position. Rather, as Holland et al. (1998) remind us, individual identities are unstable and tend to remain multiple, as an individual's trajectory through a particular community or figured world does not follow a well-worn pathway nor remain fenced into one particular cultural space, one single figured world.

What can be learned here, through these three teachers' experiences, is that structural and technical, and physical and abstract supports are required to enable teachers to undergo heuristic development and subsequent [re]formation of identity[ies] within an academic community. While Holland et al. (1998) point out the way in which spaces imbue and are imbued by the people that inhabit them, it should not be the place of the academic provider solely to mediate how comfortable or constrained teachers feel in the space of the academic 'other'. To do so, Barnacle and Usher (2003) point out, runs the risk of replicating the theory-practice divide whereby the academic community provides and supports research and the school community provides and supports professional work. Such a divide would also increase the risk of teachers 'passing' (Fordham, 1993) in academic spaces, resulting in a masquerade of teacher as academic or researcher without authentic or meaningful [re]formation of identity[ies].

But for these teachers we can see that their experiences of the academic community have supported aspects of heuristic [re]formation of their yarns of identity[ies] as researcher. Nigel felt comforted by sharing experiences with his peers, acknowledging that he was not alone in feeling a bit like a fish out of water. Both Jane and Karen had independently developed a broader academic community, partly due to the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic and the shift to online and virtual ways of working, meaning that conference, seminar, webinar and research forum activities became far more accessible. For Karen, continuing a relationship with her supervisor and Master's course leader and continued involvement in ITTE also meant that she continued to inhabit a familiar academic community beyond the completion of her Master's. There is resonance here with Beckett (2016), who in her work with 'research-active teachers' set out conditions in which relationships with 'academic partners' proved profound for these teachers in acquiring and inheriting skills, knowledge, language and artefacts with which to position themselves and inhabit the academic community. Again this serves as a reminder that teachers' personal yarns of identity[ies] as teacher – but particularly as researcher – are not [re]formed by a single force or influence, and nor are they formed independently by the motivated self. As Holland et al. (1998) remind us, an individual's identity or self-concept is 'by no means a freewheeling agent, authoring worlds from creative springs within' (p.170) but is constructed through collective experience in both abstract and physical spaces.

7.3 Professional yarns

> I think that's where I've found [teachers are] either one end of the extreme, where they've been teaching for a long time and are very, very set in their ways, or new, and they don't tend to have… they can be a bit argumentative over things that you're asking them to do. But teachers in the middle, pretty much, I think most teachers have been brought up in that, that now it's all research-based, evidence-based teaching. And I think that's a good thing. I think that is a good thing.
>
> **Jane Chapter 6**

> Something I really want to push within the school, maybe on a small scale to start with, is some action research projects. And yeah, I'm a real – I think advocate's a good word. I'm really enthusiastic about getting people involved and trying to get rid of this idea that research should only be done in this academic world, that it needs to be brought even more into the practitioner world.
>
> **Nigel, Chapter 6**

> I think some teachers are immensely practical and they see their role as a practical job, to go along, teach children, get them to learn and check that they've done it. And that's it, someone tells you what to do, you take those tools, you deliver them, you do a good job. Then I think there's another layer of teachers who are more reflective and more curious about where those tools come from and why, and ask, have we thought about this and that?
>
> **Karen, Chapter 7**

7.3.1 Social justice orientations

All three participants clearly articulated social justice drivers at the 'beginning' of their journeys into their dissertation year. For Karen, her many years' experience as a teacher and school leader had left her somewhat critical of the 'churn' of endless new initiatives. After dedicating her career to serving disadvantaged communities in her home city, Karen felt a keen sense that educational decision-making, including the implementation of policies and practices in each individual school setting, should prioritise improving outcomes for the poorest in society. Likewise, Jane – possibly feeling this more keenly, given her own life experiences of disadvantage in relation to education – set about to improve the social and emotional educational experiences of disadvantaged children in her own school, sensing that fundamental changes to curriculum and pedagogy at a very local level could provide a more fulfilling and more meaningful schooling experience for previously disenfranchised children. Nigel also described being committed to schools with high levels of poverty and deprivation and had a keen desire to provide opportunities for social mobility in his work with young people transitioning from schooling into higher education or employment.

As in the previous section, we can see here a challenge in discerning personal and professional yarns of these participants' identity[ies] as teachers and researchers as related to moral and ethical fibres. As highlighted in the literature review, teaching is frequently conceptualised as a distinctly moral enterprise (e.g. Grudnoff et al., 2016; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Janzen & Phelan, 2019). As Olson (1992) describes it, 'Teaching – a practice – is not aimed at production of something, but at developing and exercising the virtues of the group to which teacher and student belong – it is a moral enterprise, not a technical one.' The three participants in this research project seem to understand that there are considerable moral and ethical drivers that underpin their daily actions and decision-making. In relation to their professional identity[ies], it seems that for all three their experiences throughout their dissertation did not necessarily lead to substantial [re]formation of moral and ethical fibres, but did in some way strengthen these, particularly in relation to [re]formation of their identity[ies] as researcher. At the end of their dissertations, in their member check discussions, all three participants described hopes for the impact of their research related to social justice: improving educational experiences and life chances for the children and school communities that they served. It would seem that their research activities had highlighted for each of them ways in which common policies and practices actually contradicted their personal and professional values and beliefs and their reflection on this was powerful in reinforcing their moral and ethical endeavours as both teacher and researcher.

These three teachers' experiences resonate with Olson's (1992) claim that 'recovering the moral basis of practice is an exercise in historical reflection and reconstruction that has the power to shape the future' (p.92). It could be considered that school reform and teacher critical reflection are intimately bound together and that to isolate critical reflection from teachers' everyday work is to distance that work from the moral and ethical motivators of practice. Lacking a moral purpose or foundation, or losing sight of this, leaves practitioners open to abuses of power where 'we do what we do because… powerful people say we ought to' (*ibid.* p.93). Each of these participants, at the end of their dissertation journeys, came to recognise the ways in which bureaucrats isolate school practice[s] as a technicality removed from the social and professional milieus in which it exists. Subsequently, they assume a position to challenge faulty assumptions that teaching is an amoral enterprise and which preclude the ethical dimensions of teachers' worlds and work (Clarke, 2022; Day, 2017).

Yet this 'amoral' conceptualisation of teachers and teaching has not always been the case in England. Woods and Jeffrey (2002) assert that in the 1970s and 1980s teacher' self-identity was strongly endorsed by government policy, strongly influenced by the Plowden Report. They describe a 'Plowden self-identity' common in primary teachers: 'Social and personal identities and self-concepts were at one and teachers had, for the most part, an integrated and consistent self-identity. It was based on

two major sets of values – humanism and vocationalism' (p.92). However, changes to policy from the late-1980s onwards led to challenges to this kind of self-identity, raising potential conflicts with teachers' personal and professional identities. In particular, Woods and Jeffrey identified a shift from the notion of 'good teaching' based on 'humanism and vocationalism' (p.92) to being based on teacher competencies and set standards. This fundamentally altered the social construction and expectation of what it meant to be a teacher.

It would seem that what has been instrumental for these three teachers in not only rediscovering but in strengthening moral and ethical fibres of their teacher and researcher identity[ies] has been their commitment to engage in research. As Carr and Kemmis (1986) remind us, implicit in the notion of teachers' research is a practical critical framework through which practitioners undertake systematic enquiry to uncover connections with potential social and democratic actions. Thus, for these three teachers, we can see significance in their experiences of [re]forming professional yarns of identity[ies] as a researcher related both to notions of democratising the profession (Dewey, 1923) and to emancipatory outcomes which are directed towards 'the good for each person and the good for humankind' (Carr & Kemmis, 2009, p.83).

7.3.2 The place of research in teaching

For all three participants, their own experiences, challenges and successes during their dissertation research projects have been powerful in leading them to [re]consider the role, purpose and value of research within the teaching profession. Linked to their personal struggles and [re]forming professional yarns and fibres of identity[ies] as academic and researcher, these experiences have not only compounded their existing beliefs about research within the world and work of the teaching profession but also led to an increased awareness of dominant discourses which tend to amplify theory-practice divisions. Of particular importance is the way in which each of these teachers articulated how they lived and worked within cultures that gave little recognition or value to research, even when the research was framed as their own dissertation work which was contextualised in their own schools. Although all three participants, at the end of their time in the research project, considered themselves to be advocates for teachers engaging in research, they all still described how they 'bang on' and 'bore' others about research; how their colleagues consider their research to be 'just another piece of reading'; how they apologise for being 'passionate' about their research areas; and how difficult it was to prioritise time in their professional lives to continue to engage in research work.

It is apparent that these teachers have lived experiences of cultures of ITTE and CPD in recent decades which have side-lined the 'university project' (Furlong, 2013b) and consequently teachers' critical

intellectual and academic work and worth. As discussed in the literature review, a particular concern in relation to teachers' research engagement and activity in England is the contradiction between 'research-based' and 'evidence-based' teaching (Lingard & Renshaw, 2010). In England, 'evidence-based' models of ITTE and CPD are favoured, constructing a narrow view of research along with a technical view of teaching, leading to expectations that research findings can be 'applied' in order to have a direct and simple impact on practice, e.g. 'theory into practice' (Cain, 2015a). As we saw in the literature review, many would argue that what is needed in England – as elsewhere – is a shift from these simplistic 'theory into practice' dialogues based on instrumental rationality. Rather, a praxeological epistemology is need, whereby professional knowledge is created on the basis of critical reflection and theorising of practice (Burn & Mutton, 2013; McIntyre, 1995) and where teachers are repositioned as active agents in research-based knowledge creation, mobilisation and translation (Philpott & Poultney, 2018).

One key issue is the way in which dominant cultures of teaching in England tend to neglect to think of teacher action and routine as some kind of professional or intellectual act: by focusing on the action rather than the meaning, we neglect to give proper credit to the depth and breadth of teachers' intellectual work. Ryle (2000) gives us something to consider in relation to the perceived practice-theory divide that persists in teacher education:

> Why are people so strongly drawn to believe, in the face of their own daily experience, that the intelligent execution of an operation must embody two processes, one of doing and another of theorizing? Part of the answer is that they are wedded to the dogma of the ghost in the machine. (p.32)

This dogma can be seen in the shift in recent years in England towards the conceptualisation of teachers as technicians. As discussed in detail in the literature review, the introduction of the CCF and ECF from 2016 onwards, combined with the shift of ITTE into school-based provision and the recent iterations of the National Oak Academy have all further positioned teaching as an act of 'deliverology' (Barber et al., 2011) rather than as acts of critical and intellectual professionals. Such positioning of teachers is criticised by all three participants at varying times and in varying ways, from Jane's frustration with 'data-driven machines' who are focused on attainment and behaviour with little regard for the whole-child, to Nigel's feelings of failure post-dissertation as he returns to the 'treadmill' and 'grind' of daily life in school, and Karen's concern that many teachers just want to be told what to do so that they can keep on top of and manage enormous workloads and ever-changing demands from external policy-makers.

Dillabough (1999) draws our attention to the complex and meaningful social interactions which influence teachers' identity[ies]. She criticises dominant notions of professional identity that only require teachers to respond to instrumental goals formulated by policy-makers or other power brokers, such as performance against externally set Teachers' Standards or compliance with National Oak Academy teaching materials. These externally set goals confine teachers' professional identity[ies] to fixed competency scales where they are judged and labelled, for example, as 'outstanding' or 'requiring improvement' through Ofsted inspection or by other senior leaders. Dillabough frames this as problematic because, '… a discursive notion of the teaching "self" is lost, and the complexity of education and its socialising mechanisms remain unexplored' (1999, p.378). She goes on to conclude that the technical turn in teaching locates individuals as rational and instrumental actors, not only ignoring but denying teachers' authentic, discursive and critical selves.

For these three teachers, repositioning themselves as active, critical researchers has meant actively connecting with research as knowledge creation and theorising, rather than reducing it solely to reflections on, or evaluations of, applied practice. This aligns with Mockler & Groundwater-Smith's (2015) critique of much action research and inquiry carried out by teachers, which tends to be celebratory, reifying 'what works' in a particular classroom or school environment. To ask teachers to engage in more 'authentic' forms of research then relies on a re-conceptualisation of the purpose and outcomes of research for teachers. This relates to the debate covered in the literature review about philosophical positionings and reckonings of educational research as a distinct paradigm (e.g. Biesta, 2020; Pring, 2015; Wyse et al., 2018). But herein lies a conundrum which Nigel expressed quite distinctly: that research is 'not allowed' in some school and MAT settings, particularly where the outcomes of research may contradict policies and practices that have been embedded in the school culture.

Reay (2022) charges the UK – and England especially – as being particularly bad at changing our education system when compared to the transformation and open reflectiveness that are seen in other nations, such as Estonia, Finland and Singapore. She points to a decades-long, right-wing canker at the centre of education policy and decision-making, characterised by an obsession with 'privatisation, marketisation, traditionalism, individualism and self-reliance' (p.15), along with values of 'hierarchy, competition, elitism and individual excellence' (p.16). One of the significant outcomes, as experienced by the three teachers in this research, has been a culture of what Raymond (2018) describes as 'terror versus soul', with teachers experiencing intensification, heightened accountability, the pressure of 'raising standards', and demoralisation as the toll of compliance and fidelity (Sturrock, 2022). But for the three teachers here, we have seen how engaging with critical research has opened

up potential to challenge these cultures, if only in a very localised classroom and/or school context. And all three of them identify how it is the perceived difference of Master's level research, as compared to normative and centrally set CPD experiences, that has been most influential in this aspect of [re]formation of their professional identity[ies] as teacher but most notably as researcher.

7.3.3 Thinking not doing

That all three participants identified multiple ways in which their Masters study, and particularly their dissertation research projects, were very different to their usual experiences of CPD, is telling in terms of how their engagement with this programme has underpinned a significant shift in their conceptualisation away from teachers as technicians or 'evidence-based' practitioners and towards a more authentic critical research stance. Part of this involved each participant describing in some way how their experiences through the Master's programme as a whole, but especially during their dissertation journey, had been significantly different to their 'usual' CPD. It is also interesting to note that all three participants had completed NPQ qualifications, with Jane completing NPQ for Senior Leader (NPQSL) and Nigel completing NPQ for Headship (NPQH) within the duration of this research project. While Jane mentions her NPQ study in relation to it being complementary to her Master's study – although more heavily focused on the day-to-day workings of schools – Nigel does not discuss much impact from his NPQ study. Karen, who completed NPQH earlier in her career, mentions briefly some of the research literature she engaged with this at this time, but makes a clear distinction in the ways that her Master's study has been much more critical and intellectual. It is apparent that for all three participants, the NPQ qualifications they have completed do not seem to provide the same status personally and professionally as their completed Master's degrees.

Sugrue and Mertkan (2017) describe how, in the English context, school leadership has become increasingly 'scripted', with senior leadership teams, and middle management in schools, acting as enforcers of predetermined agenda within a paradigm of perpetual improvement and raising standards. The promotion to the teaching profession of not just NPQH, but – from 2020 onwards – a whole raft of centrally designed and delivered NPQ programmes, provides a good example of scripting the profession at all levels. The kind of CPD framework favoured by policy-makers in England tightly controls 'what teachers do, and learn to do, and what they think and aspire to for themselves, their students and their schools … with a strict national policy framework of a highly regulated and controlled education system' (Pedder & Opfer, 2011, p.743). In the longer term, these kinds of frameworks have the potential to be corrosive and to hollow out the profession.

In contrast, teachers' critical, intellectual and active research, as experienced in Master's programmes, offers 'rich explorations of the layers of the self' (Noffke, 1997, p.329). As McLaughlin (1998, p.72)

reminds us, 'policy can't mandate what matters'. These three teachers found this for themselves at certain episodes within their dissertation journeys, when they came to re-focus on what mattered to them, related to moral and ethical fibres of their personal and professional identity[ies] and embedded in their commitment to values of social justice. At times this was challenging, as Greany (2014) points out, '…evidence does not translate into simple, linear changes in practice. Instead, evidence must inform what is ultimately a messy process of social change, whether at the level of the individual practitioner, the school, or the system' (p.14). In a culture of 'what works' (Biesta, 2010) in schooling and in ITTE and CPD, such messiness is rarely welcomed and at times is outright rejected. But these three teachers came to, if not embrace, then at least accept the challenge of working with 'messy' research outcomes. And as part of this they came to acknowledge – and, in some episodes, explicitly reject – 'training' forms of CPD which focus predominantly on the technical and practical aspects of teaching with fundamental importance placed on the acquisition of skills and techniques (a.k.a. tips for teachers) (Cameron & Baker, 2004).

We can see a delineation of one of the most significant aspects of each participants' experiences through Master's study as a whole, a shift away from technical and functional work as both teacher and researcher, which Karen neatly expressed as being 'more of a doer than a thinker'. As can be seen in detailed transcripts, for all three participants a step-change can be detected in later episodes in the way they position their dissertation, changing from functional work or a means to an end, to a more integral part of themselves as teacher and researcher. Part of this shift is related to their discussions of time and pace, with each participant concluding that their dissertation work needed a slower pace, more thinking time and greater depth of knowledge and critical understanding than their usual day-to-day practice or function as a teacher. This underscores the challenges they faced in relation to prioritising time for their research and there is extensive evidence related to the technical difficulties teachers have encountered as they move into the realm of 'teacher-researcher', frequently documented as time, workload and sustaining motivation and momentum (Thornley et al., 2004). In several episodes, each participant identified ways in which aspects of their research work took longer than anticipated: examples included reading challenging texts, becoming involved in complex debates around areas of policy or practice, and in achieving a standard of academic writing they felt was required. In a culture of 'fast schooling', silver bullet quick fixes and organisational rationality (Lewis & Hogan, 2019), it is unsurprising that these teachers highlight challenges related to temporal and spatial constructs of time. But it is well-documented in existing literature that in order for teachers to undergo meaningful professional development activity, time is needed; both in terms of time for the professional development to take place (indicating relevance and support for the activity) (Lindvall &

Ryve, 2019), and in the form of time for the outcomes of professional development to be embedded not just in practice but as part of meaningful and authentic classroom, school or system reform (Bryan & Burstow, 2015).

Another of the significant experiences related to conceptualising Master's level study as different from the usual CPD offering was the way in which each of these participants described episodes where they experienced some breaking down of previously perceived barriers between schools and universities or 'academia'. Karen describes this [re]formation of professional identity[ies] as a researcher as joining 'another little world'; Nigel explains how his previous beliefs that research is the preserve of universities and academics have changed completely and how research belongs with practitioners; and Jane, who experienced such personal struggles, describes how her Master's has helped her to become much more critical and much more confident in challenging dominant discourses in education policy and practice. However, as vital as we may consider these processes of self-awareness in relation to identifying contradictions and tensions between an individual's espoused theories and the practicalities of their professional role, if we focus on the individual learning experience in isolation then we only begin to consider conceptualising teacher's research in relation to personal belief systems. In such a conceptualisation, a sense of agency in relation to bridging the 'theory-practice divide' frames each individual as autonomous: if one's beliefs change and actions subsequently change, then we assume that broader change in teachers' professionalism beyond the individual sphere of influence follows. What is missing here, however, is the interconnection of both power and privilege, which lie outside individuals' reach, with personal and professional agency and autonomy. While the individual process of [re]formation of personal and professional yarns of teacher and researcher identity[ies] may be a vital part of broader reconceptualization of the role of research in teaching, these alone are not sufficient (Dixon & Ward, 2015; Martin, 2021). One response is for teachers to, 'organise themselves as communities of enquirers, organising their own enlightenment' (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p.221). Such organisation, however, smacks of political awareness and a desire for more activist forms of professionalism and professional development (Sachs, 2000) which may be considered unwelcome by particular policy-makers, senior leaders and power brokers in education.

7.4 Political yarns

> Maybe if teachers were more interested and curious about why we're doing things, they wouldn't necessarily be as compliant as a work body. Ha, that would cause a few problems, wouldn't it, for the government?
>
> **Karen, Chapter 7**

I suppose it's more about politicians, maybe that's been the change really, the frustration there that they've used education just as a, you know, just talking in sound bites, using social mobility and levelling up as just nice to throw in there but without actually putting the resource or structures in place to make it happen, to make it a success.

Nigel, Chapter 6

There seems to be, the same with anything in education, there seems to be these buzzwords and at the moment the buzzword is recovery curriculum.

Jane, Chapter 3

7.4.1 Politics and [national] policy

Of the three yarns of identity[ies] exposed and examined within this research project, it would seem that for all three participants the political yarns and fibres of their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher have been least explicit. As previously highlighted in the literature review and corroborated for these three participants in the findings chapters, teachers in England are somehow expected to be 'apolitical', especially in the climate at the time of writing. It is interesting to note that of the three participants it is Karen who makes most frequent observations related to political debate and political influence on policy and practice within the profession; her teacher training and early career were experienced in a very different social and political climate to that of Jane and Nigel, possibly leaving her with a greater sense of 'Plowden self-identity' (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002) as a teacher, more aware of and invested in political debate, concomitant with findings that suggest that 'veteran' teachers' identity[ies] are influenced in part by their interaction with political agendas (Carrillo & Flores, 2018). Both Nigel and Jane very rarely mentioned politics as related to education or their own lived experience in each episode, and both only explicitly referred to politics when asked a direct question as part of their 12+ month follow-up interview. But within some episodes, critique of policy and practice, which could be related to an emergent political stance, did emerge. Both Nigel and Jane centred this on frustration at language and fads in education policy-making, a sense that 'buzzwords' and grandiose promises grab headlines and hint at reform, but that in reality this is pure rhetoric, with no funding, no resource and no real commitment made to effecting any kind of meaningful change. This perception of the political voice as related to policy creation, mobilisation and translation is one that has been consistently put under the spotlight by scholars in the fields of sociology of education and policy studies, as examined in the literature review.

As we have seen, patterns of political and administrative shifts from the 1980s onwards represented a 'return to the shadows' for teachers in terms of their agency, power and visibility (Goodson & Numan, 2002, p.270). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) argue that the movements of standards and

accountability not only de-emphasises teachers' academic and intellectual knowledge work in and with school communities, but also de-emphasises the role of the teacher in relation to agency, power and autonomy. As a result, policy-making and decision-making in education rests in a small, centralised body politic, made up of a number of actors who have seemed somewhat reluctant to engage with research findings (Lupton & Hayes, 2021). And even when these actors do engage with research, it has been selective, raising concerns that 'political ideology, anecdote and, on occasion, whim dominate policy-making' (Chapman & Ainscow, 2019, p.901). One only has to consider the comments of David Law, former Schools' Minister in the UK government to see such concerns in action:

> A lot of decision-making is not based on evidence but on hunch. I had little coming to me from civil servants that presented the latest academic evidence. Too often, they just serve up practical advice about how the minister can do what he or she wants. But politicians are prone to making decisions based on ideology and personal experience. (The Guardian, 1 August 2017)

In this culture of political ideology, central control and acting on 'whims', Bridges and Watts (2009, p.43) describe four key functions of education policy, including

- Expressing collective intentions, and providing aims and aspirations
- Making rhetorical rallying calls
- Providing rules that others have to follow or describing behaviours that others have to perform
- Indicating outcomes that have to be achieved (while leaving it open as to how)

The consequences for teachers can be seen in frustrations expressed by participants here, particularly in later episodes, where they came to acknowledge that centrally determined policies and practices were at times in conflict with their own research findings as well as their personal and professional values and beliefs. In their frustrations at buzzwords and rhetoric around the 'recovery curriculum' and 'levelling up', Jane and Nigel expose the troubling realities for teachers who are seeking to engage in social justice driven debates and to challenge the status quo, who are driven by a social justice imperative and seek restorative practices for the disadvantaged students and families with whom they work. In contrast, education policy seems constrained by the four functions outlined above, and as such is nothing more than politicking by a succession of education ministers and advisors. Therefore, if we consider that 'Politics is seen as a constitutive element in action research, as well as all other forms of educational practice' (Noffke, 1997, p.306), it is clear that politics as related to policy is an

integral part of the [re]formation of some of the strands and fibres of these teachers' identity[ies] as researchers.

7.4.2 'Unwelcome truths'

It could be suggested that some of the frustrations expressed by Jane and Nigel come from experiences of what Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2015) term 'unwelcome truths'. Karen seemed to have sustained her political beliefs, values and critique of policy directions throughout, but both Jane and Nigel came across unexpected, adverse findings at various points within their dissertation research. For Nigel there were three key episodes: firstly, discovering the potentially negative effects of setting and streaming which were embedded in his practice and beliefs; secondly, discovering the potential challenges and difficulties encountered by individuals who did experience social mobility; and thirdly, discovering the extent to which families with access to particular resources were able to 'game' the state school system. Similarly, we saw Jane try to come to terms with policies and practices, which she felt were disadvantageous to the development of the 'whole child' and which were contradictory to her values and beliefs as a 'nurturing' practitioner. One distinct episode was related to the post-pandemic 'recovery curriculum', which Jane considered to be a worthwhile endeavour but in relation to which she could see limitations and a narrowing in the short-term nature of both the policy itself and the guidance for its enactment at a local level. There is resonance here with rhetorical rallying calls and descriptions of behaviours and outcomes that embody education policy making and enactment in England (Bridges & Watts, 2009). This suggests that some of Nigel and Jane's frustration may be rooted in contradictions between their own lived experiences and the lived experiences of the students and families that they serve, on the one hand, and the values and beliefs embodied in policy-making and policy enactment at a national and local level, on the other.

For both Jane and Nigel, we could consider the episodes where they uncover 'unwelcome truths' as key examples of teaching dilemmas, defined as 'conflicts in which there are multiple, equally viable and often unattractive alternatives' (Volkmann & Anderson, 1998, p.72). Volkmann and Anderson also point out that dilemmas occur when the multiple yarns, strands and fibres which make up a teacher's identity[ies] suggest contradictory solution paths. Such experiences of dilemmas are exemplified in other empirical studies of teachers. Enyedy et al. (2006) offer up analysis of two teachers who self-identified as having socially conscious goals for their students, but experienced tensions in relation to these goals during the enactment of a new curriculum policy. For example, one of the teachers experienced oscillations between adherence to the prescribed curriculum and her own deviations and additions, suggesting a tension between compliance and fidelity with a prescribed curriculum approach and individual professional and craft knowledge and experience. The second teacher

described being fearful when making decisions about pedagogy and practice which she perceived to be in direct conflict with the prescribed curriculum she was expected to enact, as well as the school culture. Enyedy et al. (2006) concluded that teachers who perceive themselves to have a lack of control or agency experience disconnection when faced with dilemmas, resulting in difficulties in adapting practice and feeling unable to reconcile or navigate the dilemmas experienced. As a result, teachers' identity[ies] are de-stabilised and individuals may leave the profession, as happened to these two teachers in Enyedy et al.'s (2006) empirical work as well as in reports from other empirical work related to teachers' experiences of disconnection and disenfranchisement (Alexander et al., 2020; Chambers et al., 2010; Sturrock, 2022)

For the participants in this research project, some of the 'unwelcome truths' experienced seem to relate to tension, contradiction and conflict in relationships with colleagues, senior leaders and other stakeholders. At the heart of this, we can deduce some implicit criticism of policy-making and enactment whereby each of the participants sensed a lack power or agency to challenge decision-making or to influence school cultures. Jane describes this in the most heartfelt and personal way, expressing disappointment and frustration at colleagues she labels as 'data-driven machines', who appear more concerned with the standards and processes of education set out in national and local policy vernacular, and less concerned with pastoral care, and the social, emotional and mental health of students. Nigel, too, expresses some dissatisfaction with school leaders, seen in his move to a different MAT, seeking a more open and supportive approach to teacher research, where he feels he will be able to mobilise outcomes of his dissertation and forthcoming EdD study. For Karen, despite the potential of having a comparatively greater sense of power and agency in her role as school improvement advisor, the reluctance of both teachers and senior leaders to ask critical questions or to engage with literature and research provides a continued source of frustration. Implicit here is perhaps some unease as Karen reflects on the way in which she, previously as a school leader, also accepted mandates and policies and implemented these in the same unquestioning way that she now criticises in others, another, very personal 'unwelcome truth'.

As we have seen throughout the literature, teachers who self-select to engage in Master's level CPD and research do so because they perceive there to be added value in such activities in relation to their personal, professional – and to an extent political – values, beliefs, practices and experiences in schooling and beyond. However, the reaction of peers and colleagues to their academic and critical research work provides implicit and, at times, explicit messages about the value that others attribute to academic study and research in the context of education policy and practice at local and national levels. Dixon and Ward (2015), in their empirical work with teachers engaged in Master's level study,

identified professional contradictions or dilemmas between participating teachers' values and those held by their workplace colleagues, which clearly resonates with those of the teachers in this research project, all of whom described colleagues' reticence, dismissal and apathy towards their dissertation research.

What is problematic is not only the dilemmas that such experiences create for these teachers, which can be difficult to negotiate and reconcile, but also the way in which their colleagues' reactions seem to be manifestations of social and cultural factors which position teaching as *not* a learned or research-based profession (Ellis et al., 2020; Menter & Flores, 2021). As we saw in the literature review, many teachers experience normative and coercive isomorphism, leading them to self-police and police others in regards to professional behaviours and actions (Greany & Waterhouse, 2016; Puttick, 2017). Subsequently, as experienced by these teachers, colleagues' behaviours and reactions may contribute to significant barriers in the creation and mobilisation of knowledge stemming from teachers' intellectual work and critical research activities. Chapman and Ainscow (2019) describe some of the factors that may create barriers as bound within individual and shared perceptions of identity[ies] as teachers and professionals, both within and across individual schools. As these authors conclude, it is easy to maintain cooperation and shared goals and action between different stakeholders until the times arise when difficult decisions have to be made, particularly around determining priorities and allocation of resources. At these times, group cohesion breaks down and individuals may experience fractures in relationships with colleagues and subsequently dilemmas related to their own identity[ies] within shared personal and professional spaces. Likewise, cultural factors, related to power, agency and autonomy in relation to school change, are influential. Accepted approaches to school change and school improvement underpin the ways in which individual schools enact national and local policies and the ways in which innovation or local research findings can be mobilised and translated. But, as we have seen for all three teachers in this research project, having a lack of agency related to school change or school change decision-making leads to discomfort and an implicit message that their intellectual and research work does not matter. Such experiences are not uncommon; it could be argued that, in England, teachers face a system-wide lack of support and value given to their intellectual, academic and critical research activity, at all stages of their careers and across both ITTE and CPD activity.

7.4.3 Impact of teachers' research: epistemic injustice?

As we have seen in previous sections, all three participants faced struggles in various episodes with their personal and professional identity[ies] as related to perceived lack of value attributed to research within the teaching profession as a whole, and reluctance from some colleagues and senior leaders to

engage with or support these teachers' own research. Highlighted in the literature review, in the current policy and political climate of the teaching profession in England, teachers experience challenges not just in engaging in research, but also in mobilising and translating outcomes from their own research findings as well as from their professional practice more generally. It could be considered that cumulative policies and practices, language and discourse which position teachers as technicians and in a framework of 'deliverology' of mandated knowledge create an environment in which teachers themselves are unlikely to be considered as legitimate knowledge creators. Fricker (2007) would term this 'epistemic injustice'; an undemocratic environment in which only the privileged and the powerful hold and distribute legitimate knowledge, and others (such as teachers) have their knowledge not just silenced but also repressed. Consequently, it could be argued that the very act of teacher research in itself is a direct reproach to an environment in which teachers' voices are suppressed. As Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2009) put it, 'Teacher research is political insofar as it challenges epistemologies which locate power and knowledge within traditional structures of the academy, giving voice to teachers and providing teachers with a way of interpreting, documenting and sharing their own knowledge' (p.20). However, there are those who criticise such notions of teacher research as being empowering in relation to advocating and platforming teachers' knowledge. For example, Huberman (1996) describes the teacher research movement as nothing new; as falling outside legitimate forms of research as defined by the academy; and rejects the claims made by practitioners due to the inability of the 'researchers' to accurately measure and report their experiences. Similar arguments are seen in the more recent BERA Close to Practice report (Wyse et al., 2018), where some teacher research is criticised as localised, context-laden and of little value outside of the immediate professional domain. While we could critique these views as 'tied to the very dichotomies challenged by the philosophies that underpin practitioner inquiry' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p.21), it is impossible to ignore some integral issues raised here around the legitimacy of teachers' research activities and subsequent creation, translation and mobilisation of knowledge. Of particular concern is the issue of 'insider' research, which may lead teachers to produce introspective accounts that are abundant with 'preconceptions, distortions and self-delusions' (Huberman, 1996, p.128). A further issue is the perceived 'gap' between teacher-researcher findings and more rigorous constructions of educational knowledge and theory in the academy (Wyse et al., 2018).

How are these issues reconciled? Both Karen and Nigel, in their 12+ month follow-up interviews, highlighted the ways in which more extensive, more regular and closer relationships between teachers and academics could be influential in re-establishing teachers' voices within the discourse of

educational research and theory. While these three participants have gained some ground in discovering their academic voice, as they all point out, opportunities for translating and mobilising the new knowledge they have created are incredibly limited. It would follow then that 'the establishment and consolidation of intellectual communities for teacher research is necessary' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p.23). Once established, these communities would not only inform and influence educational research and theory, but through collective power and connections would likely influence broader school policies and practices as a 'bottom-up' movement (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). There is an important role for universities and academics in such a community, not least in supporting teachers to problematise the aspects of education that they put under investigation. This is not to place academics and teachers in a hierarchy of knowledge, but to recognise the ways in which members of both communities can act to challenge each other's analyses and interpretations. But for such intellectual communities to not only exist but to flourish and to gain power and agency in the education system in England would require a significant shift in political will and a critical shift in the current status quo.

7.5 Impact of Covid-19

At the time of writing, and as seen in several episodes of participants' experiences, it is important to acknowledge the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic response from March 2020. The after-effects of the nature of the global pandemic are still being felt and repercussions will continue to be debated for many years to come, but within this analysis of episodic dimensions, it is particular personal, professional and political impacts as described by these three participants that we will consider.

For all three teachers, the sudden and unprecedented shift to home-schooling, online learning and providing virtual support for students and their families was pivotal. This was described by all of them in several episodes in terms of the impact on their professional roles but also related to their personal and emotional responses to such sudden and overwhelming changes in their everyday lives and relationships. It could be considered that Karen, working part-time as a school improvement advisor, was the least affected in relation to her day-to-day work. This can be seen in her descriptions within some episodes of how the pandemic and related lockdown gave her more space and time for thinking and research work, although this ended up being quite short-lived as her work quickly resumed albeit in an online/virtual form.

For Jane and Nigel, the consequences of the lockdown were felt more keenly. Like Karen, both were quite optimistic at the start of lockdown that they would be able to create more time and space for

their dissertation work, and that some of the workload pressures of their role would be alleviated due to the shift to remote working and with the majority of students being home-schooled. This fairly optimistic stance in regards to workload was not uncommon in the first few weeks of the lockdown, as the sudden change to modes of schooling and education led to some 'pull-back' of expectations for teachers and teaching (Marshall et al., 2020). However, the reality for all three participants, but mainly for Jane and Nigel, was that their workload quickly increased and became more challenging than in their pre-pandemic lives.

At the crux of these experiences is possibly the way in which the pandemic response served to highlight existing inequalities and inequities, demonstrated in the growth of the attainment gap in England, as elsewhere, for disadvantaged students (Farquharson et al., 2022; Twist et al., 2022) and how the digital divide for marginalised communities and groups quickly became a barrier in accessing and engaging with education (Meyer & Wills, 2022). Further, the social, emotional and mental health repercussions for young children of isolating or of being removed from their emergent social circles can now be seen, three years on from the first lockdown, in patterns of increased referrals to speech and language therapy, behaviour support services, mental health services and school refusal (McDonald et al., 2023; Twist et al., 2022). Jane, in particular, returned to these issues in multiple episodes, considering how her research work was all the more valuable in supporting children through and post-pandemic, although she was also aware of how she lacked agency and power to employ her research work holistically in her own school.

Kim and Asbury (2020) identified two key stressors for teachers in the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic response: uncertainty in general, and worry for vulnerable students and families, including concern with not being able to adequately safeguard children. Common to these two stressors are challenges to teachers' core values of being caring and focused on the well-being of students, and a sudden lack of power and agency in their day-to-day work as well as in their personal lives. Additional stress was created for teachers due to the very nature of their role, regarded, for example, by Kim and Asbury (2022, p.1079) as 'the social fabric that holds the educational system together'. Set alongside personal challenges, isolation and family responsibilities, such stressors will have had a profound effect on the teachers in this research project. But they lived through the pandemic and the pandemic is as much a part of their personal, professional and political [re]formation of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher as any other of their lived experiences. So, while it is useful to consider this aspect explicitly, it cannot be separated out nor can particular aspects of [re]formation of identity[ies] be attributed solely to the impact of the pandemic conditions. Rather, it is one of the holistic elements of these teachers' experiences during the course of this research project.

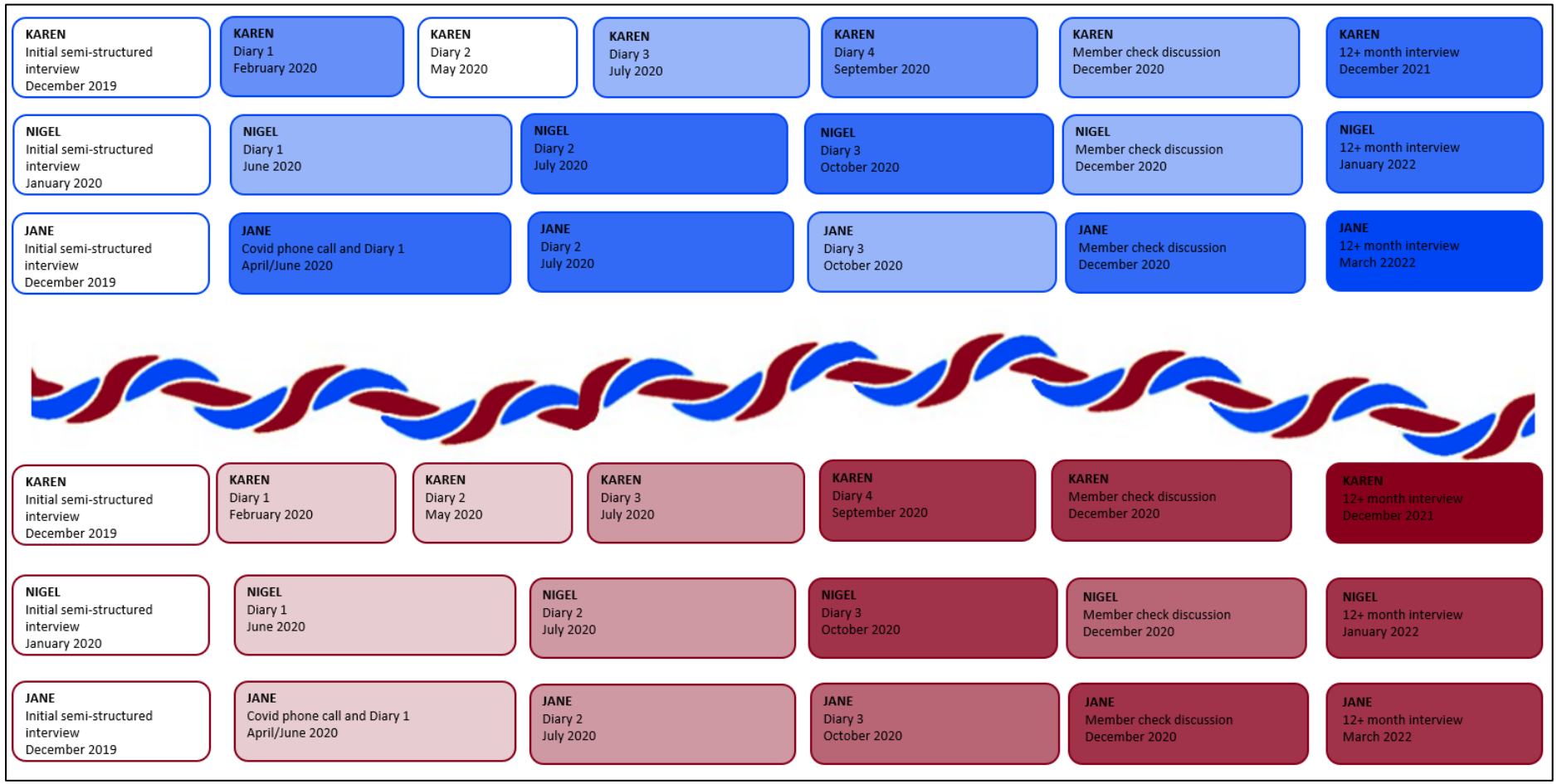
Chapter Eight: Discussion of Configurational Dimensions

8.0 Introduction to the analysis of whole-case configurational dimensions

Having explored and exposed particularly significant and shared episodes in time of each participants' narrative, analysis of configurational dimensions now allows for some 'grasping together' (Ricœur, 1980, p.178) which can elicit patterns as well as contradictions in and between the episodes of narratives. The conceptual rope model constructed for this research suggests that we consider a beginning, an in-between and an end, whereby the research can reveal epistemic rhythms or patterns within individual or across a number of episodes. What I seek to achieve in this configurational analysis is to examine the beginning, the in-between and the end of the three participants' narratives, identifying any shared or contradictory patterns and rhythms which give insights into [re]formation of personal, professional and political yarns of teacher and researcher identity[ies] over time.

As Gibbs (2006, p.2) reminds us, 'the journey of becoming and being a teacher is unique for each teacher and yet depends on others' and it is both uniqueness and wholeness that I seek to expose here. Figure 8.1 provides a visual summary of the extent to which I considered Karen, Jane and Nigel to experience significance of [re]formation of their teacher and research identity[ies] throughout the research project. As expressed in the methodology and research design and findings chapters, that is not to say that we can deduce linear transformation with a beginning, a middle and end to each of these journeys: each participants' personal, professional and political values, beliefs and actions have been, and will continue to be, [re]formed both as an individual and in negotiation with others before, during and after this research project. What is under analysis here is the extent to which each participant, individually and collectively as a group, experienced [re]formation in three stages of the research journey. I have framed each of these sections as becoming, being and belonging, inspired by the words of Karen, who described her experiences in her dissertation as 'you're becoming something that's a bit bigger and better than you were' (Karen, Chapter 6). To consider the configurational dimension in such terms also avoids being trapped in a causal and linear narrative structure of beginning, middle and end, which divorces these participants' experiences from their life history and from the social and cultural context in which each episode was experienced.

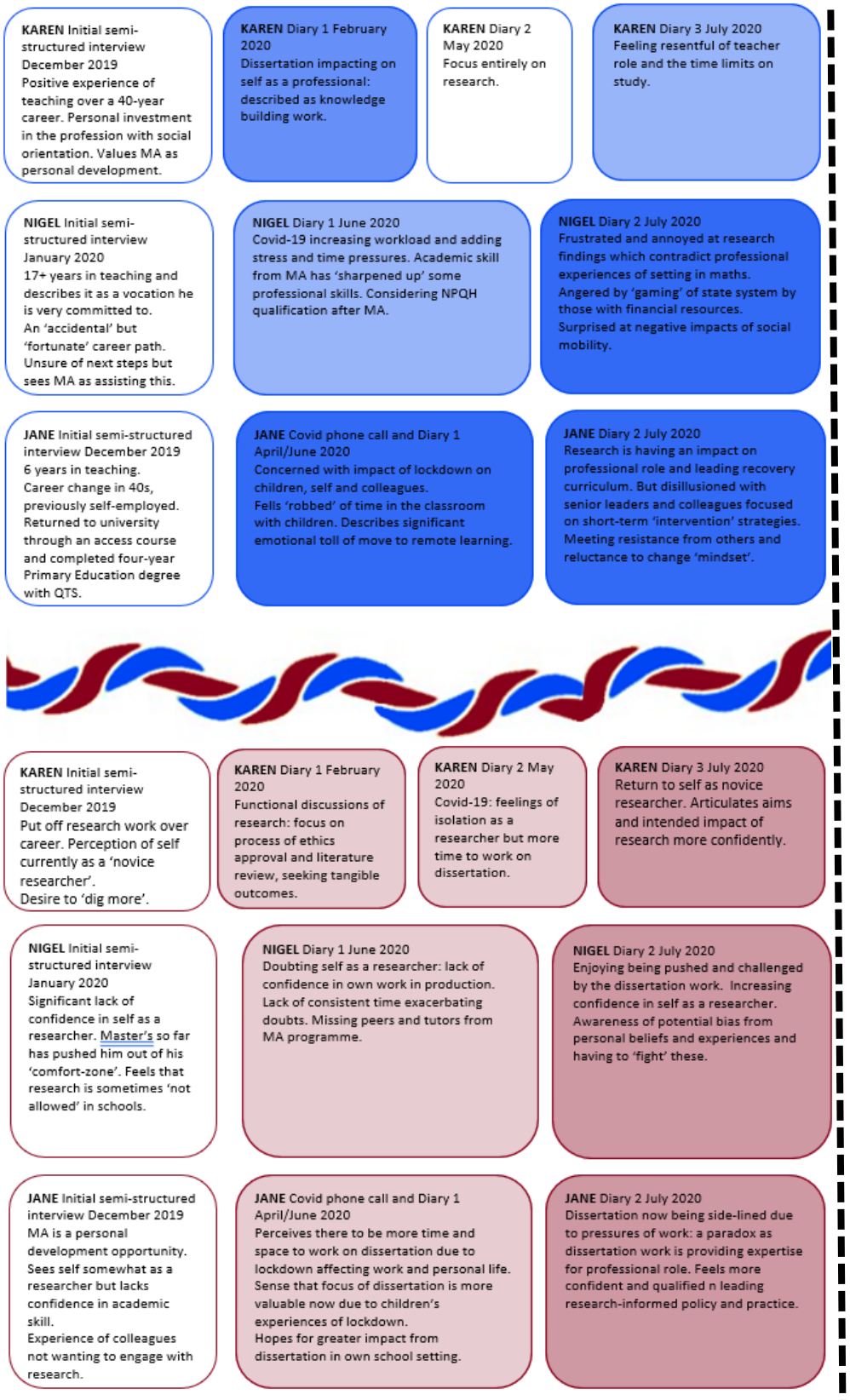
Figure 8.1 Summary of significance of each strand of identity[ies] at each episode



In each of the following three sections, a summary of the key episodes of each participant is presented, followed by analysis of their shared experiences of [re]formation of teacher and researcher identity[ies] related to critical analysis of relevant literature. This is followed by some commentary on responses to participating in this research project, reminding us of the social construction paradigm in which it is recognised that knowledge is constructed through dialogue. As such, the wider social, cultural and political context of this research project must be examined as being yet another influential dimension which helped to shape both the 'narrare' and the 'gnarus' or 'knowing in some particular way' (Bruner, 2003, p.27) of each participant's narrative and subsequent interpretation and analysis.

8.1 Becoming researcher AND teacher

Figure 8.2 Configurational dimensions: 'Becoming'



In this first section of the configurational analysis, we consider the way in which participants' Master's study and the early stages of their dissertation created a space where they could be considered as 'becoming' researcher as well as teacher; in essence, starting to form some kind of duality of identity[ies].

8.1.1 Becoming researcher

As we can see in Figure 8.1, all three participants underwent some shared experiences in relation to [re]formation of their identity[ies] as researchers between their initial semi-structured interviews and their video diary entries which were all submitted in July 2020. Each participant expressed a lack of confidence and self-doubt in themselves as 'researcher' in our initial semi-structured interview, with all three saying 'no' when asked if they considered themselves to be a researcher at this point. All of them did, however, concede to holding *some* dimension of identity as a researcher: Karen considered herself to be a 'novice researcher', and both Jane and Nigel described how they had been doing some kind of research through reading literature and their work during earlier, taught modules of their Master's programme. Subsequently, some small but significant changes in researcher identity[ies] were detected in their first video diaries and Covid-19 phone calls. While much of their discussion was related to what was coded as 'functional work', an increase in the amount of time that they spent consciously speaking about their Master's dissertation compared to their teacher's world and work suggests that this strand of identity[ies] was beginning to gain strength in relation to personal and professional yarns. Of course, there needs to be caution here: the video diary prompts and overarching purpose of the study clearly directed participants to focus on their experiences in their dissertation, but in all of the video diary entries and semi-structured interviews we have seen how each participant consistently returned to a great deal of discussion and insight related to their professional selves. Indeed, we see how Karen, in video diary 2, neglects to mention anything about her teaching role at all, so focused is she on the work of her dissertation.

It could be considered that in this early stage of the dissertation, each of these teachers is beginning to experience some cultural shift as they re-locate themselves – personally, professionally and politically – away from the *techne* as teacher and towards critical enquiry and research domains (Campbell & McNamara, 2010; Winch, Oancea, et al., 2015). Previous empirical work from across the UK, Australia and New Zealand has highlighted ways in which teachers who engage in Master's study, including completing Master's level research, experience substantial shifts as they move away from the routine and the practical and become involved in more deep and critical interrogation of their own (and others') practices (Campbell & McNamara, 2010; Dixon & Ward, 2015; Thomas, 2017). As

Zeichner (2003) reminds us, engaging in inquiry can be a transformative professional development activity, because what emerges from teachers' critical inquiry and research is a complex web of skills, knowledge, professional dispositions and attitudes, all of which are influential yarns and fibres of one's strands of teacher and researcher identity[ies]. Here we see alignment with Groundwater-Smith & Mockler (2009), who assert that, at its best, inquiry-based professional learning is ongoing, is focused on transformation of both the self and the institution, and encompasses opportunities for teachers to develop their professional knowledge, judgements and skills.

We can see the impact of this emergent cultural shift in participants' video diaries from July 2020, an episode in time where they were all well underway with their research projects and were looking forward to using the time of the school summer holidays to complete their work, ready for submission in September. At this time, participants' discussion of their dissertations had become less about functional work: although they were all still concerned with progress in analysing data and writing up each section, more of their discussion focused on the potential findings and impact from their dissertations. And in reviewing detailed transcripts of 'Chapter 3' for each participant, we can see evidence of a great deal more discussion related to their emerging self-concept as a researcher. For each participant, an increase in confidence can be detected, and both Jane and Karen discuss how they feel more credible in sharing their research findings with others, or in engaging in research informed discussions and debates with colleagues. Some would consider that, at this stage in their journey, these participants have become much more 'research-literate' which encompasses the understanding that research findings and research knowledge have to be dealt with critically (Evans et al., 2017; Waring & Evans, 2015). This is in contrast with dominant conceptualisations of teachers' work with research as passive acceptance of externally funded and created 'knowledge' related to mandated policies around 'best practice'. Such critical engagement requires a willingness to explore qualitatively and systematically '*how* something works' as well as '*why* it does *not* work' (Lillejord & Børte, 2016, p.552). Thus, within this first part of the dissertation journey, we could conclude that each participant is experiencing 'becoming' as a researcher: developing some of the yarns and fibres which will ultimately intertwine into a more substantial and strong strand of researcher identity[ies].

8.1.2 Tensions as teacher

It is interesting to note that at the same time that these participants were experiencing the early stages of a cultural shift which would allow for some [re]formation of their researcher identity[ies], they were also experiencing sudden and unexpected cultural shifts in their lives and worlds as teachers in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown in England which began in March 2020. Adams et al. (2023), from their surveys of several thousand teachers in England, identified how teachers self-

reported feelings of worthwhileness, happiness and life satisfaction had dropped to their lowest recorded levels in December 2020, while anxiety had risen to its third highest recorded level. In comparison to the general population, teachers and school leaders were experiencing lower levels of wellbeing from measures taken between the onset of the Covid-19 response in March 2020 and September 2021. Some of these measures may well be associated not only with increases in workload during the Covid-19 pandemic response, but also with the cultural shifts to digitised online ways of working (Guzzo et al., 2022; Thomas & Rogers, 2020), linked to greater levels of surveillance from leaders and students' families (Meyer & Wills, 2022) as well as increases in inequalities for the poorest and most disadvantaged and an increase in mental health needs and pastoral care for young people and their families (Farquharson et al., 2022).

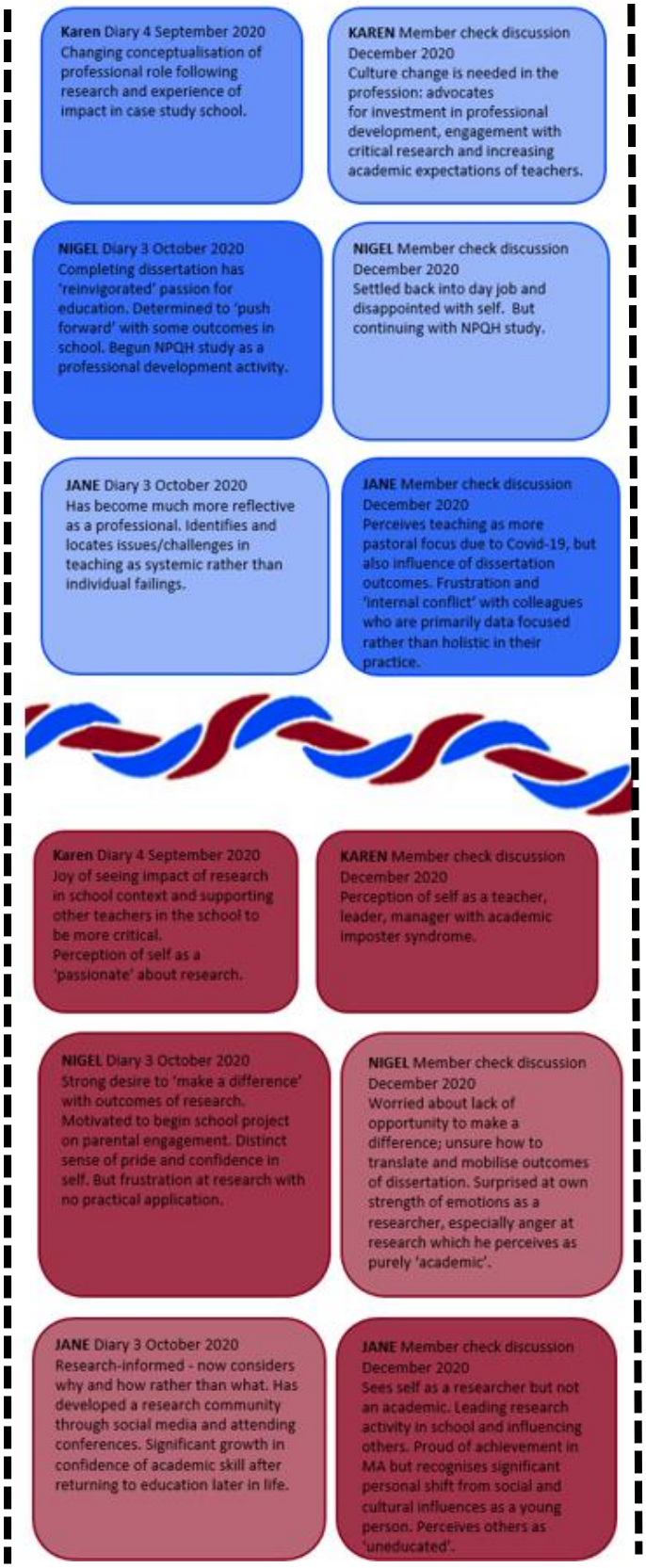
What we can see for the three participants in this research project is the way in which dual tensions – the impact of Covid-19 and their experiences of 'becoming' as a researcher – influenced some [re]formation of their teacher identity[ies]. In line with teachers' experiences expressed within post-pandemic global research (e.g. Adams et al., 2023; P. Campbell, 2020; Guzzo et al., 2022; Marshall et al., 2020), all three participants highlighted how the impact of Covid-19 had increased workload related to their professional roles, while generating some intense emotional responses, such as Jane's tearful descriptions of worrying about the children from her class, Nigel's frustrations and Karen's resentfulness of the way in which her workload had grown just as she was making real progress with her dissertation. But some of these emotional responses could also be attributed to some [re]formation of participants' teacher identity[ies]. Evans et al. (2017) argue that teachers who have a well-formed sense of research literacy tend also to align with notions of critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2011) in that teachers' evaluation of evidence takes into account who is advantaged and disadvantaged, and how inclusive policies and practices address issues of equity. As such, teachers who are research literate, or in this case, 'becoming' researcher, could be considered to be engaging in more democratic and emancipatory professional development (W. Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Sachs, 2016), developing more sophisticated and nuanced awareness of the status quo of extant systems and structures related to power, politics and policy. This can be seen in Nigel's frustrations around uncovering problematic dimensions of social mobility and his growing awareness of how those with certain privileges 'game' the education system in England, as well as Jane's frustration at not being able to lead more meaningful social, emotional and mental health changes in school and feeling stymied by a 'recovery curriculum' that was grounded in nothing but policy-makers' 'buzzwords'.

It is interesting to note that Karen's [re]formation of teacher identity[ies] in this 'becoming' stage seems slightly less significant than that experienced by Jane and Nigel. As highlighted previously, it

could be that Karen, having more power and agency in her role as improvement advisor, feels less strait-jacketed by extant policies and practices. But what we can conclude is that all three participants, in their experiences of 'becoming' researcher, underwent some personal, professional and political [re]formation of their yarns of their identity[ies] as teacher as well as researcher.

8.2 Being researcher and teacher

Figure 8.3 Configurational dimensions: 'Being'



In this second section of configurational analysis, we examine the ways in which these three participants begin to establish themselves in some ways as 'being' a teacher and a researcher simultaneously. This part of their dissertation journey takes us from submission of their dissertations at the beginning of the school autumn term in 2020 to their member-check discussions held at the end of that calendar year.

8.2.1 Being researcher: successful dissertations

When considering each participants' yarns of researcher identity[ies], it is clear that all three had experienced some significant [re]formation at the point at which they had submitted their dissertations. The detailed transcripts of each of their final video diaries show a great deal of discussion related to their self-concept as a researcher, although this is slightly more noticeable for Nigel and Karen than for Jane. All of them described feelings of relief, happiness and joy at submitting their final piece of work, although Jane described how she was slightly disappointed that it had not been as 'polished' as she would have liked. Despite this, she, along with Karen and Nigel, also described feeling much more confident in research skills and research knowledge, and had hopes that their dissertation outcomes would go on to influence school policies and practices in some way.

It could be considered that these potential future possibilities – optimism, to an extent – of their dissertation projects having some kind of positive impact were influential in not only [re]forming researcher identity[ies] but enveloping some sense of 'being' as researcher. Beijaard et al. (2004) tell us that experiences of identity formation are not just around 'who am I at this moment' but also need to include 'what do I want to become'. As such, the way in which each of these three teachers determines to influence their school setting and their work with colleagues based on their dissertation outcomes reflects a determination to 'be' researcher, to continue the personal, professional and political strands of their research work which have already significantly [re]formed this yarn of their identity. This is also evident in a significant amount of commentary on plans for applying and implementing evidence from their dissertation projects, along with increased 'academic' confidence, suggesting some dismantling of common divides seen between 'academic research' and 'practice-based research' (Wyse et al., 2018). This process is important if these teachers are to become invested in a profession where individuals' learning and development goes beyond disembodied knowledge or research findings and they are prepared to cope intellectually and critically with ambiguous and uncertain future demands (Brew & Saunders, 2020). Such a dispensation is characterised by van Katwijk et al. (2019) as an 'inquiry habit of mind' (p.5) and is exemplified in comments relating to Nigel taking more of an interest in teaching and reading more books, Karen's 'driver' to understand research

more and dig underneath policy and practice, and Jane's belief that 'research-informed' practice is the best way forward for her.

However, when we meet these participants again, around 3-4 months later, for their member check discussions, we see some divergence in subsequent experiences. Both Jane and Karen seem to have continued to sustain their sense of 'being' as a researcher, both describing themselves as researchers and, to some extent, academic. This manifests in perceptions of producing credible academic research through completed dissertations and in leading colleagues in actively engaging with research literature and/or small-scale critical inquiry in their own classrooms. Jane describes how research work is 'ingrained' in her, while Karen talks about her desire for schools and teachers to work more closely with universities, and for teachers to embrace a 'dual role' as teacher and researcher. It could be considered that these two participants have strengthened the yarns and fibres of their strand of identity[ies] as researcher through their experiences of further developing and mobilising in some ways outcomes from their dissertations. But for Nigel, we see that his researcher identity[ies] seem to have been destabilised during this same time period. He describes frustration at having 'reverted back to type' and framing research activity as quite separate from his 'day job'. This is not surprising, given empirical work which suggests that as teachers respond to identity changes they may only partially resolve dilemmas they encounter in tensions between various forms of identity, and that new forms of self-identity may be more volatile than the old. Burke and Stets (2009) point out the complexity of multiple identities related to multiple agencies in multiple systems of interaction. Multiple agencies may be accomplished within multiple systems of interaction, but there may not be compatibility between these. Burke (1991) points us towards the role conflict and stress that an individual experiences when serving as an agent in incompatible systems. For example, an individual as a teacher and a researcher may find that they pass on information from research that informs their teaching practice. In this case, there is agentic compatibility between the two identities. However, the individual may come across research findings that conflict with their accepted teaching practice or beliefs. Here, there is potential for role conflict: research findings can inspire agency in the role as a researcher but not in the role as a teacher. And we have seen this very example with Nigel, as he has experienced particularly emotional responses to research literature which has challenged some of his values, beliefs and embedded practices as a teacher. But, unlike the teachers in Cain's (2015b) empirical study, who tended to dismiss contradictory research findings, Nigel found ways to reconcile some of these dilemmas and tensions. Thus, that Nigel's identity[ies] as researcher is less secure at this point than those of Jane and Nigel is not entirely unexpected. Despite this, Nigel's determination to return and re-establish himself as researcher suggests that any further [re]formation of his yarns,

strands and fibres of researcher identity[ies] is indeed related to his sense of 'what do I want to become' (Beijaard et al., 2004).

8.2.2 Being a research-active teacher

As was discussed in-depth in the literature review, there is a frequently cited tension in conceptualisations of teaching as an 'evidence-based' or 'research-based' profession (e.g. Lingard & Renshaw, 2010; Philpott, 2017; Wrigley, 2018). For these select teachers in this research project, we can consider that they have developed a sense of 'being' as 'research-based' or 'research-informed' following definitions of research-informed teaching as including the adoption of a researcherly disposition (Lingard & Renshaw, 2010), and as a practice in which old ideas are tested and new ones created (Cain, 2015b) and in which critical scrutiny and evaluation of evidence take into account issues related to power, agency, autonomy and democracy (Evans et al., 2017; Hammersley, 2005). When we consider some of the [re]formation of teacher identity[ies] experienced by the participants, we can see some significant but divergent experiences in this part of their dissertation journey. All three teachers experienced some [re]formation of their teacher identity[ies] at the point at which they submitted their dissertations, although this was perhaps most keenly felt by Nigel who described at length his 'reinvigorated passion' for teaching related to potential application of his own research findings. Both Jane and Karen had experienced some [re]formation of teacher identity[ies] too, although this seemed less emotional than Nigel's experiences. For Karen, she had the opportunity to employ some of her research findings in her case study school and was encouraging colleagues to engage in more critical evaluation of new policies and practices, while Jane described herself as much more reflective as a practitioner and as engaging with research communities through various online platforms. A key difference here is scope of reach; while Karen is already developing her research-influence on others through her role as school improvement advisor, Jane, at this time, is much more focused on her individual development and continuing to develop her own, personal and professional research dispositions. But at the member-check discussion, Jane's [re]formation of yarns and fibres of her teacher strand of identity[ies] seemed more significant than that of Nigel and Karen. This is perhaps in some way related to her emotional responses and experience of conflict with some colleagues who were not only reluctant, but in some cases unwilling, to engage in research-informed dialogue or professional development. Nigel and Karen both seemed to share a similar disillusionment at this stage in their journey, finding that it was challenging to support others in research-informed practice. Nigel also expressed some self-remorse at losing his previous emphasis on research-informed practice although he seemed to recompense for this in some way with his transition from Master's into NPQH study.

This [re]formation of teacher identity[ies] and emerging sense of 'being' as a research-informed teacher is in direct contrast with the 'practice turn' in teacher education and CPD in England in recent years (Mutton et al., 2017; Tatto et al., 2018) which, in turn, has produced a managerial professionalism (Sachs, 2016) with a risk-averse and compliant teaching body (Mayer & Mills, 2021). So it is no surprise, then, to find that each of these participants has experienced some tension and emotional reaction to their [re]formation of teacher identity[ies]. It is also significant that research knowledge is accumulated slowly and logically, with an attitude of principled scepticism, whereas teachers' knowledge tends to be presumed to be up-to-date, practical and instantly implementable (Cain, 2015a; Hammersley, 2005). Herein lies a dilemma: as discussed in the literature review, teachers' knowledge creation, mobilisation and translation through active engagement with critical and emancipatory forms of research is, by its very nature, limited in some ways as it is commonly accepted that in teaching, 'research can never tell teachers what to do' (Wiliam et al., 2004, p.51). Research-informed practice means taking account of the ways in which research-generated knowledge includes elements of various knowledge domains, including situational and tacit craft knowledge, technical knowledge, and knowledge that is gained through critical reflection and reflexivity (Winch, Orchard, et al., 2015). Thus, to engage in, or to 'be', a research informed teacher means acknowledging the ways that research has a cultural role in teaching, providing theoretical lenses that enable practitioners not only to understand problems but also to recognise problems of which they were previously unaware (Biesta, 2007), with the potential to lead teachers towards more activist and democratic forms of professionalism (Sachs, 2016). It is perhaps to be expected, therefore, that each of these teachers would experience some internal and external conflicts in their endeavours to establish themselves as research-informed professionals, in direct contrast with technical and managerial cultures of teaching.

8.3 Belonging as a researcher and an advocate for research-informed teaching

Figure 8.4 Configurational dimensions: 'Belonging'



In this third, and final, part of configurational analysis, we consider the three participants at the 'end' of my research project, around 15 - 18 months after the submission of their dissertations. At this stage we consider the ways in which participants expressed some sense of 'belonging' as researcher and teacher, examining the ways in which they have come to reconcile some of the tensions and contradictions they had experienced, as well as external (and is some cases internal) validation of their selves as researchers.

8.3.1 Validation as researcher AND research-informed teacher

In each of the three semi-structured interviews at the 'end' of the research project, each participant expressed ways in which they had more stable or established identity[ies] as researcher, which had been supported by both internal and external validatory factors. When reviewing detailed transcripts for both Karen and Nigel we can see emphasis not only on the way in which they consider themselves to be more 'authoritative', 'confident' and feeling 'at ease' in dealing with research, but also how they have integrated advocacy for research within their practice and, arguably, within their values and beliefs as a teaching professional. Although Jane seems to be in a position where she has less agency in advocating research for others, even she has secured some sense of researcher identity[ies], framing herself as research-based and research-informed in her professional life.

That all three participants seem to have established a stronger and more stable identity[ies] as researchers 24-27 months after we first met at the beginning of their dissertation year, highlights the importance of time in [re]formation of the yarns, strands and fibres of identity[ies]. As Holland (2001) reminds us,

> Forming an identity on intimate landscapes takes time, certainly months, often years. It takes (and makes) personal experience to organize a self around discourses and practices, with the aid of cultural resources and the behavioural prompting and verbal feedback of others. It takes the heuristic developments of disposition and savoir faire to imagine the world and to identify with the figured world. Conceiving oneself as an agent whose acts count in and account for, the world cannot happen overnight. (p.285)

In this case, we consider the 'figured world' to be the landscape of research and the academy, one which we saw that all participants felt was remote and alien to them in some ways at the beginning of their dissertation journeys. As Holland, and many others, highlight, it is the heuristic experiences of individuals within a social context that affords opportunity for them to develop a social imaginary of 'what do I want to become' when considering the future self and [re]formation of self to achieve this (Beijaard et al., 2004). As we see for each of these three participants, the potential for [re]formation and indeed strengthening of particular strands, yarns and fibres of their identity[ies] is intrinsically

related to the complex interplay between notions of self-authoring and culturally and socially constructed discourses around what it means to be 'teacher' and 'researcher'.

In the field of teacher identity work, Korthagen (2004) considers that teacher identity can be influenced by multiple external dimensions, but makes the claim that, 'fundamental changes in teacher identity do not take place easily: identity change is a difficult and sometimes painful process, and often there seems to be little change at all in how teachers view themselves' (p.85). What we have seen for these three teachers is that they *have* experienced a difficult and painful process, but contrary to Korthagen's assertion, these teachers have fundamentally changed how they view themselves as researchers as well as teachers. And in [re]formation and validation of self as researcher, for each participant we can see a range of internal (self-authoring) and external (socio-cultural discourse) influences.

Greany (2014) draws on the concept of 'isomorphism' to describe the ways in which schools in England have a startling homogeneity of organisational forms and practices. Puttick (2017) goes further and describes three forms of isomorphism which he considers to exist in England's school system: coercive isomorphism, where pressure from others (including those in power) leads to similarity; mimetic isomorphism, where uncertainty, and associated fearful states, lead to similarity; and normative isomorphism, where social trends and closely guarded professional standards lead to similarity. Whatever is at the root, the concern here is that enacting change for teachers and schools is a 'messy process of social change' (Greany, 2014, p.14), and one in which teachers may resist change as they internalise socio-cultural discourse about what it means to be a 'good' teacher. Indeed, it could be considered that the current position of ITE and CPD in England, with the centralised CCF, ECF and NPQ policies and practice, create the conditions in which coercive and normative isomorphism flourish. So, for the three teachers in this research project, to challenge – internally and externally – the powerful discourses that they have encountered about the relationship between research and teaching means that they have had to take significant risks in their internal dialogue about themselves as researchers and teachers.

For Jane, much of this internal validation has been related to re-positioning herself as a research-informed teacher. Unlike Karen and Nigel, at this time she was not continuing with 'academic' research through further study or publications and conferences, but she was using research in her daily work as a teacher and still held a distinct sense of pride at completing her Master's. She expressed desire to continue by publishing articles and engaging in PhD study although ultimately considered that investment of time in this was not compatible with her current career pathway and trajectory. Karen

and Nigel were both also continuing to engage with research in their professional roles, demonstrating a similar internal 'self-authoring' and validation as researcher to Jane. But these two participants had also experienced external validation: Karen, in publication of an article and invitations to speak at conferences, and Nigel in beginning EdD study and being encouraged by senior leaders in his new MAT to develop more research-informed practices and policies.

It is this external validation, which seems particularly powerful and is emphasised in Karen's publication of work and conference presentations, although she is still self-deprecating and reluctant to consider herself as an 'expert' in her field. But such external validation is an essential dimension of linking individual teachers' research and knowledge work to wider narratives and social movements, preventing parochial forms of research which have limited impact on the individual and the context (Goodson and Numan, 2002). As Hargreaves (1999) argues, the challenge is 'to connect the localised narratives of students, teachers and parents within their own schools, to the big pictures or grand narratives of educational or social change that are taking place 'out there' beyond the classroom walls, in ways that directly affect their lives behind them.' (p. 341). But to do so, teachers acting as researchers need to navigate dimensions of identity[ies], agency and institutional as well as socio-cultural structures. And such navigation, as we have seen, also requires a focus on the dynamic interplay between past influences and experiences, engagement with the present, and orientations towards the future (Etelapelto et al., 2013).

As we saw in the literature review, teachers' sense of strong and stable identity[ies] is related to emotional well-being (e.g. Day, 2017; Hanna et al., 2019, Zembylas, 2013). But we need also to recognise that the process of growth as a teacher has a 'multidimensional, idiosyncratic and context specific nature… which entails an interplay between different, and sometimes conflicting, perspectives, beliefs and practices, which are accompanied by development of the teachers' self' Flores & Day (2006, p. 219). So for these teachers, reconciling some of the tensions, conflicts and dilemmas that they experienced, both in relation to 'self-authoring' as a researcher and with their colleagues, has now led to this more well-developed sense of belonging as researcher and research-informed teacher. This aligns with findings from other empirical work highlighted in the literature review, such as that of Dixon and Ward (2015) who found that teachers who successfully completed Master's qualifications developed mind-sets, skill-sets and identity[ies] of teacher as researcher, considering their own research and research skills to be more of a public rather than a private good (Rust, 2009).

The process of re-conceptualising research as a public good is evident in all three teacher's accounts here too, as they all describe an established advocacy for research, supporting others to build research literacy and promoting research-informed policies and practices with their settings. So part of this sense of belonging as a researcher is to shift research from an individual aim and goal, to a more democratic ideal (e.g. Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Such a shift positions these teachers as advocates of what Evetts (2013) would term 'occupational professionalism', where teachers' professional development is focused on intellectual, motivational and attitudinal dimensions, a direct challenge to cultures of 'managerial professionalism' (Sachs, 2016) based on compliance, imposition and self-policing of the profession. Again, we see how these three teachers have negotiated multiple sites of internal and external conflict to validate their identity[ies] as researchers. Clarke (2022) describes cultures of teaching in England where unwavering loyalty, total commitment and compliance are expected to individual organisations and to centrally mandated policies and practices. As he describes it, most teachers manage this expectation through 'self-containment' (p.11), similar to the concept of isomorphism, whereby teachers close in on themselves as a direct response to experiences of tensions and conflict with their own personal, professional and political values and beliefs. Individuals then become more isolated and more prone to self-policing as well as to the policing of others. Clarke (2022) suggests that what is needed is for more individuals to engage with friction – to identify it, to expose it, to challenge it in both internal and external dialogues – as a step in challenging dominant socio-cultural discourses and perceived norms. As he explains, such action in and of itself will not fix education, but will expose current failings and give rise to the potential of new possibilities. These three teachers have engaged in this very process and have now come to situate themselves as researchers and research-informed teachers, advocating for others to re-engage with more political debates and activism within their roles (Beckett, 2016). In doing so, these teachers have uncovered potential for 'progressive imaginary' (Lingard, 2011, p.355) of how teachers and teaching *could* be, and are now beginning to use their own research work and research experiences to theorise a whole world of possibilities for the future (McIntyre, 1993).

8.4 Impact of participation

Friedman (2016) describes how individuals who position themselves as being between two worlds have a unique capacity for reflexivity and self-analysis. It could be considered that we see this here with these three participants, all of whom made reference to the way in which participation in the research project – being 'researched' as well as [re]forming identity[ies] as 'researcher' – had been a meaningful experience which they had articulated at times independently of any prompts from myself as researcher. For example, Jane offered up in her third video the comment that, 'Actually, doing these

videos has helped me reflect and think about doing the research and wanting to go on [continue with research] at some point' (Jane, Chapter 4).

All three participants described enjoying reviewing their videos as had been requested prior to the member check discussion (although Nigel did comment that he wasn't too pleased to see that he hadn't lost any weight!). Karen noted her growth in confidence, and exclaimed at how much she had learned, changed and moved on from her earlier diary entries. Nigel described how, 'one of the nice things about watching the videos and thinking back over my time was just remembering how much I really enjoyed engaging with the research' (Nigel, Chapter 5). When asked, all three felt that they had been as open and honest as they could in their video diaries and in general throughout their participation in the research project. Karen was honest about how she had perhaps held back some things, conscious of my position within the same university department and staff group as her Master's tutors and supervisor:

> '…had I been doing it for me, yeah, I would have added more things. Obviously, there is an awareness of your audience so there were a couple of times in it where I just felt like I came to a complete bang, and I don't know whether I said that or not, where I just thought I can't do it. So there's probably stuff like that I probably wouldn't reveal as much, you know, and also, I'm quite mindful that you're part of the university and so there may be things that I would have said to myself that I wouldn't say to you' (Karen, Chapter 6)

But she, as well as Jane and Nigel, described how they felt a sense of trust in me as a researcher and that they could be open and honest to a greater extent than maybe they had expected. Perhaps some of this trust in the relationship was founded on shared experiences and my history as a teacher engaging in part-time Master's study, as well as my current position as a teacher educator engaged in part-time doctoral study. There was a sense of symmetry there, on which Nigel commented, 'I found it very easy to just be completely honest. And I suppose, Amanda, I'm just wondering whether part of that is because you're going through a research process yourself. Whether that would have been different with someone who wasn't? I don't know' (Nigel, Chapter 5).

It was not just the opportunity to reflect back on their dissertation as whole which had been thought provoking. All three participants described that they had put aside time to reflect and sometimes make notes prior to recording a video diary, and that this process had been useful throughout the dissertation. For Jane, it meant helping her to keep on track with progress in her dissertation so she had something to talk about at the next diary request. Nigel described how '…being able to, or kind of – I wouldn't say having to – but knowing that I needed to stop and reflect and talk really added to the experience ' (Nigel, Chapter 6). And Nigel, following our 12+ month follow-up interview, requested

that I liaise with the Master's tutor team to encourage other cohorts of students to engage in a similar kind of self-reflection during their dissertation year.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), in their review of teacher identity literature, tell us that a teacher's realisation and actualisation of their own identity can be empowering. We are well aware that personal histories and life experiences are significant dimensions in influencing teachers' perceptions of themselves and their identity[ies] (e.g. Goodson, 1980, 1992, 2003) and the way that teachers 'import data' (Goodson, 1980, p.74) from evolving experiences to inform their accounts and understandings of the self, and subsequently adding to, or shedding some of, the yarns, strands and fibres of identity[ies]. There is correlation here with Bakhtin's (1981) vision of self-fashioning, which Holland et al. (1998) term 'space of authoring' (p.169), a concept of conflictual and continuing dialogic inner speech where active identities are under constant [re]formation. The role of dialogue in this concept of identity is clear, as exposure to the language and actions of others influences self-authoring or self-fashioning – what is thought possible and, equally, what is left out or what is perceived as impossible. As Bakhtin explains, the language with which to author or fashion the self only become one's own when the individual shapes this vocabulary and discourse with their own intention and accent, establishing a series of complex interrelationships which underpin [re]formation of the individual's identity[ies]. In this research project, therefore, we can see how each participant's engagement with dialogue – although in isolation during the video diaries – around teaching and researching has perhaps influenced some experiences of 'self-authoring' or 'self-fashioning'. Being prompted to engage with reflection on their evolving experiences, as well as being prompted to engage in inner and external dialogue using the language of academic research, could thus be considered as influential to an extent in their experiences of [re]forming yarns, strands and fibres of identity[ies] as researcher. Would such [re]formation have been experienced by these three teachers without engagement in this research project? It is not possible to deduce causality, but from their descriptions and reflection on participating in the research we can expose some correlation between what Lefebvre (2017) would describe as opportunity to pause, patrol and reflect on lived experience with some kind of disruption to the usual patterns and future directions of their personal, professional and political lives and identity[ies].

Chapter Nine: Conclusion and Next Steps

9.0 Summary of the research project

In this empirical research project, an embedded case study, I set out to expose and explore teachers' lived experiences as they engage in and complete Master's level dissertation research, as well as their experiences as both teacher and researcher in the 12 – 15 months following successful completion of their Master's in education degrees. The aim was to scrutinise, individually and collectively, each of these teachers' experiences through a lens of identity[ies], considering how their engagement with critical, intellectual forms of research and knowledge work could [re]form their understandings of what it meant to be a teacher and a researcher. These experiences seemed particularly relevant given that these teachers, in the English system, are subject to public, policy and political discourses which tend to position teaching as a 'semi-profession' (Menter & Flores, 2021). As a result, public perceptions and shared beliefs about teachers and teachers' work tend to coalesce around craft and technical dimensions, alienating and, at times, disregarding the potential for teachers to actively lead and produce valid research or be considered as legitimate creators of new knowledge and theory (Cain, 2015b; Clarke, 2022; Fricker, 2007). The intended outcome of this research project was not to produce a 'universal truth' or 'grand narrative' (Yin, 2018) which could be generalised across *all* teachers in England engaging in Master's level or equivalent forms of research; rather, it was to build rich and detailed understandings of the *meanings* of experiences as teacher and researcher for these three participants.

9.1 Response to research questions

I identified an overarching research question with three sub-questions:

What experiences during and after their Master's level dissertation do teachers describe as significant?

a) What is the significance of these experiences in relation to individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' (after Hattie, 2004) of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
b) How do these experiences affect the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies]?
c) What, if any, experiences of the [re]formation of individuals' personal, professional and political 'yarns' of teacher and researcher identity[ies] are common across participants?

In response to questions a) and b) I created narratives and detailed transcripts of each participants' experiences at particular moments in time. Dubbed 'episodes' (Ricœur, 1980) and presented as

'chapters' in a first-person narrative, these rich stories captured the essence of each participants' experience in such a way that the deeply emotional affective and cognitive dimensions of their experiences as related to identity[ies] became visible. In each of the findings chapters, I constructed a representation of each participant's experiences utilising my conceptual and analytical framework which represents identity[ies] by extending the metaphor of a rope. In these chapters, I systematically uncovered each participant's experiences as a teacher and as a researcher, examining the extent to which these dual strands of identity[ies] became intertwined or separated and frayed in some way at particular moments in time. Following this, observation on the potential [re]formation of each participants' identity[ies] over time was created. This commentary took into account the temporal nature of participants' experiences, considering that each episode of the research project was a space in which their past, present and future experiences could be 'grasped together' (Ricœur, 1980). This 'configurational' dimension provided insights into how each individual participant experienced [re]formation of their personal, professional and political yarns and fibres of their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher over the course of the research project.

To respond to research question c), I subsequently explored all three participants' experiences as 'embedded sub-units' of the holistic case study (Yin, 2018). In the first discussion chapter, I identified components of shared experiences within each episode related to personal, professional and political yarns and fibres of the three participants' identity[ies] as teacher and researcher. Significant themes were highlighted and addressed, such as experiences of personal struggles and emotional responses linked to participants' experiences of emotional labour; the importance of an academic community and academic spaces in which participants could begin to, and sustain, conceptualisation of the self as researcher and 'academic' in some way; and experiences of 'unwelcome truths' in participants' practice, research and professional relationships with colleagues and senior leaders. A summary of the themes coded across all participants can be seen in Table 11.1. The potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated public policy responses in England were also highlighted, both in terms of these participants' experiences as teachers and researchers as well as with reference to its influence on the outcomes of this research project.

Table 9.1 Summary of themes for each participant, ordered from most to least frequent.

Karen	**Nigel**	**Jane**
25: Self-concept as researcher	27: Emotional labour	24: Self-concept as researcher
13: I'm not a researcher AND Emotional labour	26: Self-concept as researcher	17: Emotional labour
	11: Research is not valued in the profession	13: Social justice orientation
12: Research is not valued in the profession AND Teachers as technicians AND MA changes thinking	10: Social justice orientation	8: MA changes thinking AND Developing as a teacher
	9: MA changes thinking	
	6: Application of own research	6: Research is not valued in the profession AND Teachers as technicians AND I'm not a researcher AND Functional work
11: Policy OR political critique	5: Teachers as technicians AND Advocacy for research	
10: Functional work		
8: Advocacy for research	4: I'm not a researcher AND Developing as a teacher	
6: Application of own research AND Academic community		5: Advocacy for research
	3: Academic community AND Policy OR political critique	3: Application of own research
2: Social justice orientation		2: Policy OR political critique AND Academic community
0: Developing as a teacher	0: Functional work	

In the second discussion chapter, we saw how these three participants shared some experiences of [re]formation and, in places, transformation of their identity[ies] over the course of this research project. This analysis over time gave insight into how participants' cumulative experiences gave rise to [re]formation of their identity[ies] as teacher and researcher. This is not to claim causality across and between each episodic dimension in a linear fashion from beginning to end, nor that the experience of [re]formation of identity[ies] can be homogenised across all groups of teachers. Instead, a 'grasping together' (Ricœur, 1980) of various themes and strands of narratives gave particular insights which led us to consider these individuals as having some shared experiences of becoming, being and belonging as teachers and researchers.

9.2 Unique contribution to knowledge

At the beginning of this research, I considered how a great deal of current literature in the field of teachers' identity[ies] has tended to separate and segment the multiple facets of teachers' work and experiences, neglecting to pay attention to the complex way in which these facets are interrelated and intertwined. By extending Hattie's (2004) metaphor of a rope, and influenced by connected concepts of teachers' identity work from key literature and theories of narrativity, I came to construct a new framework, the teacher-researcher identity[ies] rope model, which is both conceptual and analytic. It is conceptual in the way that it specifies and defines key dimensions – or, as related to the rope metaphor, strands, yarns and fibres – of an individual's identity[ies] for the purposes of research. These dimensions subsequently inform research questions and research design to allow systematic data collection. It is analytic in the way it sets out broad *a priori* themes for interrogation as well as bringing together both episodic and configurational dimensions to construct a holistic picture of participants' individual and collective experiences of [re]formation of identity[ies].

In the research project presented here, the adaptation and application of this framework has afforded unique insights as we have been able to observe, investigate and build a profound understanding of three teachers' personal, professional and political learning experiences. The uniqueness of the framework means that we delve into not just individual events or specific moments for each participant, but we have been able to grasp together their individual and cumulative experiences over multiple facets of time, place and space. Complexity is welcomed as the framework enables us to analyse and discuss their personal, professional and political histories, values, beliefs and potential for future trajectories.

A further key contribution to knowledge is presented through my findings and discussion, where priority is given to teacher's voices as they come to situate themselves within a complex landscape of teaching and research, with a gateway provided by their participation and engagement with the Master's in Education programme. What we have learned is that teachers' engagement in Master's level education – but most predominantly within the research-focussed dissertation year – creates a site for potentially transformational professional learning. Transformational in the way that individual teachers undergo significant [re]formation of identity[ies] as becoming, being and belonging as a teacher and researcher. But also transformational in the way that individual teachers then become advocates and agents to encourage and enable others in their professional and academic communities to undergo similar experiences. Here I have highlighted an ecological perspective of transformational professional learning experiences, demonstrating the intricate web of interrelationships and

interdependencies across multiple sites and multiple actors that predicate the potential for transformative rather than transmissive learning experiences for teachers.

Ultimately, the contribution to knowledge summarised here rejects a linear conceptualisation of [re]formation or transformation of identity[ies] as teacher and researcher; what we have learned from these teachers is that interaction between and response to a range of significant episodes and experiences led to both the incorporation of new strands, yarns and fibres of identity[ies] and to simultaneous shedding of some of the old. Experiences of [re]formation and even transformation of identity[ies] involves interaction between past, present and future possibilities, an ontological perspective of identity [re]formation and transformational professional learning as a set of complex interactions in perpetual motion. In extending this knowledge in the future, this conceptual and analytic framework could be adapted and applied across professions, particularly those in social sciences such as nursing, social work and policing. Future research could further our understanding of transformative professional learning across multiple fields, through systematic investigation of the complex relationships between critical and intellectual knowledge work, professional learning, critical research activity and [re]formation of individual and collective identity[ies].

9.3 Conclusions and recommendations: notions of becoming, being, belonging

The summaries of conclusions and related recommendations here further present key insights and contributions to knowledge. The experiences of becoming, being and belonging as a teacher and a researcher, represented here as [re]formation of identity[ies], are clearly temporal, situational and relational. These attributes relate to the tenets of identity theory as discussed in the literature review, where I uncovered some of the complexities of the relationship between culture, society and the self. This work provided three interrelated assumptions around identity upon which the conceptual and analytical framework for this research project were constructed: that culturally and socially constructed discourses, practices and artefacts are living tools with which individuals interact in order to [re]form a sense of self; that the self is embedded in social practice and social relationships; and that sites of the self are plural and are not stable over time (Holland et al., 1998).

Existing literature on teachers' identity[ies] and on teachers as researchers has tended to separate these two dimensions and address teachers' experiences within two very separate spheres. Teachers' professional identity work has tended to coalesce around how beginning and early career teachers establish a professional identity or the personal and professional qualities and traits of veteran teachers who sustain long careers in the profession (e.g. Beijaard et al., 2004; Carrillo & Flores, 2018; Day, 2017; Rodrigues & Mogarro, 2019). Much of this work also correlates [re]formation of teachers'

professional identity[ies] with national and international markers of 'teacher quality' which, as we have seen, has become a site of highly politicised discourse in recent years, in England as in other Anglosphere nations (Darling-Hammond, 2021; Gore et al., 2023; Mockler, 2022b). Similarly, work on teachers' relationships with research tends to position teachers within three distinct domains: teachers as receivers of others' research work, which is in some way applied to their daily practice (as described in policy and practice within current ITTE and CPD curricula); teachers engaging in 'action research' in their classrooms to improve or celebrate some element of their practice (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015); and some forms of teachers' research as less valuable in terms of rigour and reliability compared to academic or research-institution (e.g. EEF) led research work (Wyse et al., 2018).

Current and recent literature which considers teachers' experiences as simultaneously teacher and researcher, and which unpacks the meaning of these experiences in relation to an individual's identity[ies], is very sparse. Although there is extensive literature that examines the history, theory and practice of teacher research, insufficient attention has been paid to the way in which teachers learn, develop and sustain a critical research stance (Daly, Davidge-Smith, et al., 2020) or that reports self-dialogue of teachers' identity[ies] struggles (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). In response to these gaps in existing literature, and the research questions posed at the beginning of this research project, three inter-related conclusions and associated responses are now presented which offer in further detail the unique contribution to knowledge of this thesis.

9.3.1 Becoming

My first conclusion is that teachers who actively engage in critical and intellectual forms of research face challenges and barriers in relation to their sense of 'becoming' a researcher while sustaining their identity[ies] as a teacher. These barriers can play out in personal and affective dimensions, sometimes expressed as painful, uncomfortable and destabilising.

As we have seen for the teachers in this research project, prior to beginning their Master's level dissertation research none of them considered themselves to be a researcher. Instead, they conceptualised the researcher as 'other': typically a white, middle-class male employed in a university or an individual employed by a large-scale research organisation such as the EEF. When we take into account that these teachers were already critically engaged with research through their Master's study, it could be considered that completing a higher degree or engaging in active forms of research is therefore beyond the social imaginary for many teachers. Here we see the significant impact of

social, policy and political discourse whereby teachers are positioned to 'receive' the research of others and apply 'best practice'. Therefore, to engage in critical, intellectual and active forms of research is to diverge from established professional identity[ies] and spaces; teachers who seek to build a sense of critical research literacy also tend to align with notions of critical pedagogy and social justice (Evans et al., 2017; Giroux, 2011).

Beijaard et al. (2004) tell us that experiences of identity [re]formation are not just around 'who am I at this moment' but also need to include 'what do I want to become'. But for teachers who do act to 'become' researcher we have seen some arising tensions in continuing and sustaining a stable sense of self as a teacher. Teachers may uncover existing research literature that challenges their long-established and embedded beliefs and values in their professional practice or personal and/or political viewpoints. Teachers may come to problematise the status quo or become aware of existing systems and hierarchies of power and decision making which highlight their lack of agency or autonomy in their professional role. These issues may be more prominent for women in the teaching profession; even for white women, who, in terms of sheer numbers, dominate the profession in England, there seems to be a glass ceiling in relation to career progression beyond middle-leadership. As we saw for Jane in this research project, the intersection between class and gender was particularly acute; therefore, it could be assumed that further intersectionality creates more extensive barriers for teachers in being motivated to, and acting upon their motivations to, become critical, intellectual and active researchers.

In response to this first conclusion, I suggest that what is needed are systematic approaches at local, regional and national levels to encourage more teachers to engage in higher degrees and active forms of practitioner research, as well as to re-position research as a universal site for significant professional development. Within the locus of my agency, at the university where this research project was set, actions have already been put into place to address this issue. These actions include co-developing PGCert programmes, which are designed to be more accessible for full-time teachers; providing asynchronous micro-credentials through a dedicated CPD platform for teachers; and establishing an informal practitioner research group supported by peers and academic partners. A longer-term project has been established to increase research literacy in all ITTE programmes, recognising that student teachers require explicit support in developing some sense of self as a teacher AND researcher in their early career. But without wider systematic change at a national level to re-conceptualise teaching as a more learned profession, and to tackle the perceived theory-practice divide in teaching, many teachers will continue to express indifference to research and remain oblivious to its possibilities.

9.3.2 Being

My second conclusion is that for teachers to establish a self-concept - to 'be' a researcher or a research-active teacher - requires the opportunity to inhabit a sustained community of practice, for example, through journeys into and across multiple academic communities of people, places, spaces and artefacts.

The concepts of the 'authoring self' and 'space of authoring' (Holland et al, 1998) tell us that individuals can and do awake new possibilities for becoming and being. But the process of self-authoring is not a linear and homogenous pathway; each individual forges a different journey into and within a [new] community. Therefore, we could assume that structural and technical, and physical and abstract, supports are required to enable teachers to undergo heuristic development which leads to a more established sense of 'being' a researcher or a research-active teacher. As the teachers in this research project demonstrated, having support from a network of peers, colleagues, tutors and researchers was particularly significant in helping them establish some sense of ease in inhabiting academic spaces. These spaces included the university as well as virtual and in-person conferences, forums and lectures or workshops. But when their network of academic others was lost during Covid-19, it became apparent that, for these teachers, working in isolation with brief forays into virtual worlds was not enough to 'self-author' their identity[ies] as researchers. It could be concluded that continuous interplay between internal and external authoring of the self over a prolonged period of time is necessary for teachers to undergo more fundamental changes in how they position themselves as researchers.

Herein lies a conundrum: for teachers who engage in higher degrees or active forms of research, it is typically the academic institution that mediates the individual's journey into and within the academic or research community. However, as we have seen, relying solely on the academic provider to mediate this access for teachers is not enough to secure 'being' a researcher. Rather, what is needed is sustained access to physical and virtual academic spaces where the individual can re-negotiate their researcher identity[ies] in relationship with a multitude of actors. This multiplicity of sites, spaces and relationships can help to remove the perceived divide between academic and practitioner research, giving more value to teachers' voices and knowledge work and reducing the potential of individual teachers 'passing' in academic and research spaces (Fordham, 1993).

We have learned from the teachers in this research project that establishing a sense of self and 'being' a researcher also requires some reconceptualisation of what it means to 'be' a teacher. Sustained

engagement in critical intellectual forms of research work relies on teachers also engaging in critical reflection related to the moral values and purposes of teaching and researching – and how these two activities are intrinsically intertwined. As a result, teachers who are also researchers may come to re-focus on the meaning rather than the action of their work – the 'why' rather than the 'what' and 'how'. And as we saw for these teachers, a sharpening of the moral and ethical dimensions of their work also included rediscovering their social justice motivations and recentring their work on making a difference to the students, families and communities that they serve.

In response to this second conclusion, I suggest that there is significant work to do in England in opening up and sustaining academic and research spaces for teachers. This work needs to be actioned on at least two levels. Firstly, teachers need open and supported access to broad communities of practice of academics, researchers, and research active teachers. Although some of this work has been evident in recent years, for example through ResearchEd, BrewEd, edu-Twitter, and the work of the Chartered College of Teaching, more needs to be done to enable access, especially for those teachers who may feel disenfranchised in current systems. Academics have a particular role to play here too, in securing greater dialogue with, and co-development of, research work with schools and practitioners in ways that help to challenge the perceived theory-practice divide. Secondly, working cultures and practices for teachers in their school settings needs to provide adequate space for teachers' research work. This requires some reconfiguring of understanding of CPD as serving both institutional and individual interests and as working with research as a messy process, but one which ultimately leads to more meaningful school change and reform.

9.3.3 Belonging

My third conclusion is that without significant systemic change – theoretical, social and cultural – teachers will only experience short-lived and fragile episodes of 'belonging' as researchers.

Burke and Stets (2009) tell us that new forms of self-identity may be more volatile than the old. In this research project it was only in the final episode of these teachers' experiences that we detected some sense of 'belonging' as a researcher, and at this time individuals' identity[ies] as researcher seemed fairly fragile. While some aspects of belonging had been internalised, these teachers still related to and relied on continuing validation from others; for example, Nigel through beginning and sustaining doctoral study and Karen through publication of her research work and ongoing support from one of her Master's tutors in role as academic partner. Perhaps a more sustained change and sense of belonging could be seen in these teachers' increasingly established sense of self as a research-active

teacher. This re-positioning of the professional self encompassed significant changes to an 'inquiry habit of mind' (van Katwijk et al., 2019), demonstrating a commitment to continued critical and intellectual research work as related to these teachers' professional roles. Some 12 to 15 months after completing their Master's degrees, all three teachers reported an increased sense of agency and autonomy not only to combine research and teaching, but also to reconcile conflict between research findings and teaching practice and vice-versa.

Richard Pring (2015), along with many others in the field, asserts that theory and practice are in continual dialogue with one another: theory can only be constructed in constant reference to practice, and practice without theory is diminished. In relation to teachers and teachers' work, therefore, a praxeological epistemology is required whereby teachers' critical research and knowledge creation is legitimised beyond the individual's immediate professional context. But this would require a significant re-positioning of teachers' knowledge and research work away from practical and craft knowledge traditions and into an integrated knowledge tradition, where research, theory and practice together form the bedrock of teachers' work (Furlong, 2020).

In response to this third conclusion, I posit that we need to challenge deficit models of practitioner-led or classroom-based research. That does not mean that the attributes and characteristics of high-quality educational research, such as those promoted by BERA and other societies, should not be applicable for teachers, but that there should be recognition of the way in which teachers' research activities can be highly valuable *because of* their localised and context heavy status. But to do so would require co-ordinated change from multiple policy-makers along with leaders of educational research and learned societies. As Oancea (2016) points out, currently in educational research, as in many other fields in education, there exists a 'bewitching' duality whereby simplistic notions are espoused and individuals are forced to 'pick a side', e.g. positivist or interpretivist, empirical or philosophical, practical or theoretical. Thus, our language and narratives limit the nuance of our understandings of research and researchers as multi-faceted and inter-related. A culture which recognises, acknowledges and celebrates variation in educational research activity – including teachers' own forms of research – has potential to engender greater connections between schools, universities and other research bodies; to re-position teaching as a learned profession and to incorporate a greater sense of belonging for teachers in academic and research communities. This last point is of great importance: individuals who position themselves between two spaces – in this case teaching and researching – may have greater capacity for reflexivity, critical analysis and mobilising meaningful change which will be for the good of all in the education system.

9.4 Strengths and limitations

A research project which sets out to explore individuals' experiences in relation to multiple aspects of their identity[ies] was always going to require a sensitive approach and a great deal of trust from participants both in myself as a researcher and in the whole project. I have also been keen to acknowledge and consider my positionality as a researcher as the extent of my own experiences of relocating myself within and across dual identity[ies] as teacher and researcher had potential to influence my interpretation and analysis of others' experiences.

It requires a careful balancing act for any researcher to establish a trusting relationship with participants and to collect an adequate range of data for meaningful analysis and for relevant conclusions to be drawn and put forward. The potential dangers of using a priori themes along with research interviews include the risk of the researcher steering content and direction, and possibly only identifying for analysis key facets of data which align with the researcher's pre-existing values and beliefs. I was aware that at the beginning of this research project I had invested too much of myself in the research design and research questions, and subsequently took very conscious and explicit actions to 'step away' during the process of data collection and analysis. This can be seen in the open-ended prompts and questions which underpinned each data collection point. I was also careful to keep a research diary in which I recorded my own experiences and responses so that I had space to collect and regard my own identity[ies] at each episode in a way that did not occlude participants' voices and prevent or inhibit them from leading the research. But responses, when participants were asked about their openness in this project, were pleasing for to hear in the way they described their trust in me as a researcher, as well as how they identified with me as someone experiencing a parallel journey in my role as (former) teacher trying to establish my place as a researcher. It is perhaps this unique relationship that I developed with each participant that would make this research project difficult to replicate closely for another researcher.

The research design was carefully constructed so that teachers' voices were at the fore, while robustness and rigour were retained. The mixture of video diaries and semi-structured interviews enabled the collection of a rich data set. The inclusion of a detailed member-check interview and a follow-up with each participant 12+ months after completion of their Master's degrees could be considered to enhance the validity of the findings. The power of the narratives presented and analysed in this thesis derives not from 'faithful representations of the past world' (Riessman, 2008, p.6) but in the careful co-construction and interpretation of individual experiences.

While I can report confidently on the findings from these three participants, I cannot claim generalisability across all teachers, nor across all institutions offering part-time Master's in education programmes. But I can, and have, enacted change at a local (institution) level which is intended to have positive impact on supporting teacher-research activity within my university partnership. Despite the self-selectivity of the participants and the small sample size, there are other key findings which, as highlighted in the conclusions and responses above, can be used to inform decision making or serve as foundations for further research. In this research project, I only managed to capture a very fragile and potentially temporary sense of belonging as researchers for these three teachers; perhaps with a longer time frame and a greater sample size a more detailed understanding of how to sustain the tentative [re]formation of identity[ies] reported here could be garnered.

This study set out to place teachers at the heart of constructing stories of their experiences of becoming, being and belonging as a researcher; my intention was to give voice to their stories and to offer up a new understanding of these experiences through a lens of identity[ies] and I believe that this has been achieved.

9.5 Future research

Future dissemination of this research project is planned, through a sequence of journal articles, conference papers and a book proposal. The unique stories from this project, some auto-ethnography work on the parallel between my own experiences and those of my participants, and more formal exploration of video diaries and narrative methods are all subjects that have been highlighted for publication.

The conclusions and recommendations offered here from this research project also put forward potential avenues for exploration through further research. One aspect of this, as identified in strengths and limitations, would be to replicate a similar study over a longer period of time and with a larger group of participants to ascertain greater breadth of understanding in how self-concept and belonging as a researcher can be and is sustained for those who continue to manage a dual role as teacher and researcher. This kind of work also aligns with other research, which interrogates the retention and attrition of experienced teachers and may provide further insight into potential forms of professional development for teachers that are side-lined or un-imagined in the current policy and practice contexts.

I am pleased that some of the tentative outcomes of this thesis have already been recognised; I have been awarded a UCET Travel Grant for AY23/24 to engage in a nascent international study of teachers and teacher educators across England, Sweden and Denmark. The project has a working title, 'Place

and space: an international reconnaissance of teachers' and teacher educators' perceptions on critical intellectual and academic work'. The aim of this initial work is to explore parallel experiences of teachers' and teacher educators' engagement in critical intellectual and research aspects of their work. This work is motivated by a combination of the voices of the teachers in this research project, my own experience as teacher educator and researcher, and the effect that reforms to ITTE and CPD in England over the last four years particularly have had on our collective professional identity[ies]. Although drawing upon the centralised policies which serve to "define the space" in which critical academic work takes place in England, the study will look beyond national borders to give voice to teachers and teacher educators working across Europe with a view to identifying potential places and spaces for action which creates greater potential for both professions to feel belonging as researchers. Further funding is now being sought to develop the scope of this project beyond initial reconnaissance.

9.6 Final thoughts

Beauchamp & Thomas (2009) provide some words that help me encapsulate my intention, experience and outcomes from this research project. As they put it, we should aim to

> …comprehend the close connection between identity and the self, the role of emotion in shaping identity, the power of stories and discourse in understanding identity, the role of reflection in shaping identity, the link between identity and agency, the contextual factors that promote of hinder the construction of identity, and ultimately the responsibility of teacher education programs to create opportunities for the exploration of new and developing teacher identities (p.176)

In my role as teacher educator, and with a more established sense of belonging as a researcher and academic myself, I uphold my responsibility to create opportunities for beginning and experienced teachers. I also recognise that there are parallel experiences and opportunities for colleagues who transition professional worlds from schools and classrooms to become teacher educators and academics. The learning that I can take forward from the voices of Karen, Jane and Nigel will, I hope, be influential in providing places, spaces and opportunities for a generation of teachers and teacher educators to become, to be, and to belong as researchers in and across existing and new academic communities.

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Appendix A: Karen's Story

Chapter 1: An introduction to Karen.

December 2019, a face-to-face meeting in my office on campus.

Karen as an educator

I've been in education for more than 40 years unbelievably. Initially as a teacher, then I was a head teacher for 20 years in three different schools, and I also spent three of those years as a school advisor for the local authority. I retired from headship in 2014 but continued to work as school improvement advisor, consultant for a trust and I also facilitate NPQH and NPQ courses. I'm still heavily involved in teaching and working with teachers. Now I work with ten primary schools across the city, mostly in disadvantaged areas of the city, supporting teachers and groups of children, looking at how we can improve outcomes.

Starting MA study

I'd always said that when I have more time, when I retired from full time work, I would do a further degree. It's something that's always been there, that desire to study further. I wouldn't necessarily have thought I would do a Master's in education, actually, although that would have always obviously been an option. I even did a postgraduate diploma, years ago in the 80s, while I was a young teacher and working full-time and I really enjoyed that. I studied two evenings a week and completed my work in school holidays, but at that time I had a less responsible job and no family. As my career progressed, I found I was working 65-70 hours a week, and I just couldn't find the time to study on top of that. I know some people manage it, but I needed that time outside of work to focus on things that were nothing to do with education! So, while I wanted to do further study, I knew I needed to be not working 70 hours a week if I was going to do it. And then, because of all that time taken up with the day job, I suppose further study just dropped of my radar- it became something I didn't really think about anymore.

But then I got the opportunity, actually through my work on School Direct with the trust, to do a postgraduate certificate in coaching and mentoring with a reduced fee. And I thought, ooh, you know what, that sounds interesting. That gave me 60 credits and really set me off on the journey: I decided that I would do the two further years and complete the full Master's. Because I'm retired from headship and working in consultancy doing this Master's is very much for me, it's not about it leading to anything. Although my husband did say to me the other day, you know, it might lead you to new

things, but I've never really thought of it like that. For me, it's been a purely personal ambition to engage in some research and do some academic study.

Teachers as researchers

Thinking about myself as a teacher, I have a strong feeling that we don't do enough research in the profession. We don't seem to spend time researching things, thinking about them, reading around what we do – well, I didn't, anyway. Sometimes I'd go along and listen to other people present or I'd get recommendations of books and I'd just dip in and read bits of them. I think teachers haven't really engaged in research for a whole raft of reasons. The two that stand out to me are that research isn't given status and prominence in the profession, and the second is time. Generally, research isn't seen as terribly important in school culture and so it just isn't given the time. Some teachers think about it as another world: it feels as if research is so far removed from that practical day to day stuff in the classroom. I think it's a shame that we seem to have set the academic bar so low for teachers. I'd love to see teaching become a Master's level profession. We see so many leave the profession within five years and maybe if we invested a bit more in professional development, we'd solve some of the retention problems for teachers.

Becoming a researcher

Over the 40 years that I was a teacher I've seen so many initiatives being wheeled in and out of schools. And really, some of them, I feel, as a profession, we've just gone along with it without every saying, hang on a minute, what are we actually doing here? We haven't really asked, how do we know this works, can we look at this more deeply, or thought, maybe we shouldn't throw ourselves into this just because everyone else is doing it at the moment. But I think, now I'm doing the Master's, it's changed how I think about all of this. Now I want to know more, I want to dig more, I want to think more deeply about things: I want to research properly.

Looking back to my headships, I'd say I'd certainly be more critical. I'd know to look at the background of an initiative and think about the contributors and the research that has gone into it. I'd be much more mindful of how an initiative is implemented, checking whether it would actually make a difference rather than just doing it to get improved school results. I think differently now about the whole way education is shaped. For example, the new Ofsted framework has everyone in school now re-designing their curriculum and preparing for subject deep dives, just because Amanda Spielman says so… To her credit, she has put forward a research document to support what Ofsted are asking for, but I'm now straight into that research, looking at what might work, what bits might not be

suitable. I'd never have done that before. Was it because of time or because I think differently now? Both, I think.

Perhaps the biggest change in me has been because studying the Master's has been hugely different to any kind of professional development I've done before. I guess the main thing has been it seemed much harder. Previously I could just knock out a presentation or a report, but I quickly became aware in the first module that I couldn't do that now! I've had to really engage with reading, going through several times, and writing notes and making connections – it's really been on another level. I suppose most professional development I've done before has been very practical – here's a thing, go back to school and do it. So, the whole way of working on the Master's is totally different.

At the moment, I'd consider myself a novice researcher. I've found some parts of the dissertation difficult to get to grips with, especially the literature review and managing ethics. But my supervisor and course leader have been really supportive, and I've just thrown myself into it. I enjoy getting absorbed in my Master's work and I hope that, by the end of the dissertation, I've got some outcomes that will be useful for the school I'm working with. They're involved in my research project and having an outcome, being able to make a difference with my dissertation, feels important to me at this point.

Chapter 2: Video diary, February 2020

I'm going to tell you about my dissertation, basically, about what's happened so far.

I did my ethics clearance, and the form was a lot more detailed than I'd imagined and it took me a lot longer than I thought. It needed to be very comprehensive, with all the parental letters and scripts for the pupils and all that kind of thing. Anyway, I'm glad that's been done. Fortunately I got good help from my supervisor and the ethics application was accepted straightaway so I was able to proceed with my first data collection in January. That went well and was really interesting and quite revealing *but* I now feel all concerned because I've got all this data: I've got my recordings, I've got my observations, I've got my checklists, but I haven't dedicated the time for looking into that yet. I've kind of parked it for a while which bothers me a bit. I've moved on to my literature review because I feel that's something that I can get started with. Well, I'd already done some of that so all I've been doing at this stage is reading, looking at various relevant documentation and making notes. I've gone through my diary for this month and tried to and set aside clear times for when I can get on with it. I'm seeing my tutor again soon and hopefully I'll have some more of literature written up.

I feel concerned that I'm not further on than I am, which I guess is fairly typical. So that's where I am really, I'm getting on with my reading *but* I really feel like I want to spend longer chunks of time on it and that's what I'm finding difficult. I'm still working part time in my various roles so in a typical week I might have one day at home, and then half a day in a school, and then later in the week another day and a half working in a different school. Some of that time is obviously spent prepping for my school work or writing up. I try and dedicate one day each week to doing my MA work but it doesn't always happen, it doesn't always work. What I'd prefer is a dedicated week or something so I've earmarked time in the Easter holidays where I really want to crack on. I think time is one of the things I'm finding really difficult, and if I'm finding it difficult, when I only work part-time, goodness knows how full-time teachers are finding it. It is a struggle.

In terms of what I'm learning, we had a really good session, from Claire, on data collection, so I know what to look at when I come to that bit. That was really helpful. I'm *really* interested in the subject that I'm researching. A lot of schools that I'm working with are talking about curriculum revision and the knowledge rich curriculum, and my work on looking at metacognition and children's learning is directly linked. The cognitive science element is directly linked to curriculum design and implementation so I'm finding that I'm talking about that a lot more. This dissertation work really is impacting on me as a professional which is great.

I have to do two lots of data collection so the other lot will be in the summer term. What I need to do is get my lit review done so I've got that secure base there, so I know what the literature is saying but obviously referring it to my study. I need to go through the data I have got, carefully, and draw things out from that. Maybe I'll begin to write my introduction and my methodology section as well. What I really don't want to do is end up doing it in the summer holidays: I want it to be done by July. My second data collection is May or June so I'm really hoping that will be the case.

I've been very well supported by my supervisor who has given me things to read is and is very willing to give up his time. That's been great, as well as the really good support I've had from Claire and the quality of the things we've done in sessions with her. But I feel this dissertation is not something that can easily be dipped in and out of. It needs sustained time and that's what I'm finding difficult within my working calendar at the moment especially as I was away part of half-term too.

I hope that's alright. I really don't like looking at myself on video! Ok, cheers, bye!

Chapter 3a: Covid phone call, April 2020

I'm fine, I'm fine, thank you. Very strange time and all that but you know I'm well which is important. It's very strange, very strange and it changes all the time. I think in that first week I just found it really hard to process, it felt unreal I think. But it's starting to feel a bit more normal now. Anyway.

Initially we had information from the university saying these are your options and one was that you could change to a major study. And I thought, I really don't want to do that, I'd planned and collected my first lot of data and trawled through it. Or, it said, collect your data by other means. So I thought that's what I'll try to do. I needed to get on to it quickly because my second data collection was going to take place after the Easter holidays, probably early May. But I was very mindful of the fact that, by then, the children will have forgotten about what we were doing because it's all connected to the classroom. I thought, right, I need to do this as soon as possible so I contacted the head of the school. He was very supportive and he said he would be happy for me to see if we could do some remote interviews . Obviously I can't do the observations but I can do interviews and a survey. He was happy for me to make contact with teachers, but not the Year One pupils. I was looking at Year One, Year Four and Year Six pupils so not to include Year One now, which was fine. Then I contacted the teachers and they were really helpful. Then I contacted Claire who is always immensely helpful. She said you have to amend your ethics form and the head teacher asked for some things that were quite stringent, for example, making sure parents were in the house when I contacted the pupils. So I amended the form with his requirements and it was turned around really quickly, in two days, which I was very grateful for, and I got it back saying fine you can go ahead.

But now, the problem is that I've not been able to get hold of one child at all and there were only six in the sample. That is now becoming the difficulty. Basically, the problem that I have at the moment is knowing whether or not we will be able to contact the children in the sample to collect the data remotely. And secondly, I'm conscious of nagging the teachers because they've also got a lot of other things on and I don't want to keep pestering them because they've got to make the initial contact for me. I said to James the other day, I just thought, if I end up not being able to do this, the second lot of data collection, I think what I'm going to have to do is talk to the teachers about what they felt the impact was, using children's work and when I write it up explain the circumstances and just draw any conclusions that I can. So I'm not going to change to major study and I'm definitely definitely continuing.

On the good side, last week, I got nearly all my literature surveys done, I just kind of got on with it. I'm just going to finish that off over the next couple of days. I sent some of that to James to look at and I feel like I'm in it now and I can do the rest of it and I'm just going to crack on with it and I've obviously got more time than I would normally. Because I don't have a full-time job and the work that I do is genuinely non-essential. I've actually got more time than I would have so, I'm not going to defer anything I'm going to do it this year. I really don't want to defer it. James said that one of his people that he supervises has deferred, at least one of them. I think if you haven't started your data collection, that is a problem, but I had. I know Alex – I contacted her last week - she was saying that she's had to resubmit to ethics so she must be trying to go forward with it as well.

I feel, there are times, last week for example, when I really enjoyed being absorbed in it and I didn't feel other pressures that I would normally feel. I didn't feel like oh I should be doing this, or I should be doing that. So it's good. Yeah. I mean, I've missed the library and that sounds silly really because I can get everything online I know but I used to quite like going there. I'm not quite sure why, but it just made me feel slightly more intellectual! I've always liked library so I miss that. But other than that I've been grateful for it. I've been really grateful for it. I've thought, so I'm so glad that got it to think about and get absorbed in.

I only work, on average, three days a week, probably. But I would usually be thinking, I've got a report to write or preparation to do or, you know, but I'm not having that to do. Next term I'm gonna do remote development work but nowhere near what I would normally be doing so it's good. I was going to use the Easter holidays anyway for dissertation work. We were supposed to be going on holiday directly after the Easter holidays which obviously won't happening. So, yeah, I think the dissertation has replaced work in a way. It's good. When I get into it I really, really enjoy it. I really feel… Oh, I don't

know how to explain it… it's partly because it's so different than practical teaching stuff that you feel like you enter another little world. And when you come across references of people that you know, you start to link together and you think, 'Oh yes I remember reading about him', or 'He was referencing something she also said' and you feel like you become part of this little world that you didn't know about before. It's good, it's good, I like it.

But no-one made me do it. I almost would feel guilty about grumbling about it because it's my choice. No-one said, 'Go and do an MA'. I'm doing it, I'm paying for it, so if I'm moaning about it I think, 'Well, don't do it then.' So I feel lucky, I feel lucky that I've got it. And I do feel well supported by James, he's been very flexible, he said, 'Ask me anything, send me anything'. He's been very helpful, as has Claire with the ethics form. So you feel like there's people out there, and there's loads of stuff on the VLE . You know, and there's loads of stuff on Moodle and everything.

Chapter 3b: Video diary 2, May 2020

Here I am talking about my MA and the next stage and what I'm doing.

I suppose there's two parts to this really. On the one hand, collecting the data and that sort of thing has been much more difficult for me in these circumstances. I've had to collect some of the data on the phone and it's been tricky. I've had to get additional data from the teachers and the whole thing's been less straightforward. I don't think the data will be as good because of that, because the children are not in situ so it's harder for them to talk about their learning. So that's been tricky.

Motivation at times has been hard, and it's interesting that, because I do think, if you want something doing ask a busy person. There are times when I'm busy with virtual meetings but it's much less than I normally would be. So some of the time it's been hard to motivate myself but also, I think I've really missed just having a bit of contact with other people who are doing the course. I have phoned a couple of people but we were meant to have a couple more sessions at the university that we've not been able to have. So that's been harder. But I've had quite a few calls with James, my tutor, which have been useful, and some emails. So that's kind of kept it going. So there's been difficulties. However, it's also given me more time than normal which is good.

In terms of where I am: the lit review I found really challenging to do. I don't know why I particularly did, I didn't think it was going to be as hard as it was really. The first draft I put together… well, there was *so much* out there. I did try really hard just to keep it relevant to my study but it was difficult to not go down alleys all the time, to read something and then that would link to something else and you'd read that and de-der-de-der. So, anyway, the first draft I did I sent it to James, and he was encouraging but he said, hmm, you know, think about this, think about that and think about the

other. It was very useful feedback, but I did find it at first probably more of a, what's the word? A knockback, than I probably would have normally found it maybe. I didn't know whether that was because of the circumstances, and just everything feels a bit odd, but I was a bit like 'oh'. Don't get me wrong, there was lots of positive comments, it wasn't, like, all *dire.* But I was surprised at how I had to really make myself get back in there, and then draft it again, and then draft it again, and then I began to see that actually it was so much better. So, I'm much happier with it and so is James.

I suppose what I'm trying to say is that I think the lit review has been the hardest part. I found the introduction to the whole thing really easy because it was just my story and I knew what I was doing. But pulling together that research critically, for someone like me who is not used to doing lots of academic reading, everything is hard, you have to read it once, read it again and read it again to really understand it. Particularly when people are researching quite complex stuff. So, I'm really glad that's out of the way.

Now I'm working on my methodology section which is much more straightforward and I feel confident with it really so I'm kind of doing okay. I should have got through it, most of it, this week I would have thought. I've been doing it for a while but I think what really helped me with that section was the assignment that we did last year, which was preparation for the research. That was when I learned to get to grips with the terminology of methodology and understand what ontology and so on was, and Claire did a very good lecture on that as well. And there's lots of helpful stuff on the VLE. So I feel okay with that.

And then, obviously, when that bit's done then it's ooooooh, it's the data. And I'm afraid my data, I've listened to my data a few times – this is the interviews I've got on my laptop – but I haven't transcribed them yet and it's going to take me ages. So I'm not looking forward to that bit. And, you know, coding and actually making sense of it. On the other hand, it's also quite exciting, because, although I don't feel it's as valid as it could be because the situation, I've had a look at some of the surveys that the children have done and compared them, and I'm thinking, oooooh yes, you can see a difference here. I've been given permission to augment the data by talking to the teachers, interviewing them, which I wasn't going to do, initially. But that was really encouraging as I was talking to them and you could really see they felt the impact of work that they'd done on metacognition with the children. So that's all encouraging.

Being in this situation has had some very positive angles for my MA in terms of time and so on, and some significant drawbacks, which I've outlined. The other thing I've missed is going to the library because I do like going to the library. I feel I can work better there but also a lot of the books were not

available electronically that we needed, which was a bit annoying. But I found lots of other stuff but the research books, I could have done with a few more of those.

Hope that's all right. Bye!

Chapter 4: Video diary 3, July 2020

Hi, so, this is July, and I'm now on the final strait of my MA. Hurrah! So I'm just going to capture some thoughts about that, some key things that I thought might be good to share.

So first of all, I do feel that, if I were going to do this again, *which I'm not,* I would prefer to do one-year full time than a part time MA because all the time that I'm not doing it I feel that I should be doing it. I just feel resentful almost of other work at the moment, that you know that I'm needing to do it, I wish that I could just prioritise this. So, yeah, something I would do if I could. Anyway, here I am.

I'm at the stage where I've, although I'll have to tweak things obviously, I've done a bit of an introduction, literature review, methodology section, which was the most straightforward part of it actually, and then I've gone through all of my data. It's taken a long time: reading, coding, analysing, drawing the themes together, trying to represent it visually, making sense of it. Now I'm beginning to write that up and, as with each of the sections really, actually getting started on how I'm going to approach it is difficult. So, I look at other people's data analysis sections, in dissertations, and it's just no help whatsoever, really, because, well because everyone's data is so different, and that's kind of fair enough. But as a novice, just knowing how to represent it, where to put quotes and what-have-you.... Anyway, James and I had a virtual meeting last week and he suggested doing just one section of one particular theme and sending him that for feedback. That will be useful so that's what I'm doing at the moment.

I've enjoyed actually working through the data and finding things out and coding and so on. I think that's probably just my personality, really, I quite like organising things so I enjoyed that part of it very much. But I kind of wish that, having got all the data in by April, although I had read it I wish I'd have got more out of it then. I think it might have influenced just little bits of the other sections that I've written but, anyway, I can always go back and tweak things. A couple of findings that have been interesting: one is about teacher modelling that's come out really strongly. I didn't expect that, but the children and teachers have talked about that as a really useful strategy in improving metacognitive skills, by talking through the learning and the processes, and using models. So, that's interesting. And monitoring: children having strategies to monitor their progress, to know what to do if they're finding something tricky, has really increased their independence and, in turn, their self-efficacy and their confidence I think. I think this has particularly helped disadvantaged pupils which I'm focusing on. And that has come out very strongly from the data which is useful as well as interesting. Even though my sample is small, it's been good to actually feel that impact, in fact, really good to feel that.

In terms of an impact going forwards... I certainly would encourage teachers to use pupil voice more. To try things out and talk to the pupils more about what they've found out and how useful it is. Interrogating initiatives more, I would certainly encourage, and the use of evidence. But I am kind of completely sold on putting self-regulation and metacognition at the heart of the school improvement strategy really because I think it can have such an impact. So all of that has been really useful.

It does feel a bit of a slog now on this last bit. Not because it's not very interesting, but it just feels, as I say, it's been sitting there a long time now. And my aim is to have it sort of done, all bar the shouting as they say, because that it will have to be checked and rechecked and tweaked, but to kind of have it written by the end of July. I really want to do that and then during August I can just check it and then it's ready for submission. I think we probably did have the opportunity to defer because of the virus but I decided not to take the opportunity because it's given me time. And also, I do feel, I just want to get it done now.

But, it's actually been really interesting, you know, being in the data. It's been more revealing than perhaps I anticipated. And, you know, I didn't think that just using six pupils and three teachers and looking at various things they've got to say in surveys and so on could generate that much information, some of which was expected, some was unexpected. So that's been really useful as well.

But academic writing. Yeah, perhaps it gets easier, I don't know. And, you know, because I haven't wanted to just do it either, I've wanted to do a reasonably good job of it which I'm sure most people do feel like. I do feel like, yeah, it's a bit of a slog at times, but hey-ho. And just one more thing that I think I've discovered about myself as a learner is that I do much more mulling things over. During lockdown I have gone out for a walk or a run every day. I'm very near to the Hill, which is great so I can just, you know, be outside and in a nice place. And I've used that time often to think about my MA. I've usually gone my own and I like to do that, and that's where some of my ideas have come from, you know, thinking how I'm going to shape something, how I'm going to start it.

And I think, you know, all my career, I've worked really hard, I've worked full-time until recent times. I've worked full-time for nearly 40 years, and also, just always worked really hard, like most teachers do, and I was always busy so everything was done pretty quickly and turned over quickly. And this, I've just spent much more time reflecting and thinking and that's taught me that it's good, I think it gives a better result. So that's been a big thing to learn, actually. I've always been more of a doer than a thinker and I think it's given me a bit more balance, you know, which I probably wouldn't have got, actually, had it not been for lockdown. So that's interesting.

Okay. I hope that’s useful. Thank you. Bye!

Chapter 5: Video diary 4, September 2020

Oh, hi. So this is my final video recording. I just want to check that it's working, but I think it is. Yeah. Okay.

So I've finished. Yay! I submitted my dissertation yesterday, which is a good feeling. Although I will miss it, I will miss living with it, definitely, but it's done, it's finished.

In terms of a couple of things that you asked, Amanda, about the impact that it's going to have. Well, in terms of the school that I work with, the intention, of my study, although it was kind of to find things out, which indeed it did, the intention was to look beyond that. Okay, so it was to encourage teachers, really, to say, "Okay, people tell me metacognition works but let's see why it works, let's see how it works, let's find that out. And then maybe, when we understand that a bit more, it will not only help us to implement metacognition, but it might give us a broader spectrum of other things to do."

I suppose what I'm trying to say is that I believe that teachers need to understand *why* they're implementing something, why they're doing something pedagogically. Not just because someone, some research somewhere, has told them it's a good thing to do. So my study is actually called, 'But how and why does it work'.

What I hope will happen is that not only will the findings influence, you know, the continued implementation of this in the school. The school I've worked with, three of the classes, who were the ones in my study, they've been on training on metacognition, and they were implementing it in their teaching. Next year they're hoping to roll that out across the school, so these findings will you know, they will be able to say things like, actually, monitoring is a really crucial strategy in the implementation, kids find that really useful, blah-de-blah. But also, certain things that they now understand, let's say for example, the practical nature of some of the metacognitive strategies and tools that they gave the children, made them very accessible. And that seemed to really work well. So, actually, saying to children, if you do this, this and this and you can learn more effectively and be a better learner in this particular case, was actually more effective than saying for example, if we contrast it with a growth mindset approach, oh yes, you know, you're not a better learner but you will be kind of. Those kinds of strategies, the practical 'do this, do this, do this' is more effective. Therefore, that might be something that you would look at in other teaching approaches and think, gosh, if I give them these practical tools, that actually might work really well. So I hope that not only does it have an impact on implementing metacognition, but on wider implementation for the teachers involved. And for the school involved, the implementation across the school will be influenced hopefully, by my findings. I really hope so.

For me, then, working with other schools on metacognition, I'm doing that, schools have asked me to do some work this term, this month, actually. I would share those findings with them and I would say, you know, this is what we found at X school, however, I would also be saying, you need to look at your school, at what works with your kids in your context. Because that's really important. So, I suppose my driver would be understand research more, look beyond the headlines, dig underneath it, find out why it's working with the kids, use that information in your implementation, and in your broader approaches in the classroom. Think about *why* this works. Understand it.

In terms of my study, the children were disadvantaged - all of them. And the metacognition approaches are kind of deemed to work, particularly with this group, but nobody, as far as I could find out, was saying why that was the case. Perhaps there's stuff and I didn't find it, though I did look at over a hundred different books or journal articles. Anyway, what I feel is one of the reasons is that it improves self-efficacy, self-confidence, and so on, which obviously has an impact, and in disadvantaged children that's lower. Another factor, I think, is that it gives children skills that more advantaged children perhaps have more naturally, they perhaps use more naturally, for a whole variety of reasons. But also in the way that teaching phonics, let's say, teaching phonics can be taught to most children, nearly all children can access that teaching because you don't need a broad vocabulary, out of school experiences, you don't need to have read lots of books, you don't need to have a broad language in order to learn it, it's kind of like boom-boom-boom, a bit like learning to drive, I suppose, maybe. And actually, learning to apply metacognitive strategies has some elements of that, so that it kind of mitigates against other barriers. This is what I think. I'm sure lots of people could drive a coach and horses through it, but this is what my study showed. I think that's quite important, because I'm hoping that it will make the teachers look at other things that they do and be aware of how you can mitigate those barriers more. Okay, so, for example, if you're teaching reading comprehension, you know that children who have broader experiences, have read more, have a wider vocabulary, will immediately have a head start, because that will help them in that particular sphere. What can you do to mitigate that for children who are less advantaged? You can look at those barriers. And you can seek to broaden those things or do more to mitigate them when you're in the task. So every single new word, you provide explanations for reinforcement, and whatever. But there are other things that are equally accessible to all children and I think it's kind of looking for that as well. And perhaps I'm not making myself very clear, but this is something that I want to take forward in my work with schools. So that's very much come out of it.

I'm trying to see what time it is? Yeah, I've gone on a bit now.

And so impact and there was something else.... so what would it change? Well, yeah. So it would change, it would change what I thought about using research. I mean, I have always kind of been interested in that and I suppose, at the back of my mind, you know, I've thought 'yeah, but we need to know why', but I think this has fundamentally – it would encourage me to encourage other people to think about why. So that is a change, definitely. You know, why are you doing that, how does it help them, how do you know it helps them? To ask those kinds of questions.

One of the things, I don't know, whether this is relevant or not, but the checking of the work at the end was, like, was *massive*. And, I mean, part of that is probably my own approach, you know, too much as I went along I kind of thought, 'I'll check that at the end, I'll check that at the end, I'll check it all'. So perhaps just doing a section and checking it over thoroughly as I went along would have helped, but, you know, spacing, and hyphens, and dashes, and oh, the formatting of the appendices, formatting various things... that just took me virtually a week to re-check because I had it printed, even though we didn't need to because of Covid, but I had it printed off and I found loads of errors and then my husband read it for me and, there were not loads of errors, and they were all minor, but, yeah, the checking was massive and I wish I'd kind of thought about that more really.

Some of the things I think sometimes, 'I wish someone had told me that', but actually I also have to take some responsibility for that and think, I should have known that really.

But anyway, it's done now. So yeah, I certainly do feel that it's had an impact, it will have an impact on my work going forward. Yeah. And I'm quite happy to talk about it on a video link or whatever that you've requested in the future. And I hope that's useful. And I'm sorry if I've rambled on but I've got, I've got quite passionate about it!

Okay, thank you. Bye.

Chapter 6: Member check discussion, online Teams meeting, December 2020

I think probably reading this [excerpts from transcripts] reminds me that I think I became more interested... So, maybe, at first, I saw it as a thing to do, to get through, a mountain to climb, whereas latterly, it became more of my interest in what it was telling me, so the research became the interesting thing not the construction of a dissertation if you like.

And then also, how this could be useful, what impact could this have. So I think my focus changed from how it was initially. This is perhaps slightly counterintuitive to me as well because I am not somebody, and this is probably negative, but I tend to kind of get in there and get on with it. I'm not a great stand back, look at the journey ahead think where you might be on each part of it. I'm aware of that: like with IKEA flat packs I will just welly in there and get on whereas my husband would put every single piece out and read the instructions four times.

So, I would think that I'd be just, right, I've got this dissertation to do, I'm going to do it on this, I'm interested in that, get on with it, der-der-der. And then, over time, I gradually thought, ooh, gosh, this is really interesting. Wow! I've actually found this out! Oooh, crikey there's a pattern there. And so that became the thing that I found interesting and exciting and it became something that lived with me.

I would say that was a change; initially it was something you did a bit of and left it whereas latterly it lived with me. I thought about it. It was always there, whenever I was out for a walk or going to sleep at night, I was turning things over. It was odd when I finished it. And I kept wanting to read it again and again. It's funny. I didn't think I would think like that, but I did.

I think that [identity] is an interesting theme, because I do think there is a slight imposter syndrome for me, that I would still think, 'ooh well I'm not academic, no, I'm not really an academic'. And when you describe one or two things there [notes on body language from video transcripts] some of the time I think I was just pausing and twiddling with my hair because I didn't know what to say next. But some of the time, certainly when I'm talking about the research, there probably is a bit of me thinking, 'but I'm a practical person, I'm a classroom teacher, I'm a leader, I'm a manager, I'm not an academic'. I think it's that sort of identity, that when you're doing academic work, that you almost feel you've got to make excuses for.

But I also think that there's something about the notion of being an academic or doing academic work that seems, not necessarily superior, but on a different level, that I think leads to imposter syndrome, that makes you think, 'but I'm not that'. Also, reading some of the material was very hard, it was hard to understand. I didn't feel out of my depth – I don't know the right word for it - but I think as a

profession maybe we should just be encouraged more to see ourselves in more dual roles. It's part of my personality as well but teaching is so much about getting the job done isn't it, and then, you know, getting results on the table but I can hugely see the benefits of taking time to stand back from things. A change for me, and I did say this in one of the videos, and partly that was lockdown as well, it's hard to say what would have happened had we not had lockdown, because I went out for long walks every day, often on my own, and I would just mull it over and sometimes really good ideas came to me to do with the dissertation while I was out, some of my best ideas I think. I think that's something that I never spent enough time really doing. On the journeys to and from work I did - in my first headship I had a long journey that took me at least an hour both ways and I used to use that as thinking time, but you don't really get that much opportunity to do it or don't make that time, I don't know, it's not the culture is it?

I think the research did start off quite separate and yet it began to influence me, and it would now, in particular because of the topic. I don't mean necessarily metacognition, but the title of my dissertation was, 'But how and why does it work?'. It was about looking underneath the headlines, not just saying, 'Okay so EEF says this is the latest thing, go on and do it'. It was about saying, well, okay why is that successful? If we can actually unpick some of that, that will help us see what other things might work. That was my big thing, really. There was a quote from Dylan William, something like, 'teachers not only use research but they should become critical consumers of research'. I suppose I've always felt that, really, that too many things have just come along and people have said let's do this and got on, and it might have worked for some children and then you've moved on to something else, but there's not been enough reflection on why. Does 'every child a reader' work because you've got one to one time and no other reason really? And if that is the case, let's do more one to one, but if it's about the materials or more than that, let's learn from that. My dissertation was saying "metacognition works" (*finger quotes*), let's see why. I did come up with some tentative reasons why that might be the case, so which ones could we then apply more broadly?

Would I encourage somebody in a full-time job to do an MA? I'm not sure. Because it's hugely time consuming, I just don't know how you'd marry it unless you had a day a week or something like that. If I had my time again, I would have done my MA for a year. I would have done a one-year course where I would have completely immersed myself in it for a year and not worked. In a sense, because I had fewer opportunities to work and wasn't going out to work, lockdown gave me more of a chance to invest myself in my dissertation. In the previous year, and I don't work full time, I was always moving study around different things. It's not as satisfying, I don't think, but I know it's how many people have to do it, isn't it?

If I'm being really honest, I think, it doesn't marry well with teaching, not if you want a life as well. Unless you're prepared to use all your holidays I suppose. Years ago, when I was a young teacher, I did a postgraduate diploma, I think it was a Dip Ed., and it was about special needs because I was doing some work with special needs kids at the time. It was a two-year thing and I was in Nottingham, and I basically had to do everything in the holidays, I remember that, just using the holidays to do it and in the summer, probably using three weeks solidly of the holidays. There was very little that I managed to get done in term time. Because as a teacher you worked all day, you came home, you did work in the evenings, and at the weekends you had a day off and then you spend half of Sunday working again. And that always had to come first.

I don't know what the answer is because, I don't want to sort of bleat on about time but I do think that your job, the job you get paid to do has to come first doesn't it? It's slightly different in your position in a sense, Amanda, as an academic because you are paid to continue research, that's part of your role. I don't know, I don't know what your thoughts are on teachers doing it while they're still working, I mean people have, Alison, who I'm friends with on my course she's brilliant and she's just taken on a new job and everything and she's done it (completed MA).

For teachers to do this there needs to be a big culture change. Ed Balls was pushing teaching as a Master's profession... Was that something that was meant to be done along with the job? People couldn't get a secondment for it could they? There was funding though.

I suppose it's not just teaching though is it, I have a young nephew (well, he's 30) who has just given up a funded MA. He did the first year, and then he couldn't - he's not a teacher, he works in like, I don't know, soil analysis or something - but he just couldn't do it, it was too much. Also I have a friend who works in the NHS as an advanced practitioner, and she only works three days a week but she has a family as well. She did manage to finish it, but she had numerous extensions and huge amounts of stress and just scraped it in the end, so I guess it's hard for anyone really, when you're working as well.

Teachers tend to think that sometimes, that we're the only people who have a hard life. But maybe the only way it could be done, is if, as you say, there's a culture change so it's an expectation. And then you also had a dedicated day per week or something like that if you were embarking on further study. I think, though, and this is a personal view, if that was going to be the case they've got to raise the academic bar a bit, in terms of people they're letting into teaching. It may just be because I'm old (you're supposed to say no you're not at that point) but I am staggered sometimes at the low levels of literacy, let's say, in some of the people. For example, when I was doing School Direct and

interviewing people for that course, but also young teachers that I've had in school - and some of them very capable actually, some less so - but just not knowing stuff, not having what I would call such a strong level of academic knowledge mainly, and I think if you're going to then expect people to do further study, you've got to raise that bar a bit more. And haven't they scrapped the maths and English tests now? So basically if you haven't got two heads and you can breathe, I think you'd probably get in on a postgraduate (teacher training) course. I'm not sure that that's the right way to proceed but I know we have a shortage of teachers. As the head, rightly or wrongly, I did look at people's academic background, I looked to the class of their degree and what it was in, which University it was from and I looked at their A levels. Because, in a very unscientific way, generally I had found people who had a stronger academic background to be better in the classroom. Lots of people will disagree with me on that people would say well I know so and so she's absolutely brilliant. But, okay, I would say they (those with a less-academic background) had less flexibility across year groups, so you might get somebody who had fairly low academic achievement but worked well in one year group. But then, getting them to work across the school, getting them to work strategically, that might be more of a challenge for them. Anyway, that's just my opinion.

I also do believe, as well though, that there isn't a ceiling so you might get someone coming into teaching who, like in my own background, I went to a Polytechnic – it was hardly anything to write home about - but I did have potential, and there will be people coming in to teaching who maybe don't have that strong academic background but have the potential. They need to be given the right development, and so on, that not just tells them what worksheet to use but that really gets them to grapple with thinking that's behind that so that they develop in that sense.

I think, because it's such an important job isn't it, you've got to get good people doing it and people who are thinkers who are going to shape the future for young people. I know Teach First tried it, they tried to recruit that high level of academic standards, probably with some success. You had to have a first initially to get into that and the competition was really stiff. But perhaps less so now I think, but I think the principle of that was good, actually. And also the, the fact of putting those teachers into the more challenging areas. But then lots of them didn't stay so that's difficult as well.

I'm just going to add one more thing and it chimes with an article I was reading recently about culture in a school; I do feel that the more development opportunities you give to teachers and I think research does back this up, or some research says (I don't say anymore just 'research', I think 'what research') and that teachers are more likely to stay in the profession when they are invested and their development is invested in. I did read some research that said that workload and behaviour, although

they were factors in teacher retention, actually that quality of experience and investment and guidance and support that you receive is an equal, if not greater factor. So I think that's something that's really important about investing in people.

I think there needs to be a mixture of things for professional development, but certainly something that challenges rather than just reinforces on a practical level. Probably CPD that does give them some challenge. It's interesting thinking about those accredited courses. There's a SENCo course, I think it's 60 Master's credits at Level 7, and Donna at school was doing that while I was head there. And bless her, she used to say, 'Oh it's really hard this' and I would say, 'Oh for goodness sake Donna', I was very dismissive of it, 'You'll be fine, just get on with it, loads of people have to do it'. I'm still in touch with Donna and when I was doing my Masters I texted her one day and said, Donna, it was not a five-minute job. A couple of things out of that: I do think she grew as the SENCO from doing that course so I would say, A. really beneficial. B. I think other people in school and school leaders need to know a bit about what it entails, because I knew nothing, I said just get on and do it. I think that that's another factor. I also think, and I know some schools do this in different ways, but having that staffroom culture of bringing a piece of research to a meeting or whatever can really help the culture in a school. I think there's more of a drive, in a sense, certainly from Ofsted now, if you think their last reworking of the EIF and how there was a lot of academic research quoted in that document that pre-empted it, which I was very pleased to see, as well as their own research. I do think, hopefully, that there is more research. Certainly the EEF is the one that is talked about all the time, but you see I think that's become a bit, 'Oh, the EEF says this, this EEF says...' and people are not looking enough beyond their one little study on something. It needs to be looked at more widely. But these research schools that we've got all over the country, there has been maybe more of a focus on research than perhaps in the past.

Someone once said to me years ago, and it really stuck with me, if you were comparing teaching to another job and it wasn't the medical profession maybe something like an electrician, they were saying that if you are an electrician you might be reading stuff but all the time things are changing and you've got to keep up to date. You've got to keep doing little tests or your exams or checking things out and saying well actually no, we've found that this isn't safe anymore and we've got be using it this way and that way. Their point was that sometimes a teacher can go in at 22 and that's it. They're not given these sort of refreshers, like nurses have to do a refresher every year or something. I think that that needs to be part of how we view the profession that you've got to maybe do something every year, tell me three things that you've read this year, your opinions, some critical analysis and how it's impacted on your work in the classroom.

Also, maybe getting teachers constantly to engage in a bit of their own research in the classroom. All I have in this in this study is six children, which is nothing, and it's in one school, and honestly the amount of information that I got from that, through having the opportunity to talk to them, talk to their teachers, look at what they were doing, and stand back from it. It was absolutely fascinating, there must be so many things out there that a teacher could really investigate and find out about.

I do think there is probably a case for not having sort of the academic bit. I've read quite a lot of stuff that was very critical of the EEF and I think there is a case for looking at a classroom-based project in the light of what some wider academic studies have said, and then looking overall at what that might say to you. I think that would give you a firmer picture. So if I was going to research something in the future, I would want to know a bit about what other people are saying about it. And then, I would maybe think of what I thought myself and test something out. I think it's making sure that it's not at a toy town level, if you like, or that it's too context related because you just try something out and it works in that classroom. I think you need a sense of the bigger picture a little bit as well. I don't think it's either randomised control trials or the other stuff, I think it's both. I don't think there should be an argument, academics v teachers in the classroom, I think we should be working more closely together. Universities, working more closely in partnership with schools to help them to develop that culture. There was a course that was run last year at the university, I think it was on curriculum, it was Adam and James, and it was honestly one of the best things I've been on. I thought, why aren't universities doing more of this? Running courses for teachers, because it was at a deeper level. He was quoting research, he had a bigger picture because of the context he worked in.

Just one final thing with the notes that you made, when you said I mentioned the literature review a couple of times and you thought I was a bit nervous there, I think you're right about that. I think that was because, oh, it's lots of reasons, but I think it was because it was the hardest thing to write. I don't think I necessarily thought it was it first. And actually, one of my neighbours who is an academic at Lincoln University said to me, and I thought she was right, she said I don't think that's the right word for it, a literature review, because essentially it's not just a literature review, it's far more a critical analysis of relevant literature. I think my understanding of it, initially, wasn't developed and then my first attempt of it, my tutor was quite constructively critical of. That immediately sort of made me feel less confident of it, but in the end it was obviously fine. Whereas the methodology.... Also, I had planned, in an essay last year, and I was more familiar with that and I've read a lot about that for my module last year. But methodology is more practical, and then actually getting all the results together, I enjoyed that, it was exciting. Being methodical and recording and colour coding and that all appeals to me. And being able to say, well, that answers that part of the question and I did think sometimes

actually the type of thinker that you are... because someone with a more creative brain (that isn't a good description but I know what I mean), a more creative imaginative side, I know would have struggled more with that part, the coding and analysing part of the research, whereas I actually enjoyed that because I'm much more pragmatic and that's much more my approach.

In the second year you do a couple of big pieces of work and the first one you do it's like, whoa I have no idea if this is any good, but actually the bloke who was my tutor then he was a former teacher and he'd done an MA and was doing a PhD, and he was fabulous in the amount of time that he took with me. Not that there were major things but he did give me confidence really, so when I did the second piece of work, I was more confident in that. I think also, and again academics have got a role here, you need to strip back that mystique a bit about the writing being something that you've got to use lots of really complex sentences with huge words in otherwise it's not a piece of academic writing. There is a little bit of a sense of that, isn't there, that you read things and the harder it is to read, the more worthy you believe it is. And then you realise after a while that that's not necessarily the case. One of the tutors gave us some pieces of work once to grade, they were anonymised, and there was one that was like terribly convoluted and complex in all, and we all thought that that had got the best mark and it hadn't. Part of it was, she said, it's impenetrable almost, so I do think that maybe there is there is a thing there about stripping back that mystique of we're the university and we're really clever and we write in big words so that teachers feel that they can do that too. I think my dissertation was very much written generally in accessible prose that a teacher could pick up and understand. I think having the confidence to feel that that was all right took me a while, that it didn't have to go bleurgh-bleurgh-bleurgh, or complex complex complex.

The thing about reading, that is an interesting thing, because when I first started, I thought, I've read that and I do not understand it and a friend of mine, the one who works at another university, said, you can't just read it once, I say this to my students all the time, you've got to keep reading it, you've got to read it like four times. And again, thinking about my 40 years in school, you don't have time to read anything more than once, I always look at a piece of paper and deal with it. I never kept it, I did it there and then so that was like, why should I be wasting time reading and rereading, but that was the only way. That was a big learning point for me, that you've got to take more time, you've got to read and reread and really digest where you think and then it does start to make sense. It's good when things like that happen because you realise you're developing, you're learning, you're becoming, you're becoming something that's a bit bigger and better than you were. It's learning, like when you learn something new on the computer and you maybe learn some other fancy way of doing a PowerPoint you think, 'Wow, that's great, I didn't know that'. That's not a very good example, but I do

feel that in here. I felt like a different person when I finished it than when I started it. Because of learning about reading and digesting and also that reflection and querying things and sometimes towards the end I would go, I don't really agree with that, but there is still a little voice saying, who are you to say that, but at least I was saying it to myself.

I think it is a different skill set, a bit like when I worked as a school advisor for a while. I remember my boss saying, just because you've been the head teacher, you can't suddenly think you've got the skill set to be an advisor, and you haven't, it was a different skill set that again made me a better head when I went back to school. I've thought about that in comparison to doing this, that being a researcher and writing is a different skill set. But it also makes you better at the day job, so it's sort of separate but helps you grow.

On being a participant

Yeah, it was it was interesting. I think when I did the last one I looked back at all of them. And so that was interesting, you know, seeing that journey through time and how I had changed during that time. I'd probably grown in confidence with the project as well so it was interesting. I wondered whether I should have perhaps been a bit more structured in my information, whether it was just a bit of a stream of consciousness in a sense. I suppose I didn't plan it before I went on, I just went 'bleurgh' and kind of did it. But, you know, I don't know whether that would have helped but no it was interesting to see that journey over that period of time and remember how it was and thinking, 'oh crikey, you know, I hadn't done any of that then'.

People are different aren't they. I remember doing it and thinking, I wonder how other people approach this. I wonder if people find this really hard or other people say much more or other people... I do remember thinking that, and thinking is this right, I have no idea. I think I always said to you each time, hope that's okay let me know because I've got no idea whether you thought oh my god, what was she on about, that is not what I wanted, and you were too polite to say. I think I probably always wasn't quite sure what it was what you wanted. I think that was always there.

I think it felt a bit strange rabbiting on, rabbiting on, rabbiting, whereas actually that's what you just asked us to do. But I can see it's really good. And also the timing in-between, I think that was good to see that journey. It was funny seeing the seasons when I watched the video, I was there with a woollen scarf and it was kind of good to look back on.

I think perhaps the fact that I knew you a little bit was probably helpful. I mean I don't know you very well. I think if you'd been a complete stranger or, if you'd have been somebody who maybe I felt a bit more intimidated by, I might have felt a bit more restricted. I think I felt quite comfortable, partly

because of your background and I knew you'd been a teacher and a teacher at Green Trees which is very familiar. I thought that you would understand me a bit, so I guess I didn't [leave things out]. But had I been doing it for me, yeah, I would have added more things. Obviously, there is an awareness of your audience so there were a couple of times in it where I just felt like I came to a complete bang, and I don't know whether I said that or not, where I just thought I can't do it. So there's probably stuff like that I probably wouldn't reveal as much, you know, and also, I'm quite mindful that you're part of the university and so there may be things that I would have said to myself that I wouldn't say to you. I do think there's a little bit of a limit there but I think had you been an anonymous person, a person that I didn't have any previous relationship with or knowledge of, then I would have been even more [reticent] but generally I think I've tried to say what I thought. I knew you weren't judging me. I knew that you just wanted to know about the experience and you weren't judging the quality of my work. If I thought you were judging the quality of my work I would have felt differently.

It's such a shame that we haven't been able to share with Claire and as a group because I think we were really beginning to gel at the beginning of this year. I really enjoyed my time at the university and I always enjoyed the sessions over the whole time I was there and I think it's such a shame really, I do feel sad about that and the lack of graduation and everything. Obviously that can't be helped, it is a small thing really but I hope that at some point we can come back together and do that. But I do feel as a general thing, that I've been really well supported by all the people that I've had as tutors. I think I've had good support.

Chapter 7: 12+ months on interview, online Teams meeting, November 2021

I was so happy about my results, I was. I think, like, one of the things is, it just gives you like… confidence isn't the right word, but it's… I quite like the fact that I've done it. You know, like, "Oh when I did my masters". I don't go around saying that, but there's just something about having studied something like that. It gives me something that I didn't have before. I can't think - there are lots of different words for it really. But in a good way. I feel I can speak more authoritatively, maybe, about certain things because I read quite a lot. I don't know. I don't know. Anyway, it gave me a great deal of satisfaction.

And also, I don't know whether I told you this, but James [supervisor] had encouraged me to write an article and he said he'd help me. I sent one off, just one, to a professional journal and it was accepted! I was so delighted. So, I sent the abstract and it was accepted and I sent the article in September and last week I got the feedback. No changes. It was a really nice bit of feedback. It made me feel so good. So that's in the spring edition. Claire [MA course leader] was really pleased. I don't know whether it will be in print or online. They said they don't know yet. I think they just probably, like balance it. But so that's, you know, I'm dead chuffed about that.

I think the reason that probably they liked it is because it's a slightly different take; it wasn't looking at, oh, this works, let's say whether it works or not, it was looking at how we know this works. It's about metacognition and why, what is it about that approach that actually makes a difference? And then knowing that, how could that influence other things you do in the classroom? It was about encouraging teachers to sort of think, right, okay, it's not just about blindly taking on an initiative, but it's about looking at it. Dylan Williams calls it 'beyond the headlines' and saying, okay, people are saying this works, let's have a look in a bit more depth as to why that might be the case. So, for example, with the metacognition, one of the things that the two main things that seemed to show in my little tiny piece of research, one of them was about self-efficacy and that it improved that; you can do that lots of ways, but actually, giving children practical tools to learn that improves their belief about themselves as learners, and that then has implications for other things. So I think that's a slightly different way of looking at it. So anyway, I think that's why they were probably interested. Okay, so that, you know, that's good.

Claire was always telling us to, you know, sort of submit articles. She was always going on about that and at the time, I just didn't really think about it. And then, you know, James, he said it and then I just got an email from the professional organisation, you know, saying, Oh, we're taking submissions about curriculum pedagogy. And I thought, yeah, I'll give this a go. So yeah. Yeah, that's fantastic.

Has your Master's had a lasting impact on you?

Yeah. Oh, yeah, definitely. Yeah, it has. And I also think that other people have viewed me a bit differently. So for example, I've been asked to speak at a conference about it in March, and, you know, things like that. I just think that people are sort of seeing you as a little bit of an expert in a particular field, and that I've never been an expert in anything, I'm not an expert, for God's sake, I'm really not. But it's just given me that bit of status, really, which is good. So, it has had an impact. Definitely. I also feel that I will encourage people to look and look at research, but also to look at why as well. Question and so on. And also, the whole thing about academic research is that in the past it was just like, an unknown world, it was just like a thing out there. And now I feel much more of a connection with it. And I understand that, for example, in the current Ofsted framework they used quite a lot of academic research to inform them. I think they probably chose the bits that they wanted, but whatever, but that interested me more than it would have done. So definitely it has [had an impact] and I think that I will ask the why question much more. Well, you know, why do people think that's a good idea? Where's that coming from? What research is backing that up? Who else is saying that, who might not be saying that? Well? Do you know what I mean? Just thinking beyond more than I did.

Has it changed how you feel as a researcher?

Well, yeah, it has, I suppose. Yeah. Because it was something that I felt I could do. I didn't know I could do and I did it on a really small scale. So I'm still massively in awe of people, though, who write these amazing articles based on phenomenal research - that that feels like, another level, doesn't it? But I just think asking 'why' much more and being more curious and interested in how you can find things out and bring information together. And yeah, so I think on that strand [I have changed]. And then on the other strand it's just being more interested in current educational thinking, and what lies beneath that, rather than accepting the headlines as it were. You know, in fact, I bore people about this, because I'm a school improvement advisor, obviously, I refer a lot to the Ofsted framework. And I'm always saying to people, well, you know, there was research and it said this, and I'm sure people think, you know, like, who cares? But it means more to me.

Although I would say there is a greater connection [between teachers and research] probably now, if I look back over my career. Is that just because I see it, I'm not just working in one school? I don't know. When I work with teachers routinely, I'm often impressed by the things that - no, I'm not *often* impressed I'm *sometimes* impressed by things that people have read and thought about and considered. Whereas I'm not sure that that was ever really, you know, the tools of the trade as it were, when I was a younger teacher. I do believe - and I think there's various camps aren't there - I think

some teachers are immensely practical. And they see their role as a practical job, to go along, teach children and get them to learn and check that they've done it. And that's it, someone tells you what to do, you take those tools, you deliver them, you do a good job. Then there's another layer of teachers, and I'm not making judgments here, who are more reflective, perhaps, and more curious about where those tools come from, and why, and have we thought about this, and that. And then probably a third even higher level, and I think teachers do fall into those camps. But I would say I probably come across more of that middle level now.

So, for example, a lot of the work I've been doing lately has been on the curriculum that brought, you know, no surprise, because of the new EIF. And lots of teachers are familiar with the work of people like Clare Sealey or Mary Myatt and Tom Sherrington and various others who are current. I don't think it's just on Twitter and things. I think it's a bit more than that, you know, and think about what they're saying and why. It's not really research, but it's perhaps a bit more reflection at least. Because a lot of people in the teaching profession I think tend to be a bit… no, not a *lot* of people, but there can be a level of cynicism can't there? You know, sort of the, 'Oh, yeah, here we go again', we've been there and how it'll all change again. But it's not quite like that. Because even though things might seem to come back they come back in a different form, in a more sophisticated, deeper way, I feel. Let's say phonics, right. Phonics is everything now, is the driving force behind all these reading deep dives. But I can remember a time in education where it was an absolute no-no. Everything was real books and especially in the local authority that I worked in at the time… And presumably, there was a time before that when everything was phonics, but it doesn't mean that it's gone back, it means that it's moved on because of lots of research saying this and it's tying it in with cognitive science and lots of other things.

Have you changed the way you think or feel about politics in education?

Well, that's an interesting question. Do you mean in its broadest sense… Yeah, very much so. And I think I've thought about that quite a lot. With regards to the curriculum and thinking that actually, for example, the history curriculum at Key Stage One and Two is almost a political decision, which things you choose. It's quite broad and it makes suggestions but what do you choose about the Romans? Or the Victorians? Because actually, you can put a political slant on what you give to children. And I've thought about how that comes from somewhere else. And, yeah, the direction of travel. So I have thought more about that certainly.

I think it's a shame probably that, you know, the world of higher education and the world of teaching doesn't meet a bit more except for ITT level. Because it doesn't really, does it, a great deal, unless you

do something like a Master's? Or, you know, you look after a student, but then that's not really any academic level, is it? But I feel like, for example, at the university, Eric and another bloke did this course on the curriculum a while ago, this was pre pandemic. Oh, and it was really, really good. And really it wasn't expensive. And a lot of it was, you know, was research-based information and stuff. And there were schools there, obviously, but I just thought like, really, you should be doing more of this in school and there should be a greater crossover of these two worlds because it was of a different quality than some of the other stuff that you routinely get on a course. It had much more depth to it.

And [teachers] like [simple, instructive CPD] sometimes. But that's not really the profession that that we want, ultimately, is it? I think we want a more reflective profession. I don't know, maybe if teachers were more interested and curious about why we're doing things, they wouldn't necessarily be as compliant as a work body. That would cause a few problems for the government, wouldn't it.

In fact, I was talking to a group of curriculum leaders yesterday, and was kind of reflecting on the journey from the implementation of the new EIF. And it was only in 2019 [that it came in]. And, you know, when I look at where schools have come from, from basically, when you're doing history, geography and everything else, as long as you're having a good time, you've got nice looking topic books and a nice display, we're happy. That was all we cared about. To having this rigour of sequenced knowledge and skills and concepts that's progressive and that's we built on previous learning, *and* we've had a pandemic. All the schools I work with, they've taken all that on, completely rewritten their curriculum. But if you said to a lot of classroom teachers, where was this research from? Why are we doing this? I don't know how many of them would be able to tell you. They'd say because Ofsted said so. And then you'd say, 'Well, why are Ofsted saying this, they didn't pull it out of the sky'. I'm always saying that, 'they don't just pull it out the sky you know, they don't just think, oh, let's do this. It's not on the back of a fag packet.' But when I bore people about things like that, I can tell they're not that interested sometimes. I think it's really important to know the story and the context. But I don't always know whether they do. I don't know whether you find that with the student teachers?

But they should really be interested in that, shouldn't they, the journey. Should they? I don't know. Would I have been? I don't know. A couple of times, I have a friend who works at another university, anyway, she asked me to do these, like guest lectures on assessment, this is before the pandemic. And I would always try and show them where SATs came out of, you know, where we were and where we didn't have any accountability and you can see that that there was just nothing. It's just not what they want to hear, not what they were interested in really. And yet, I kind of think, if you don't get that, for example, with the new EIF, if you don't see why we're suddenly having this refocus, how can you be

committed to doing it? If you don't understand, if you just think I'm doing this for Ofsted, why would you do it? You only would do it if you believed in it, wouldn't you? Because you can see where it's come from.

But, you know, historically, it's not at all the way that the teaching profession has been, has it really? And why is that? Is that because it's not particularly seen as an academic role? Is it because people are just too busy? And they just think, 'Oh, for God's sake, just tell me what to do and I'll do it'. Is it? I don't know. I don't know why. Is it because we're all scared stiff of the accountability that things like Ofsted bring? But I always find it really difficult if I hear head teachers saying to staff, 'well, we have to do this because of Ofsted', or, 'oh, the governors have told me'. I have said to people, you can't expect people to buy into something that you're not even saying you believe in. It amazes me that people will blindly go along with something. But they do so. Yeah. It's not a great indictment of the teaching profession, is it?

I am, in favour of accountability though, you know. I genuinely think, having been a teacher since 1977, would you believe, that things improved. The game was raised definitely when we had more accountability and disadvantaged children got a better deal on the whole. I do think one of the things that data gave us was less of an excuses culture, 'these children can't'. You could say to a school, well, actually, a similar school are doing a lot better by their pupils than you are so what's that about… I think that was positive. I can remember, and this isn't that long ago, when I was working for the city as an advisor, not this time around, so probably about 2009 or 2010, saying to a head, well, have you seen these children on free school meals, and this was before pupil premium, well they're really not doing very well looking at the RAISE online stuff. And she said, well, they're on free schools meals. What do you expect? And it was quite acceptable to say that: 'Well, of course, they're not doing well, they're on free school meals'. So I do think there are positives to come out of the accountability.

I think you do get a huge range of academic ability in the teaching profession that you wouldn't get… well, I don't know, because I have no experience of it, but maybe you wouldn't get that with doctors, let's say, or lawyers, or even maybe with nurses. Yeah, some people are going into teaching who are like super whizzy brainboxes. And some people who can just scrape through their A Levels barely. And they do the same job. I've worked with people in primary schools who were Oxford and Cambridge graduates, and I've worked with people who can hardly string a bloody sentence together. And they're all on a level, maybe that's because it's slightly vocational. Although I suppose nursing is like that, but I don't know. I would say teaching sits below doctors and lawyers, but slightly above nurses.

Marginally in society's eyes, perhaps. Maybe on a line with nurses now. And I think that the role of teachers and the way they're perceived has improved during the pandemic, actually. Yeah, you know, yeah, definitely.

What advice would you give to someone starting a Master's?

What would I advise? Well, I mean, I would certainly encourage them to do it. I wouldn't discourage anyone from doing it, I would be very positive about it. I think I'd get them to understand the big picture a bit more than I did, and perhaps that's me, but you know, how the action research fed into the research methods, fed into the dissertation. I only really got that about halfway through and realised the journey I was on. So, I think, that whole stuff about, you're suddenly a researcher and the implications of that and what that means and everything, I think I would advise them to understand that and look at the whole of the three years. Right from the beginning, be looking at that, knowing, having an idea of your end point quite early on, I think, really is helpful. I would, what else would I say? I think, in terms of academic reading, when that at first seems very difficult, and a bit impenetrable, I think, maybe, encouraging people to re-read things, to talk about it, get help from their tutor about how you might start to critically appraise something, techniques, I suppose, is what I'm saying, maybe thinking a bit more about that. I'd encourage them to block time out more, because it isn't something that you can dip in and out of easily, you need concentrated periods of time. I'd encourage them to see it as an opportunity, to find something out that they didn't know really. But I would certainly be very positive about it.

It's interesting to see people's motivation, what people's motivations [for Master's study are]…. I bet that, at least half the people on my course were doing it as a career decision. I'm not criticising them for that, but I think that would have been part of it, rather than for its own sake. So, I suppose, it's kind of trying to get them to see the other benefits that come from it, rather than just a part of a [career] journey. I mean, obviously, I wasn't doing it for a career, I'm too old. So, I would be very positive.

I do think, very practically, it's tough if you're working full time. I'm not quite sure how people do it. I think, if they were to introduce it again [a policy of all teachers completing Master's study[1]], like that time when they were going to do that, there's going to have to be some sort of payback, I don't know how, some funded time. But that's really difficult to organise. But then, I don't know, I suppose it's just making it as manageable as possible. I would certainly get people to believe in themselves and think… their ability to find things out for themselves and the excitement that you get when you pull all your research together and you start to see a pattern emerging. And you think, oh, I found this

out, no-one else has looked at his before, and you feel a bit of a pioneer and it's good, it's a good feeling.

For me, it's been huge [a sense of personal gain] but I don't know whether that would be the same for everyone. Massive for me [sense of personal pride]. And also, because, it's not a new field, is it, but it kind of feels a little bit like new water that you've stepped into and you've proved something to yourself.

Claire was good, was really helpful, a really motivational leader of that course I thought as well. Which is good. I mean, obviously, it was difficult during lockdown, we didn't get as much interaction as would have been good, but on the whole, I felt really lucky with the people we got. I don't know how many people dropped out though, I'm not sure, I only know a couple of people who definitely finished, I'm sure there were more than that. But I think the drop-out rate can be high, particularly for the ones who are travelling a long way, so maybe that's got implications for remote learning. There was somebody who used to come from the next county a couple actually, and I think one woman did complete it but the bloke, and you could tell, he just wasn't going to be able to sustain it. Actually attending, I really liked that, I really always enjoyed those sessions. I think that's a really useful part but you miss that in the dissertation year.

We didn't get our dissertations published, because of the pandemic. I mean, we'd have to do that ourselves. I mean, I wouldn't mind doing that for myself, just having a copy for myself.

Appendix B: Detailed transcripts for Karen

Key:

, natural pause in speech flow (sometimes for breath)

. natural pause at end of phrase (often for breath)

… hesitation of less than one second

[x sec pause] longer hesitation, timed to nearest whole second

(non-verbal cue) notes of physical or voice tone which are a change in the context of previous spoken words

bold word or phrase that is emphasised through voice intonation

Chapter 1: Initial interview

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
07:28-09.21	Because… *(sigh)*, because I **do feel** that as a teacher… *(sigh)* I just don't think as a profession we spend enough time… ermmm researching things, thinking about them, reading around them I didn't anyway, I did some, you know, I, I would go along to listen to people sometimes or I would get recommendations of books and I would, I would read bits, but I never, I always wanted to read more. I always wanted to have more background more context, than, than I felt I did...*(sigh)* Whereas, so actually, you know really going into something gives you the opportunity, doesn't it to… to see a broad picture. Ermmm… and also the idea of research because, you know, over 40 years, as you can imagine, I have seen **so many**, initiatives come wheeling in and out of schools…. And, you know, some of them, and I do feel that as again as a profession we've, we've just gone along with things without saying well hang on a minute. How do you know this	Research not valued in the profession. Policy critique Teachers as technicians MA changes thinking	Teacher and researcher identity seem very separate – assumption and experience that research skills are not valued in the teaching profession. Implicit critique of 'churn' of policies and practices, accepted unquestioning by the profession.

	works let's have a look at this a bit more deeply Who've you tried this out on where did right well okay we'll just have a go, but we're actually gonna… look at this in a particular way we're not just going to… ermmm throw ourselves at it because it's… what people are doing at the moment. So…, yeah so so that's another reason really, ermmm… it's quite hard, isn't it when you start on something to think how you thought before because it changes how you think now.		
11:03-11:54	I suppose I think very carefully about what do actually, why are we doing this, what do we actually want to get out of it… Then are we getting that out of it…. I don't think we think enough about those questions so [3 sec pause] you know so it's made me think, much more about the whole ermmm [2 sec pause] yeah, just that the whole way that [2 sec pause] that education can be **shaped** and the the, you know, so for example the new Ofsted framework. That's **really** shaping…. how schools are working at the moment now. You know everybody, everybody to a man is reforming their curriculum, revising their curriculum,	MA changes thinking Policy critique	Implicit criticism of how central body influences profession – policies and practices at a local level. Issues of power and agency – profession performative in relation to central decision making.
12.34-14.25	AN: Do, do you think the professional development you're having now on the Masters, is that different the types of professional development, you've experienced previously? K: Yes, hugely different, hugely different [2 sec pause] Ermmm… also it's harder, much harder. So… you know, thing that I've had to learn is… because I've done it for so long I guess, I guess, partly is… yeah partly my personality but I tended to do things quickly. I tended to be able to… knock off a presentation quickly, or scan things and just go yeah yeah yeah right okay, I can talk about that sort of stuff. And when I did the first assignment… in my second year I couldn't understand some of it, and I thought, you know, 'What's going on here? Why can't I do this quickly?' and I realised that I had to have a different approach so I had to read things **several times…** to really	Teachers as technicians MA changes thinking	Contrast between MA and usual CPD. Challenging conceptualisation of teachers as technicians – inviting critical thought and intellectual work. Different demands to 'usual'. Does this contrast make it more challenging to develop self-concept and confidence in researcher identity[ies]?

	begin to understand them. And I had to write things down more and then reread it again and then find something else that linked to it and then, you know, ask people what they thought and various other things so. So that's been challenging. So, so it feels like it's on **another level**….than, than other stuff. Yeah, it does. And it's less, it's much less **practica**l isn't it because generally you would go on CPD training and some of that you think I'm going to **do** this I'm going to **do that**. This isn't like that this is I'm going to **think this** and **write** this and read this… not I'm going to do it, I'm going to think it.		
15.17-15:36	I feel [3 sec pause] *(sigh)* better informed. Yes, I feel more… critical isn't the right word, but I I would be more **reflective** about ermmm… things and, you know… initiatives or whatever.	MA changes thinking	
16:17-16:30	It's it is like it's **another world** it it doesn't, it does feel that it does feel that this kind of work is almost part of another world… than that practical day to day stuff in the classroom.	Academic community	Significant separation between research work and work as a teacher
17:48-18:07	If you had to say what were two key reasons why teachers don't [engage in research] **one** is that it isn't given status and prominence, generally… it's not seen as terribly important in a school culture, ermmm to have **read** around something and **B** time. Yeah. But maybe the status and prominence is equally important,	Research not valued in the profession	Issue more related to status and prominence than simply time – if had more status then more time would be found.
27:45-28:52	A: So at this point in your dissertation, do you see yourself as a researcher? K: **No**… a novice. A: A novice? K: mmmmm A: A novice researcher…. Or just a novice?	I'm not a researcher Research not valued in the profession	Firmly says no to being a researcher – teacher identity much more dominant. Long career as a teacher (40 years) – has this so firmly embedded the teacher identity that the researcher identity is subdued or has difficulty emerging

	K: *(laughs)* Well, I I would feel, ermmm, I wasn't quite entitled to call myself a novice researcher but I guess I am. In this research. Yeah. A: Okay, that's interesting. Why, why wouldn't you consider yourself a novice researcher? K: [4 sec pause] *(exhale of breath)* Well maybe I will if I get going. You know, I just feel like **so** novice *(laughs)* you know, 'cos actually **I did** actually engage in some action research **years** ago with some funded project… ermmm, I can't really, about teacher talk, I think or something I can't really remember, **years** ago, I don't know what it was funded through. So I **have** been involved with action research before, ermmm, on a smaller scale but I don't really remember a great deal about it…		Influenced by first-hand experience of perceived lack of impact of previous research activity.
32.28-32:39	Actually, one of the **key** reasons that people **leave** within the first five years, is because of… lack of support and lack of… **investment** in them as a, as a professional.	Policy critique	Not about workload – this is 'received wisdom'. Issue of retention and attrition is much more complex.

Chapter 2: Video diary 1

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
1a 00:26-00:45	I did my, ermmm, err err *(rubbing face)*…. ethics clearance and, ermmm, form, and that was a lot more, ermmm, detailed, than I'd imagined so it took me a lot longer, ermmm, than I thought	I'm not a researcher	Very hesitant, seems to be searching for words. Quiet tone of voice, looking away from camera. Seems lack of confidence.
1a 01:18-02:06	…that [first data collection] went well… and… was really interesting and quite revealing but *(sighs, pushes hair away, pushes glasses up)* … you know…what I do feel *(emphasises with hand)* now I feel concerned because I've got all this data, you know, I've got my recordings, I've got ermmm…. my observations and… checklists but… errr like, I haven't [2 sec pause] *(sigh)* I haven't dedicated the time to looking into that yet so I've kind of	Emotional labour Functional work	Hesitant and fidgety throughout – possible lack of confidence in talking about research. Seems uncomfortable. Suggestion of emotional impact and dominance of teacher identity[ies].

	parked that for a while which bothers me a bit. And then ermmm… errr… I've moved on to my lit review because I feel that's something that I can get started with.		
1a 02:49-03:05	*(looking down)* I feel, ermmm [3 sec pause] concerned that, ermmm [3 sec pause] *(clicks tongue, looks up at camera)* I'm not further on than I am *(small shrug)* errr which I guess is fairly *(small laugh)* **typical**	Emotional labour	Looks down initially, sense of feeling ashamed at pack of progress?
1b 02:21-00:30	*(big intake of breath)* I really feel like I want to… spend… ermmm errr **chunks** *(emphasises with hands held wide)* of longer chunks of time [on dissertation] and that's what I'm finding difficult	Research not valued in the profession	Lack of time – teacher work is priority. Less value given to research.
1b 01:50-02:44	I'm really **interested** in… ermmm in the subject that I'm researching and actually, you know, ermmm… because of the reading that I've done so far, when I 'm working with schools, 'cos a lot of schools are talking about ermmm…. curriculum revision and at the moment and knowledge rich curriculum and my work on like looking at metacognition children's learning… is directly **linked** like the cognitive science element is is directly linked to… curriculum design and implementation so… I'm finding that, you know, that I'm kind of talking about that much more, 'Well, ok, so you've got this design, but how do you know they're actually going to learn it? And what, you know, have you thought about this and that?' so so it really is… impacting on me as a professional which is great	Application of research Self-concept as a researcher Emotional labour	Seems to run out of words at the end of this, lots of pauses and hesitations and looks at notes – 'I think you wanted to us to talk about the impact of it'… but then returns to transactional process of data collection, literature review and data analysis, then plans for writing up and time management. Raised impact on self as a professional but didn't explain further. Lots of pauses and hesitations, seems potentially to be causing some anxiety? Moved on to talk about plans for data collection which could be a safer topic to discuss.

Chapter 3a: Covid phone call

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
02:33-03:26	Initially we had the ermmm information from the university saying you know these are your options and one was ermmm that ermmm you could ermmm change to a major study. So it said you could change to a major study and I thought I really don't want to do that you know and ermmm I'd planned and collected all my first lot of **data** and you know trawled through it and so and or it said collect your data by another **means**. So I thought right you know that's what I'll try to do. So I rang ermmm so I needed to get on to it quickly so ermmm because I was very so my second data collection should have taken place after the Easter holidays.	Functional work	Greatest concern with practicalities and functional work related to data collection – safe space as identified previously.
07:03-07:13	On the **good side** is that last week I got nearly all my literature survey done, I just kind of got on with it.	Self-concept as researcher	Less time spent on teacher work has meant more time to give value to research work. Supporting self-concept as a researcher.
08:59-09:25	I feel it's a good thing… ermmm I feel you know there are times, I didn't really do much over the weekend but last week there was times when I really enjoyed being absorbed in it and I didn't feel… other pressures that I would normally feel. You know… I didn't feel like oh I should be doing this or I should be doing that. So… so it's good.	Self-concept as researcher Research not valued in the profession Emotional labour	Changes to time and space have allowed self-concept as researcher to develop. Implicit here that research is not valued and teacher work always prioritised. Some guilt at giving time to research when has competing priorities?
09:27-09:54	I miss… I miss the library that sounds silly really because… I can get everything online I know but…. I used to quite like going there. Ermmm… again, I'm not quite sure why but it just made me feel slightly more intellectual! *(laughs)* Hahaha! Ermmm so yes so ermmm yeah I kind of ermmm I've always liked the library you know so I miss that.	Academic community Self-concept as researcher	Importance of physical space in supporting identity[ies] development – perhaps aids in challenging dominant identity[ies] as a teacher.
11:47-12:41	When I get **into** it it it I really enjoy it I really feel ermmm [3 sec pause] errr *(stutters)* Oh I don't know I can't it's interesting it will be interesting to see	Self-concept as researcher	Separation of two 'worlds' as researcher and teacher – implication for identity[ies] transition and revision.

	what it is. I think… it's **partly** because it's so different than ermmm… even **practical** teaching stuff that you feel like you enter another… another little world. And and when you come across… references of people that you, you start to link and you think, 'Oh yes I remember reading about him', or 'He was referencing so-and-so', 'She's referencing…' and you feel like you become part of this… this little **world** that you didn't know about really before. Or very much, anyway. I don't know it's ermmm yeah it's good, it's good, I like it.	MA changes thinking	

Chapter 3b: Video diary 2

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
00:22-00:44	I suppose it's it's there's kind of two errr…. *(waves hands in balancing motion)* parts of this really, on the one hand *(gestures to one side)* ermmm [3 sec pause] collecting the data and that sort of thing has been tricky…	Functional work	Concerned that data won't be as good – repeatedly talks about covid situation making things 'tricky'
01:29-02:12	Motivation at times has been **hard** and it's interesting that because… I do think, it is a bit of the ermmm you know, if you want a job doing ask a busy person kind of thing really in that… you know because I haven't been… *(waves hands gesturing business)* there are times when I'm busy with virtual meetings but *shakes head)* much less than I would normally be and ermmm, some of the times it's been hard to motivate myself I think also I've really missed, ermmm, you know, just [2 sec pause] having a bit of contact with… ermmm… other people who are doing the course *(fidgeting with zipper)*	Emotional labour Academic community	Hesitations and fidgeting last section – sense of vulnerability? Feeling isolated as a researcher.
02:56-03:13	The lit review I've found **really**… challenging to do… ermmm, I don't know why errr I particularly did so that I I didn't think it was gonna be as as hard it was really.	Emotional labour I'm not a researcher	Challenge of research work impacting emerging self-concept as researcher.

04:03-05;04	It was very **useful** feedback but… I did find it at first probably **more** of a … what's the word?... a knockback than I probably would have **normally** found it maybe, I didn't know if that was because of the circumstances you know ermmm just everything feels a bit *(moves hands and upper body in horizontal waves)* odd you know so I was a bit like 'Ohhh' *(leans forward, raises eyebrows)* ermmm [2 sec pause] I found it **hard** to come, I mean, don't get me wrong, there was lots of positive comments, it wasn't, oh, you know, like, **dire** *(laughs)* but ermmm [5 sec pause] *(sigh)* I surprised I was surprised *(nods head)* at how… I had to really **make myself** *(shakes fist)* get back in there and then sort of draft it again and then draft it again and then… I began to see that actually it was so much better.	Emotional labour Self-concept as researcher	Managing challenging feedback, emphasis on resilience to continue through shaking of fist and hesitations/leaning. Impact on emerging self-concept -but perhaps confidence increasing as can now see benefits of re-working?
05:18- 05:46	I found the introduction to the whole thing really easy 'cos it was sort of my story and I knew what I was doing… but, just… pulling together that research **critically**… for someone like me who is not used to doing lots of academic reading so **everything** is hard you have to read it once read it again read it again *(gesturing with hand and head to emphasise repetition)*… to really understand it… and particularly when people are researching you know quite complex stuff.	I'm not a researcher	Working critically with literature requires a different academic skillset to planning 'action' in research – is there some conflict here between approaching research as a teacher and as a researcher?
05:51-06:00	Now I'm working on my methodology section which is **much** more straightforward and I feel… confident with really so I'm I'm kind of doing ok with that…	Functional work	Feeling confident with practical elements of dissertation
06:49-06:55 07:15-07:27	When that bit's done then it's the, oooooh *(groans, pushes hands together and down)* the data and I'm afraid… I'm not looking forward to that that bit ermmm and I you know coding it and actually making **sense** of it… on the other hand it's also quite exciting	I'm not a researcher Self-concept as researcher	Feeling afraid of data – is this 'real' research work?
08:52-08:58	The other thing I've I've missed is going to the library because I do like going to the library I feel I can work better there	Academic community	Importance of physical space as related to developing researcher identity[ies]

Chapter 4: Video diary 3

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
00:07-00:14	I'm now on the, kind of, final straight of my… MA, ermmm… hurrah *(raises hands and shakes, celebratory movement but flat tone to voice)*	Functional work	Follows phrase with a big sigh – suggests that Karen is still mostly concerned with functional work of dissertation at this stage: seems like it's a slog and not something enjoyable or exciting.
00:30-01:17	So first of all, ermmm… [2 sec pause] I do feel that, ermmm, if I were going to do this again, **which I'm not**, err, I would prefer to do one-year full time than a part time MA because, ermmm, all the time that I'm not doing it I feel that I should be doing it, ermmm… [2 sec pause] I just just feel… [2 sec pause] resentful *(leans forward, gestures hand to emphasise word)* almost of other work at the moment, ermmm, you know, that I'm needing to do, ermmm, and, ermmm… [2 sec pause] you know, I.. I wish that I could just prioritise this. So, yeah, that's something I would do if I could. Anyway *(sighs*), here I am.	Emotional labour Research not valued in the profession	Pauses and hesitations here – seems as if Karen has sustained the perception that her research is very separate from her teaching role. She has to make a choice which to devote time to – they are not compatible. Suggestion that FT study would be preferable highlights that Karen does not feel part of a research or academic community at this time. Has this been heightened due to Covid isolation?
02:01-02:45	Actually getting started, on how I'm going to approach it [data analysis section] is difficult… so, I look at other people's data analysis sections, ermmm, in dissertations, and it's just no help whatsoever, really, because, ermmm… [3 sec pause] well because everyone's data's so different and that's kind of fair enough, ermmm, but as a novice, ermmm, just knowing, you know, how to represent it, where to put quotes… Anyway, ermmm, James and I had a virtual meeting last week which was a help.	I'm not a researcher	Refers to self again as 'novice' in research. Looking to other examples for support and seems to feel a bit lost with this part of the process. Data analysis is less functional and familiar than literature review and introduction sections: greater difference perceived with teacher work?
03:00-03:15	I enjoyed, actually, working through the data and finding things out coding it and so on… I think that's probably just my personality, really, I quite like organising things, so, I enjoyed that part of it very much.	Self-concept as a researcher Functional work	Note of surprise at enjoying data work – seems this was unexpected. BUT this is more functional work – a safe space. So less

			challenging in relation to teacher/researcher identity[ies].
03:39-03:45 04:39-04:50	A couple of findings that have been interesting… Even though my sample is small it's been good to actually feel that I've found things out, ermmm.. [3 sec pause] you know, in fact **really** *(leans towards camera)* good to feel that.	Self-concept as a researcher	Seems to be surprised that findings can be substantial from such a small sample/project. Challenge to previous conceptions of what 'research' looks like (e.g. large scale, positivist). Emphasises good feeling about having some concrete findings/outcomes that will be applicable in the future. Highlights affective dimension of her current position related to research.
04:55-05:30	In termmms of an impact going forwards I certainly would encourage ermmm teachers to ermmm… [3 sec pause] to use ermmm…[3 sec pause] pupil voice more, to kind of try things out, and talk to the pupils more about what they've found out and how useful it is ermmm…. Interrogating.. initiatives more I think I would certainly encourage, yeah, and the use of evidence...	Application of research	Findings beyond the scope of Karen's dissertation topic – emphasises the way in which teachers can work with research beyond applying Karen's findings. Suggests that Karen is now thinking more broadly about other teachers' professional development and their relationship with research – a desire to support others in more critical thinking.
05:56-06:13	It does feel, ermmm, it does feel a bit of a **slog** now, ermmm, on this last, this last bit… not because actually it's not very interesting but ermmm… [2 sec pause] it just feels like, as I say, it's been sitting there a long time now *(waves hand around head, as if signifying work inside)*	Emotional labour	Emphasises again the functional aspect of completing dissertation. BUT alongside the affective dimension – research has been inside head for a long time, becoming part of Karen. Suggests that Karen perceives some transition in her researcher identity[ies].
7:47-8:13	academic writing… errr…*(sigh, leans back, rue smile)* yeah… perhaps it gets easier *(moves arm across chest and scratches elbow, folds arm – seems to close body)* I don't know… but… ermmm…it.. you know, because because I	I'm not a researcher	Suggestion of significant investment in the dissertation and wanting to succeed – important to Karen who has begun MA later in life. BUT

	haven't wanted to just do it either, I've wanted to do a reasonably good job of it which I'm sure most people do (*big intake of breath and big sigh/release of breath out)* I do feel like, yeah, it's been a slog at times but, hey	Emotional labour	still a distance between teacher and researcher identity[ies] – perceives academic writing as removed from teacher work. The sighs and body language suggest a significant emotive dimension at this point – issues of confidence in self as a researcher or academic?
08:17-10.09	And, just one more thing that I think I've discovered about **myself** as a learner, is that I do **much** more mulling things over ermmm… so, during lockdown, I I have gone out for walk or run every day… [cut]… and [2 sec pause] I've used that time often to think about my MA, I usually go on my own and I like to do that and… [1 sec pause] that's where some of my ideas have come from, you know, thinking how I'm going to shape something, how I'm going to start it,… ermmm… and I think, you know, all my career, I've been, I've worked really hard, I've worked full-time until ermmm recent times, and so I've worked full time for nearly forty years and also just like always worked really hard like most teachers do and ermmm… was always busy so everything was ermmm done pretty quickly and turned over pretty quickly *(rotates hands in a turning over and over gesture)* and this… I've just spent much more time reflecting and thinking *(raises hand to head, swirls finger round in a 'thinking' motion next to head)* and that's taught **me** *(raises hands and gestures to chest)* that, I think, that it gives a better result. Ermmm, so that's been a big thing to learn actually. Ermmm, I've always been more of a doer than a thinker ermmm and I think it's given me a bit more balance, which I probably wouldn't have got actually, had it not been for lockdown, so that's interesting.	MA changes thinking Teachers as technicians	Most emphasis on change in self – seems to have been surprising for Karen. Expected to see impact on others as learners rather than self. Relates back to unexpected strength if affective response. Hand gestures and tone of voice emphasis the change from doing to thinking. Challenge to Karen's teacher identity[ies] – developing a different work approach by engaging with research. Some implicit criticism of ways of working as a teacher and the fast pace expected which Karen seems to recognise can be limiting.

Chapter 5: Video diary 4

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
00:20-00:42	So I've finished *(smiles)* yay! *(raises hands and shakes)* and submitted my errr dissertation yesterday which is a good feeling ermmm definitely ermmm… although I will miss it I will miss ermmm I will miss living with it definitely but ermmm [3 sec pause] it's done it's finished.	Emotional labour	Seems quite flat – even the 'yay' feels a bit forced.
02:04-02:31	I **believe** that [2 sec pause] teachers need to **understand**… **why** they're implementing something why they're… errr doing something pedagogically ermmm [2 sec pause] not just because someone's some research somewhere has told them that it's a good thing to do *(big intake of breath, smiles)* so, so my study is actually called… 'But… how and why does it work'.	MA changes thinking Teachers as technicians	Reinforced belief in more critical questioning for teachers – challenging conceptualisation of teachers as technicians, implicit critique of policy directions and issues of power and agency in the profession.
04:41-05:03	I hope that… not only does it have an impact on implementing metacognition but on… [4 sec pause] w- w- wider *(gestures hands out)* implementation ermmm for for the teachers involved and for the **school** involved the the implementation across the school will be influenced **hopefully** by my findings.	Application of research Self-concept as a researcher	Confidence in talking about research suggesting stronger researcher identity. Focus on impact on school rather than impact on self – suggests priority is on school and outcomes for children. Is this a driver for Karen – social justice orientated?
05:42-06:15	I suppose my [3 sec pause] *(clicks tongue, blows breath out heavily)* … how can I say… my **driver** would be **understand** research more look beyond the headlines dig underneath it find out why it's working with the kids use that information *(gestures with hand and leans forward slightly to emphasise each of these points)* ermmm… in your implementation and in your in your broader approaches in the classroom [3 sec pause] think about **why** this works… understand it.	Self-concept as a researcher	Articulates underpinnings of research – has a confidence in potential impact across school and other teachers
08:22-08:31	This is what **I** think (*puts hand to chest)* I'm sure lots of people could drive a coach and horses through through it but (*small shrug)* this is what my study showed	Self-concept as a researcher	Ownership of research – 'my study', 'I think'. Accepting if challenge or critique from others

			but has confidence to stand behind research outcomes.
08:43-08:54	I'm hoping that it will make the teachers look at [2 sec pause] **other** things that they do… and be **aware** of how you can mitigate those barriers [for disadvantaged children] more.	Application of research Social justice orientation	Suggestion that impact for disadvantaged pupils is a key driver
10:31-11:19	It would change ermmm… it would change [2 sec pause] what I thought about… using research I mean I have always been interested in that and I suppose at the back of my mind… you know I've thought well yeah but we need to know why but this is fundamentally would would encourage me… to encourage other people to think about why so [3 sec pause] yeah so that that is a change definitely… ermmm….you know why are you doing that, what… how does it help them, how do you **know** it helps them?… ermmm… to ask those kind of questions	MA changes thinking Self-concept as a researcher	Not just concerned with change for self, but also how can work a s researcher to support change in others in the profession.
11:30-11:36 12:43-13:07	The **checking** of the work at the end was like was **massive** The checking was massive anyway and I wish… I wish I'd kind of thought about that more really (*takes long drink)* some of the things I think sometimes, 'Oh I wish someone had told me that' but actually… *(nods head)* I also have to take some responsibility for that and think… I should have known that really… but anyway (*sigh)* it's done now *(smiles)*	Functional work I'm not a researcher Self-concept as a researcher	Flow through here – from focus on functional work and how initially positioned self as not a researcher and needed direction from others; to, accepting new knowledge and skills and self-directed/independent in research work.
13:42-13:55	I'm sorry if I've rambled on but I've got [3 sec pause] you know I've got quite passionate about *(laughs)* errr about it	Research not valued in the profession	Apologising for talking and being passionate – suggests that expects others not to appreciate research, or that to be passionate about it is not quite right in some way.

Chapter 6: Member check discussion

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
01:36-01:58	That was interesting ermmm… you know seeing that journey… ermmm, through time really and how I felt I **had** changed.. during that time… ermmm [3 sec pause] you know how… *(pulls face into grimace)* probably grown in confidence with with the project as well.	Self-concept as a researcher	Can sense change in identity[ies], not least through growth of confidence in self as researcher. Has 'changed'.
03:25-04:03	I became more [3 sec pause] **interested** in… right ok so maybe at first I saw it as a thing to do to get through you know, a mountain to climb, whereas **latterly** it became more of [2sec pause] my interest in... what it was **telling** me so the **research** became the interesting thing not the **construction** of the dissertation if you like. Ermmm, and then also [2 sec pause] how how this could be **useful**, you know, what impact could this have. So I think my focus changed.	Functional work Self-concept as a researcher Application of research	Shift from functional to critical and intellectual work – from teacher doing a piece of research work to a researcher.
04:18-04:43	This is probably a negative, I… I tend to kind of [3 sec pause] **get in** there *(leans forward to emphasise)* and get on with it, I'm not a great stand back, look at the journey ahead, think where you might be on each part of that… I'm aware of that you know, IKEA flat packs I would be, *(pushes hands down to emphasise)* just welly in there and get on…	Functional work MA changes thinking	Change of thinking/pace and approach. Implicit revocation of previous way of working as teacher.
05:29-05:47	Probably initially it was something that you did a bit of and left it whereas **latterly** it lived with me… I thought about it, it was always there whenever I was out for a walk or going to sleep at night I was turning things over [2 sec pause] It was odd when I finished it	Functional work Emotional labour	Significant affective dimension – ownership of research? Shift from functional to meaningful.
06:18-06:26	There is a slight imposter syndrome… I think *(nods head gently)* for me that I would still think, 'Ooooh, I'm not academic though, I'm not really an academic'	I'm not a researcher	Shift towards researcher identity[ies] but 'academic' still some distance.

06:45-07:10	There probably is a bit of me thinking, 'But I'm I'm a **practical** person, I'm a **classroom** teacher, I'm a leader, I'm a manager, I'm not a… an academic [4 sec pause] you know errr yeah I and so I think it's that sort of **identity** as… as doing academic work that… you almost feel you've got to make **excuses** for really.	Research not valued in the profession	
08:22-08:48	There's something about the sort of academic [3 sec pause] *(sighs)* the notion of being an academic or doing academic work that seems… not necessarily superior, but on a different **level**, that I think ermmm [2 sec pause] you almost sort of that's what I meant by the imposter syndrome that you think, but but that I'm not that	Self-concept as researcher I'm not a researcher	Theory-practice divide? Ivory towers?
09:12-09:45	Maybe we should just [2 sec pause] *(shaking head)* be encouraged more to see ourselves in… in in more dual roles is what I'm trying to say because ermmm it you know part of my personality as well but [2 sec pause] teaching is so much about getting the job done isn't it and ermmm… you know ermmm getting results on the table but… ermmm you know I can hugely see the benefits of ermmm… of taking time to stand back from things.	Advocacy for research Teachers as technicians MA changes thinking	
14:08-14:23	Would I encourage somebody in a full-time job to do an MA? *(shakes head gently)* I'm not sure…. *(shaking head)* because [3 sec pause] because it's hugely time-consuming Amanda I just don't know how, how you marry it.	Research not valued in the profession	Time as a proxy for value?
20:46-21:42	Maybe the only way it could be done is if… as you say there's a culture change so it's an expectation and then ermmm you also had ermmm a dedicated day per week or something like that if you were embarking on further study. I think though, this is a personal view, that they should if if that was going to be the case Amanda they've got to raise the academic bar a bit *(shakes head)*… in terms of people they're letting in… into teaching. Because ermmm you know it may just be because I am old but ermmm *(laughs, gestures to camera)* you're supposed to say ermmm no you're not	Research not valued in the profession Policy critique Teachers as technicians	Lack of academic expectation for new teachers – expected to carry out technical and functional work, not critical and intellectual work.

	at that point… ermmm but ermmm I am **staggered** sometimes at the ermmm at the low levels of literacy let's say in some of the people		
24:53-25:13 25:32-25:50	They [teachers] need to be given the right development… and so on that not just… tells them what… you know worksheet to use but that really gets them to **grapple** with thinking that's **behind** that so that… ermmm so that they develop in that sense. Because it's such an important job isn't it Amanda that you've got to get good people doing it and people who… who are **thinkers** who… ermmm you know who who are going to ermmm shape the future for young people	Policy critique Teachers as technicians MA changes thinking Social justice orientation	Links to CPD and shift to NPQs, ECF, etc… more practical and less intellectual – following directives, technical work.
26:52-27:17	I do feel that the more… development opportunities that you give to teachers and I think research does back this up or some research says, see I don't say anymore "research" (*uses finger quote marks)* I think "what research" *(finger quotes again)* ermmm that you know teachers… teachers are more likely *(leans forward to emphasise)* to stay in the **profession** when they are **invested** in as and errr their development is is is is invested in.	Self-concept as a researcher Policy critique	Re-frames the way in which uses research – more precision.
30:05-30:30	I do think and I know some schools do this in different ways don't they you know having that staffroom culture of… bringing a piece of research to a meeting or errr or whatever ermmm you know ermmm can really… can really help ermmm the **culture** in a school… I think there's more of a **drive** in a sense, certainly from Ofsted…	Teachers as technicians Policy critique	Implicit criticism of teachers as technicians and need for culture change to address this – but this is driven externally by Ofsted in current context so is this just another tokenistic response?
35:32-36:38	…making sure that [2 sec pause] it's not [3 sec pause] like at a toy town level *(leans forward to emphasise)* if you like you know that [2 sec pause] or that it's too too context related… because you just try something out and it works in that classroom. I think you need a **sense** of the bigger picture a little bit as well. So I don't think it's either [4 sec pause] do they call them randomised control trials or the other stuff I think it's both. Ermmm I suppose is what I'm trying to say there really I don't think there should be	Self-concept as a researcher Policy critique Advocacy for research	Advocating for academic community in school culture – similar to own experiences. Implicit critique of current positioning of theory-practice divide that is embedded in policy and practice.

	an argument for one of you know 'oh academics v teachers in the classroom'. I think… I think we should be working more closely together *(leans forward and nods head)*. That's what I think. And universities errr working more closely in partnership with schools ermmm you know to to help them to develop that culture.		
43.20-44.00	I think also and again I do think you know academics have got a role here… you need to **strip** back that mystique a bit… about the about the writing being ermmm something that you know is… you've got to use lots of really **complex** sentences with **huge** words in otherwise it's not a piece of academic writing. There there is a little bit of a sense of that isn't there that you read things and the **harder** it is to read the more **worthy** you believe it is. And then you realise after a while that that's not necessarily the case.	Advocacy for research MA changes thinking	Demystifying – comes from some self-actualisation as a researcher? Emphasising need =for different ways to conceptualise what it means to research and be academic – challenging barriers. Links to practice theory divide.
46:15-46:42	That was a big learning point for me… that you've got to take more time …you've got to you've got to read and reread and really digest where you think and then it does start to make sense and you know.. that… yeah… it's **good** it's good when things like that happen because because you realise you're developing you're learning you're becoming you're becoming… you're becoming something that's a bit bigger and better than you were *(smiles)*	Self-concept as a researcher	
48:25-48:58	I remember my boss saying 'Just because you've been a head teacher you can't suddenly think you've got the skill set to be an advisor' and you haven't (*shakes head)* it was a different skill set that… again made me a better head when I went back to school. And I I have thought about that in comparison to doing this that… ermmm being a researcher and writing is a **different** skill set ermmm… but it also makes you better at the day job, so it's sort of separate but but helps you grow.	Self-concept as a researcher	

Chapter 7: 12+ month follow-up interview

Source	Transcript	Codes	Interpretive commentary
03:16-04:15	I was so happy about that [dissertation results]. I was. Yeah. [2 sec pause] ermmm I think ermmm like, one of the things is ermmm… I don't know, it's errr it is it does give you ermmm… oh, confidence isn't the right word *(shaking head)* but [3 sec pause] ermmm [5 sec pause] *(pulls face, moves side to side)* I don't know … I quite like the fact that I've done it *(shakes head and smiles)* You know, like, "Oh when I did my masters" *(posh voice)* you know I don't go around saying that but [3 sec pause] there's just something about having… studied something like that that [5 sec pause] *(shales head)* gives me something that I didn't have before *(leans in to emphasise)*. I can't… think there are lots of different words for it really *(pulls face)* But in a good way really *(smiles broadly)* [3 sec pause] I feel like I can speak more **authoritatively** *(leans forward, emphasise with finger pointing at screen)* maybe, about certain things.	Emotional labour Self-concept as a researcher	Lots of pauses and hesitations – sense of sharing something quite private. Status given to MA – 'posh voice'. Authority in profession – links to status.
06:44-7:23	So for example with the metacognition, one of the things that errr the two sort of main [2 sec pause] things *(looks down, shaking head)* that seemed to show in my little tiny piece of research, one of them was about self-efficacy that it improved that, you can do that lots of ways can't you, but actually, giving [2 sec pause] children **practical** tools to **learn** that **improves** *(leans forward to emphasise each point)* their belief about themselves as learners, that then has implications [2 sec pause] for other things, doesn't it? So so I think that's a slightly different way of looking at it. So anyway, I think that's why they were probably interested.	I'm not a researcher Application of research	Self-deprecating about article that was published – frames dissertation as 'tiny' piece of research, sets self as a different approach to an issue rather than because of merit in the piece as a whole. Validation of academic and researcher self but still lack of self-concept and confidence.
07:41-08:31	I also think that other **people**… have ermmm **viewed** me a bit differently…. So, for example, I've been asked to speak at a conference about it in March, and [2 sec pause] you know, things like that. I just think… that people [3 sec pause] yeah yeah yeah *(nodding head)* people are sort of seeing you as a little bit of an expert in a particular field *(leans forward to emphasise)* and	Self-concept as a researcher I'm not a researcher	Seems reluctance to accept being viewed as an 'expert' Quite hesitant to describe self in such a way. But acknowledges status of MA qualification.

	that I've never been an expert in anything *(shakes head)* I'm not an expert, for God's sake, I'm really not but [4 sec pause] *(looks up in thought)* it's just given that it's given it that bit of status, really, you know, which… which is good. So, it **has** it has it has had an impact, definitely.		
08:51-09:09	And also, Amanda, that whole thing about academic… research is [2 sec pause] that in the past it was just like, an unknown world really *(waves hands around to illustrate)* it was just like a thing out there and now, I feel much more of a connection with it.	Advocacy for research	Change of relationship with research and academia
09:39-10:03	I think that [3 sec pause] *(looks up to think)* I I I will ask the **why** question much more well, you know, why do people think that's a good idea? Where's that coming from? What research is backing that up? Who else is saying that, who might not be saying that? What… Do you know what I mean? Just thinking beyond *(gestures with hands to side)* more than I did.	Self-concept as a researcher	Link to Jane – who said almost the same thing about responses now to reading. Different way of approaching policy and practice, now through a lens of critical research
10:43-11:02	I didn't know I could do [research] and and I did it didn't I? On a really small scale so… *(leans forward)* I'm still massively in awe of people, though, who write these **amazing** articles based on **phenomenal** research you know that that feels like a… another level, doesn't it?	Self-concept as a researcher I'm not a researcher	Although self-concept as researcher still sees divide between self and 'academics' in relation to size, output and impact.
12:39-13:51	When I work with ermmm teachers routinely I'm often impressed by the things that… no, I'm not **often** impressed I'm **sometimes** impressed by things that people have read and thought about and… considered. Whereas I'm not sure that that was **ever** really, ermmm you know, the tools of the trade as it were, when ermmm you know I was a younger teacher. But ermmm I do believe Amanda that ermmm I think there's various camps aren't there I think some teachers are immensely practical. And they see their role as a practical job, to go along, teach children ermmm get them to learn and check that they've done it. And that's it, it it someone tells you what to do, you take those tools, you deliver them, you you do a good job. Then I think there's another layer of teachers, and I'm not making	Teachers as technicians	Links to Jane – notion of spectrum of teachers, or different camps. Different conceptualisations and relationship with research. Defines some as technical and some as critical.

	judgments here, ermmm who are more reflective, perhaps, and more curious about… where those tools… come from, and why, and you know have we thought about this and that.		
17:12-17:53	…for example, the history curriculum at Key Stage One and Two is is almost a political decision… which things you choose *(leans forward and laughs slightly)* You know, it's quite broad and it makes suggestions but what do you choose about the Romans? Or the Victorians? Because actually, you can put a political slant on… on on what you give to children. And I've thought about how that comes from somewhere else *(raises hands to gesture another place)*. And ermmm [2 sec pause] yeah, the direction of travel. Ermmm [3 sec pause] that ermmm… yes, so so I have thought more about that certainly. Definitely.	Policy critique	Has thought about politics in education 'quite a lot' More aware of political underpinnings, example of curriculum decision making as well as general directions in education policy and practice.
17:58-18:15	I think it's a shame probably that… you know, the world of… higher education and the world of teaching doesn't… meet a bit more except for ITT level [2 sec pause] Because it doesn't really, does it, a great deal? Unless you do something like a Master's?	Advocacy for research	HE and school divide
20:45-21:05	I don't know Amanda, maybe maybe if if teachers **were** [2 sec pause] more interested… and and curious about why we're doing things, they wouldn't they wouldn't necessarily be as **compliant** as as a work body *(laughs)* Ha, that would cause a few problems, wouldn't it, for the government? *(laughs)*	Teachers as technicians Policy critique	Teachers like simple, instructive CPD sometimes. But this affects the profession. Challenging compliant professionalism Recognition of political desire for compliance
21:58-22:29	But if you said to a lot of classroom teachers, where where was this research from? Why are we doing this? [2 sec pause] I don't know how many of them would be able to tell you. They'd say because Ofsted say *(leans forward to emphasise)*. And then you'd say, 'Well, why are Ofsted saying this, they didn't pull it out of the sky'. I'm always saying that, 'they don't just pull it out the sky you know… they don't just think, oh, let's do this. It's not on the back of a fag packet.' [2 sec pause] But… when I **bore**	Teachers as technicians Research not valued in the profession	Not just lack of value on research, but also asking questions and being critical – different to usual compliance with policy and directives.

	people about things like that, I can tell they're not that interested *(shakes head)* sometimes.		
23:54-24:17 24:54-25:51	…if you don't **see why** we're suddenly having this refocus… how can you be committed to doing it? *(frowns)*[2 sec pause] If you don't understand *(pushes fist up and down to emphasise)*, if you just think I'm doing this for Ofsted *(shakes head)* why would you do it? You would only do it if you believed in it, wouldn't you? [3 sec pause] Because you you can see where it's [2 sec pause] where it's come from. You know, historically, it's not… it's not **at all** the way that the teaching profession has… has been ermmm… has gone, has it really? And why is that? Is that because it's not… particularly seen as an academic role? Is it because… people are just too busy *(leans forward to emphasise)* and they just think, 'Oh, for God's sake, just tell me what to do and I'll do it'. Ermmm… Is it?... I don't know. I don't know why *(shakes head)*. Is it because we're all scared stiff *(leans forward again)* of the accountability that things like Ofsted bring?	Teachers as technicians Research not valued in the profession Policy critique	
28:02-28:35	Some people who go into teaching are like super whizzy brainboxes. And some people who can… just scrape through their A Levels barely. [2 sec pause] And they they do the same job. I've you know I've worked with people in primary schools who were Oxford and Cambridge graduates, and I've worked with people who can can hardly string a bloody sentence together you know. Ermmm *(laughs)* And you're you're all on on a level… maybe that's… because it's slightly "vocational" *(gestures speech marks)*.		Less wide range for doctors and lawyers – perceives nursing as similar to teaching, a vocational and caring profession, requiring less academic ability.
32:17-33:00	I think [3 sec pause] you know in termmms of academic **reading** when that at first seems very **difficult** ermmm and… a bit impenetrable ermmm so I think maybe, encouraging people to ermmm [3 sec pause] errr *(sighs, shrugs shoulders)* you know re-read things, to talk about… get help from their tutor about how you might start to ermmm critically appraise	Advocacy for research	Techniques/skills/strategies for working academically different and discrete to professional role – links back to saying about 'just because you're one thing doesn't mean you can be another'.

	something, you know, **techniques** I suppose, is what I'm saying, maybe you know thinking more about that.		
33:31-34:15	It's interesting to see people's motivation… what people's motivation often… you know the people… I bet that… at least half the people on my course, were doing it as a career decision. I'm not criticising them for that, but I think… that would have been part of it, rather than ermmm… for its own sake. Ermmm you know so I suppose, it's kind of… trying to get them to **see** the other benefits *(leans forward to emphasise)* that will come from it, rather than just a journ- a part of a [career] journey. I mean, obviously, I wasn't doing it for a career was, I'm too old *(takes drink from mug).*	Advocacy for research	Motivation and commitment – sense of the personal rather than professional. Some implicit criticism of those who don't invest personally in MA to the extent that Karen has.
35:15-35:47	I would certainly you know get people to believe in themselves and think… [3 sec pause] you know, their ability to… find things out for themselves and the **excitement** that you get when you when you pull all your research together *(smiling)* and you start to see a pattern emerging. You know, and you think, oh, you know, I've found this out, no-one else has looked at his before, and… you know, you feel a bit of a **pioneer** and it's good, it's a good feeling *(smiles and nods)*	Advocacy for research	

Appendix C: CUREC

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (CUREC)

Form CUREC 1A Checklist for the Social Sciences and Humanities

The University of Oxford places a high value on the knowledge, expertise, and integrity of its members and their ability to conduct research to high standards of scholarship and ethics. The research ethics clearance procedures have been established to ensure that the University is meeting its obligations as a responsible institution.

They start from the presumption that all members of the University will take their responsibilities and obligations seriously and will ensure that their research involving human participants is conducted according to the established principles and good practice in their fields and in accordance, where appropriate, with legal requirements. Since the requirements of research ethics review will vary from field to field and from project to project, the University accepts that different guidelines and procedures will be appropriate.

- Please check "Where and how to apply for ethical review" and the CUREC flowchart first to see if you need ethics approval.
- Please complete this form using a word processor and email it, together with your supporting documents, to your Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) (**if applicable**). If you don't have a DREC please email this form to ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk using your official **ox.ac.uk email** address. **Only emailed applications will be accepted.**

WHAT THIS CHECKLIST IS DESIGNED FOR

This **CUREC 1A checklist** is designed largely for research that falls within the Divisions of Social Sciences and Humanities where ethical issues are relatively few and straightforward. Interviews, field work and oral history are also included in the CUREC process.

The **full CUREC 2 application** is only required where certain project characteristics (e.g. type of participants, or procedures) result in a more complex set of ethical issues. It is expected that only in a limited number of cases will it be necessary for researchers to complete a CUREC 2 application. The checklist below will direct you to a CUREC 2 application if needed.

WHAT THIS CHECKLIST WILL NOT ASSESS

This checklist does not cover research governance, satisfactory methodology, or compliance with the requirements of publishers when administering their tests or questionnaires. As **principal researcher (i.e. principal investigator)**, it is your responsibility to ensure that requirements in these areas are met.

CUREC does not review studies classed as **audit** (see Glossary and Decision Flowchart for CUREC on our website).

If your study involves **NHS patients, NHS staff / data / facilities, or human tissue**, please check the Decision Flowchart for NHS approval and contact the Clinical Trials and Research Governance (CTRG) team in the first instance.

Further information on the University's research ethics procedures is available from the CUREC website.

SECTION A: Filter for CUREC2 application

This section determines whether your study raises more complex issues which require the completion of a full application for ethical review, known as the CUREC 2 application.

(Please mark 'X' in the Yes/No column as appropriate to indicate your response.)

1. Are research participants classed as people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question? (This may include those under 18 (though see "competent youths"), prisoners, or adults "at risk".) Your attention is drawn to the University's Safeguarding Code of Practice and its implications for researchers involving children or adults at risk, including the need for the work to be risk assessed and for researchers to undertake related training. (**Note**: If any of your participants are aged 16 or under, please answer 'Yes' here **and** also answer question 5 below.)	Yes ☐	No ☒
2. By taking part in the research, will participants be at serious risk of criminal prosecution (e.g. by providing information on drug abuse or child abuse)?	Yes ☐	No ☒
3. Does the research involve the deception of participants?	Yes ☐	No ☒
4. Does your research raise issues relevant to the **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (**the Prevent duty**)**, which seeks to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism? Please see advice on this on our Best Practice Guidance web page.	Yes ☐	No ☒

If you have answered 'No' to all of the questions above please go to **Section B**. If you have answered 'Yes' to any question above continue to question 5 below.

5. Is your project covered by a CUREC approved procedure (formerly known as "CUREC Protocols")?	Yes ☐	No ☒
If yes, please give research procedure number(s):		

If you answered '**Yes'** to **ANY** of questions **1-4**, **and** answered '**No'** to question **5**, **please stop completing this checklist and do not submit it for ethical review**. Instead, please complete the CUREC 2 application form from the CUREC website. Then submit the CUREC 2 form for ethical review.

If you answered 'Yes' to ANY of questions 1-3, **and** answered 'Yes' to question 5, please go on to **Section B**.

SECTION B: Contact details and project description (NB: must be typed not handwritten)

Contact details:

1. **Principal investigator /** supervisor (if student research (title and full name):	Ian Thompson Katharine Burn
2. Name of student (if student research):	Amanda Nuttall
3. Degree programme, e.g. DPhil, BA, MPhil, BSc, MSc (if student research):	DPhil
4. Department or Institute name:	Department of Education
5. Address for correspondence (if different from above):	
6. University e-mail (**not** private email) and telephone:	Amanda.nuttall@oxford.education.ac.uk
7. Name and status of others taking part in the project, e.g. third year undergraduate; postdoctoral research assistant:	

SECTION B continued

Project description:

8. Title of research project:	How do teachers with a commitment to social justice experience identity changes through engaging in Master's-level research?
9. List of location(s) where project will be conducted:	UNIVERSITY

10. If your research involves overseas fieldwork or travel and your department requires a travel risk assessment, will you have completed and returned a risk assessment form beforehand? (This has to be approved by your department before you travel. If you are travelling overseas, you are strongly advised to take out University travel insurance.) *Please also address any physical or psychological risks for Oxford researchers and local fieldworkers in section 15 below and discuss these with your safety officer.*	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not required in this instance ☒
11. Anticipated duration of overall research project:	2 years (maximum 5)
12. Anticipated start and end dates of the part of the research project involving human participants and/or personal data:	From: (01/09/19) To: (01/09/21) Please note that you will need ethics approval **before** you start your research. CUREC 1As may take up to 30 days to process. **Retrospective ethics approval cannot be granted.**
13. **External** organisation funding the research (if applicable):	
14. Title and very brief and simple lay description of research (about 150 words), plus description (about 200 words) of the nature of participants.	
a) Title, brief description of research (about 150 words) in lay language. When describing the research, please include your methodology, how you are applying professional guidelines, and the use to which results/data will be put. **Please also declare any** conflicts of interest **here.**	

How do teachers with a commitment to social justice experience identity changes through engaging in Master's-level research?

The research intends to investigate how teachers experience identity changes during the course of completing their dissertation year of a part-time Master's programme. It will consider teachers' identities through three lenses: personal, professional and political. As teachers go through the process of becoming both a researcher and a teacher, their experiences of managing the dual demands of both roles will be recorded. Its findings will inform the structure and content of this programme, with the aim of widening teachers' participation in higher degrees. Beyond the site of study, the findings will support understanding of teachers' experiences of this type of professional development and inform future schemes to increase teachers' engagement with academic study and research as a defined professional development pathway.

A case study methodology will be used. In September 2019 participants will be invited to participate. Each participant will be invited to take part in an interview in November 2019, the beginning of their dissertation year. This is to create a baseline of their teacher identity and consider their commitment to social justice. Over the course of the dissertation year, each participant will be asked to record and submit six video-diary entries (one per school half-term). Prompts for each diary entry in regard to teacher/research identities and experiences will be given.

Each participant will have an individual interview on submission of their dissertation (October 2020). A final interview will take place at the end of the academic year following completion (July 2021) to ascertain any impact from completion of Master's study.

A participant may decide to defer, suspend or withdraw from dissertation during the course of this study. If a participant decides to do so, they will not continue to be invited to submit subsequent video-diary entries. They will still be invited to the final interview point in July 2021 to discuss their experiences of Master's level study.

Professional guidelines issued by BERA (2018) will be adhered to throughout.

As I am a supervising tutor on the Master's programme I am aware that I need to be sensitive to any perceived power relations from the participants. I will not include any participants that I am supervising during their dissertation.

SECTION B continued

b) Description of participants and obtaining informed consent (about 200 words). When describing participants, please include

1. criteria for inclusion/exclusion
2. method of recruitment
3. processes for consent to participate

Please ensure you attach as separate documents (if applicable, in English translation):

- your recruitment and advertisement material e.g. a poster or brief invitation letter/ email
- information for participants to read (or hear) before they agree to take part e.g. written information sheets or (only if applicable) oral information scripts.
- a document to record informed consent. Templates for written consent forms and/or oral information scripts (in case of an oral consent process) are available from the CUREC website
- a guide to interview questions (this may be a list of questions to be asked, or a preliminary scope of questions), or a sample of other instruments (such as a sample questionnaire)
- (if relevant) debriefing document after participants have taken part

The research participants will be drawn from the part-time Master's in Education dissertation cohort at XXX University. I will attend one of the research training seminars in September 2019 and I will distribute written information sheets (Appendix 1). There will be opportunity for participants to ask questions before being asked to give consent. The information sheet and consent form (Appendix 2) will be available through the VLE for particpants to complete. I will remind students via the message board on the VLE one week after the seminar and again one week before the final deadline about the opportunity to particpate. This will give participants opportunity to consider their decision to participate, give informed consent and prevent them from feeling coerced. Options to withdraw from the study at any time will be made clear.

A maximum of six students will be included in the study, from a cohort of 18 students. If more than six students wish to participate, I will review their personal data to gain a representative cross-section of particpants as regards gender, ethnicity and school context. I will not include any student that I am supervising during the dissertation as this could potentially raise conflicts of interest.

A reconnaissance group with a number of teachers who are part-way through their dissertation will take place in July 2019. This will give me opportunity to review and refine the indicative interview questions and prompts for the video-diary entries to be used in the study. The preliminary draft of questions for the initial semi-structured interviews (Appendix 3) thus represents an indicative list.

Prompts for the six diary entries will also be informed by discussions with the reconaisance group and initial individual interviews in the study. Some preliminary prompts have been considered in light of theoretical framework underpinning teacher identity (Appendix 4).

Questions for the semi-structured interviews at the point of submission (October 2020) and in July 2021 will be formed to follow-up on individuals' experiences and responses as recorded through the video-diary entries. Therefore I do not yet have an indicative list of questions for these interviews.

Research participants will be offered a £5 Amazon voucher for each interview completed and each diary entry that is completed and uploaded. This is a current and accepted form of recompense within the department at XXX University for teachers' time to attend meetings and other partnership activities. This gives recognition to the time commitment from the participants who are studying part-time alongside fulfilling a professional role. It is a token gesture and is not an amount of reward that would coerce participation in the study.

15. What are the ethical issues connected with your research and what steps have you taken to address them? **Please do not answer 'none'.** The committee needs to see evidence that you have identified potential ethical issues with respect to your research and have taken steps to address them. These issues could relate to:

- your own physical and psychological safety as a researcher (please see the University's and Social Science Division's Safety in Fieldwork guidance
- participant burdens and/or risks, and
- data protection/ confidentiality (please also see section 18).

For more guidance on ethical issues, please see http://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/ethics/resources

All interviews for the study will take place at XXX University, where I am currently employed. All risk assessments and health and safety procedures as set out by the university will be followed. I do not anticipate any physical risks to safety.

Participants will be engaged in discussions about their personal, professional and political identities. This could be uncomfortable for some participants. All participants will be informed about the nature of the study and the consent form will clearly set out their right to withdraw at any time and to decline to answer any questions or respond to any prompts.

Participants may experience internal conflicts as they manage the dual demands of being a teacher and research. This could lead some participants to experience personal and/or professional discomfort. Support services available to students of XXX University, including counselling, will be signposted to any participant who displays or discloses experiences of discomfort during or after the study.

One issue is that students may feel obliged to participate if they feel that there may be benefit to their own dissertation study. I will not include any participant that I am supervising for dissertation, and invitations to participate will be sent by myself rather than Master's tutors. As I am a colleague of tutors on the Master's programme, I am aware that participants may feel concerned about sharing details of their experiences if they are negative. All participants will be assured of confidentiality and any information shared about their experiences will

be for the purpose of this study only and will not be fed back to course tutors. Any references to tutors by name will be pseudonymised in transcripts.

Participants will be assured that all data collected is confidential and that all data that is reported will be anonymised. It is highly unlikely that any participant could be identified from their reported data.

Section B continued

16. Will you obtain informed consent according to CUREC guidelines and good practice in your discipline before participation?	Yes ☒	No ☐
If you have marked '**No**', please give a brief explanation and justification for this decision here:		
17. Will your research involve discussing sensitive issues? This could be information relating to race or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, physical/mental health, trade union membership, sexual life or criminal activities.	Yes ☒	No ☐
If you have marked '**Yes**', please make sure that you have included some **supporting information** (as directed in question 14 of this section) showing the range of questions covering these issues. Please see preliminary interview questions and diary prompts in Appendices 3 and 4.		

18. **Management and handling of personal and other research data**

Your management and handling of personal data and special category data of human participants, either directly or via a third party, will need to comply with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the new Data Protection Act, as set out in the University's Guidance on Data Protection and Research. In answering the questions below, please also consider the points raised in the Data Protection Checklist. For advice on research data management and security, please consult with the University's Research Data Team (researchdata@ox.ac.uk) and/or your local IT department and the University's web pages on research data management.

a) Will your research involve the collection of **records of consent** (e.g. written forms, audio-recorded, or other recorded consent)? **If 'Yes', these will be classed as fully identifiable personal data (directly linked to an individual).**	Yes ☒	No ☐
b) Will your research involve the collection of **other** personal data**?** **If 'Yes**', specify in what form(s) this will be stored:	Yes ☒	No ☐

• Fully identifiable (directly linked to an individual)	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Pseudonymised (potentially identifiable as data may be attributed to an individual if linkage information can be accessed elsewhere by researchers)	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Fully anonymised (i.e. cannot be linked to an individual)	Yes ☐	No ☒
c) Will any of the personal data you collect classify as special category data?	Yes ☐	No ☒
If 'Yes', in what form(s) will this be stored:		
• Fully identifiable (directly linked to an individual)	Yes ☐	No ☐
• Pseudonymised (potentially identifiable as data may be attributed to an individual if linkage information can be accessed elsewhere by researchers)	Yes ☐	No ☐
• Fully anonymised (i.e. cannot be linked to an individual)	Yes ☐	No ☐

d) How will any personally identifiable data be collected, transferred and backed up? Please describe the arrangements for any physical transfer of personal data (including paper records and data captured electronically via portable media) from where it is collected to local storage.

Interviews with participants will be recorded and stored as digital files on a password protected computer at XXX University. Participants will be pseudonymised prior to interview and all audio files will include the pseudonym only. All names will be removed and pseudonyms applied before interview data is stored.

All video diary entries will be uploaded by each participant to a password protected area on the VLE. Only the participant and I will be able to access each video entry. Participants could be identified from the raw video data. Each video-diary submission will be downloaded from the VLE and retained separately from all other data on a password protected computer at XXX University. At the point of transcribing, all names will be removed and pseudonyms applied. Each transcript will be stored separately to the raw video data on a password protected computer at XXX University.

e) Where, and for how long, will participants' personally identifiable data be stored during and after the study? (Please outline the procedures for ensuring confidentiality, e.g. security arrangements, anonymisation or pseudonymisation of such data. Please distinguish between records of consent and other forms of personally identifiable data stored)

The records of consent, which are the only elements of the research data that will include participants' names, will be kept separately from the other data on a password-protected computer, and will be retained for five years after completion of the study. The raw video data will be downloaded from the VLE and stored as digital files on a password protected computer at XXX University. These files will be kept separately from all other data to avoid linkage. These files will be permanently deleted at the end of the study. All other data will be stored in a pseudonymised form and will be retained by myself for as long as it is deemed to have value.
f) If storing pseudonymised data, please confirm that identifiers will be held separately from the research data and linked through a unique study number. Specify how and at what point the pseudonymisation will occur, how the linkage information will be stored and state whether or not (and when) the linkage will be destroyed.
Identifiers that link names of the participants to the pseudonymised data will be held separately from the interview and video diary transcripts. Pseudonymisation of data will occur when the interviews and video diary entries are transcribed. The raw video files will be permanently deleted at the end of the study. The linkage data will be destroyed five years after the end of the study.
g) Who will have access to the personally identifiable data? If personally identifiable data is to be shared with another organisation, how will it be transferred/disclosed securely?
Once the consent forms have been collected and stored only I will have access to them and to the linkage information. Audio files to be transcribed may be shared with a transcription service but these will not include personally identifiable data as pseudonyms will be used in interviews.
h) When and how will personally identifiable data be destroyed? (NB. Personally identifiable data should be destroyed when no longer required.)
The personally identifiable data – i.e. consent forms – will be destroyed through the deletion of all files five years after the end of the study. The raw video data will be destroyed at the end of the study.
i) How, where and for how long will other research data be stored after the study has finished? For more information about University and research funder retention policies, please see the University's web pages on research data management.

The research data will be stored for five years after completion of the study. It may be retained beyond that point if it is deemed to have further value in relation to relation to research about teachers' professional development and knowledge exchange.

SECTION C: Methods and procedures to be used	
Method used: Please ensure you have addressed any potential ethical issues related to these methods in Section 14 and in your Participant Information Sheet	**Please mark 'X'**
1. Analysis of existing records	☒
2. Snowball sampling (recruiting through contacts of existing participants)	☐
3. Use of casual or local workers e.g. interpreters	☐
4. Participant observation	☐
5. Covert observation	☐
6. Observation of specific organisational practices	☐
7. Participant completes questionnaire in hard copy	☒
8. Participant completes online questionnaire or other online task	☒
9. Using social media	☐
10. Participant performs paper and pencil task	☐
11. Participant performs verbal or aural task (e.g. for linguistic study)	☐
12. Focus group	☒
13. Interview	☒
14. Audio recording of participant (you will generally need specific consent from participants for this)	☒
15. Video recording of participant (you will generally need specific consent from participants for this)	☒
16. Photography of participant (you will generally need specific consent from participants for this)	☐
17. Others (please specify):	☐

SECTION D: Professional guidelines and training		
In this section, please mark 'X' against at least one of the following professional guidelines you aim to adhere to. You should use the principles listed in your chosen guideline(s) in conducting your own research. **Note**: this is not an exhaustive list.		**Please mark 'X'**
Research specialism/ methodology	**Association and guidance document**	
Anthropology	Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth	☐
Criminology	http://www.britsoccrim.org/ethics/	☐
Education	British Educational Research Association Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research	☒
Geography	Association of American Geographers Statement on Professional Ethics	☐
History	Oral History Society of the UK Ethical Guidelines	☐
Internet-based Research	British Psychological Society: Conducting Research on the Internet Association of Internet Researchers Ethics Guide Also see our Best Practice Guidance on internet-based research	☐
Law (Socio-Legal)	Socio-Legal Studies Association: Statement of Principles of Ethical Research	☐
Management	Academy of Management's Professional Code of Ethics	☐
Political Science	American Political Science Association (APSA) Guide to Professional Ethics in Political Science	☐
Politics	Political Studies Association. Guidelines for Good Professional Conduct	☐
Psychology	British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct	☐
Social Research	Social Research Association: Ethical Guidelines	☐
Sociology	The British Sociological Association: Statement of Ethical Practice	☐
Visual Research	ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper: Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research	☐
Other professional guidelines. Please specify the other guidelines used here*:*		☐

Please indicate what training in research ethics the researchers involved with this study have received, e.g. the title of the course and date completed (online training available at http://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/support/training/ethics).

If no formal training has been undertaken, please indicate any discussions of research methodology between researchers and supervisors here.
I have discussed methodologies and related ethical issues with my supervisors. I have received guidance on ethical research as part of the DPhil taught programme.

SECTION E: Signatures (The SSH IDREC Secretariat accepts either option below. If you have a DREC, check which signature option it prefers.)

- **Option 1:** 'Electronic signatures', i.e. email confirmations from a University of Oxford email address, can be accepted. Separate emails should come from each of the relevant signatories as outlined below, indicating acceptance of the relevant responsibilities. **Pasted images of signatures cannot be accepted in the sections below.**
- **Option 2:** Handwritten (wet-ink) signatures. Please scan them and the rest of the checklist pages to create a single PDF document and email through.

Please ensure this checklist is signed by:

For staff research:	**For student research**:
1. Principal investigator	1. Principal investigator **(project supervisor)**
2. **Head of Department (or nominee)**	2. **Head of Department (or nominee)**
	3. **Student researcher**

1. **Principal investigator signature/supervisor signature (if student research)**

I understand my responsibilities as principal investigator as outlined in the CUREC glossary and guidance on the CUREC website.

I declare that the answers above accurately describe the research as presently designed, and that a new checklist will be submitted should the research design change in a way which would alter any of the above responses so as to require completion of CUREC 2 (involving full scrutiny by an IDREC). I will inform the relevant IDREC if I cease to be the principal investigator on this project and supply the name and contact details of my successor if appropriate.

Signature (or email endorsement using the above declaration): ……..

Print name (block capitals): …….. **Date**: ……..

2. **Departmental endorsement signature**

I have read the research project application named above. On the basis of the information available to me, I:

(i) consider the principal investigator to be aware of her/his ethical responsibilities in regard to this research;

(ii) consider that any ethical issues raised have been satisfactorily resolved or are covered by relevant professional guidelines and/or CUREC approved procedures, and that it is appropriate for the research to proceed (noting the principal investigator's obligation to report should the design of the research change in a way which would alter any of the above responses so as to require completion of a CUREC 2 full application);

(iii) am satisfied that: the proposed project design and scientific methodology is sound; the project has been/will be subject to appropriate peer review; and is likely to contribute to existing knowledge and/or to the education and training of the researcher(s) and that it is in the public interest.

Signed by Head of Department or nominee *(example nominees for student research include the Director of Graduate Studies/ Director of Undergraduate Studies)*:

Signature (or email endorsement using the above declaration): ……..

Print name (block capitals): …….. **Date**: ……..

3. **Student signature (if student research)**

I understand the questions and answers that have been entered above describing the research, and I will ensure that my practice in this research complies with these answers, subject to any modifications made by the principal investigator properly authorised by the CUREC system.

Signature by student (or email endorsement using the above declaration): …… 
……..

Print name (block capitals): ……AMANDA NUTTALL **Date**: ……13/06/19
……..... ……...

SECTION F: SUBMITTING THE COMPLETED CHECKLIST	**Please mark 'X'**
1. Check you have completed all sections (A-E)	☒
2. Ensure your application is signed (or endorsed by email) by you, your supervisor (if student) and your department/faculty	☐
3. **Please attach all supporting documents (see section B, question 14b for details).** If the appropriate supporting documentation is not included with your application, you will then be asked to provide this separately. **This may delay the ethical review process, and thus the start of your research.**	☒
4. Ensure you have declared conflicts of interest (if any) in Section B, question 14a.	☒
5. If your department has a Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC), submit this checklist and supporting information to the appropriate departmental officer.	☐
6. If your department does **not** have a DREC, submit the checklist and supporting information to the SSH IDREC (email ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk).	☐
7. Applications must be sent by email from your official ox.ac.uk email account.	☐

Appendix D: Member-check notes sent to Nigel and Jane

NIGEL: Video diary moments for discussion

Source	**Transcript (times)**	**Verbal/physical cues** ***Initial interpretations***
Video diary 1 June	4:03-4:12 I think there's part of me that, wishes I was doing this full time, was doing the full-time masters… Erm, I'm kind of seeing pros and cons… 4:19-4:26 I'm kind of [2 seconds], horrible phrase, bitting and batting 5:45-6:09 Because actually when I'm… when I'm, when I'm in it… I'm *really* enjoying it, really really enjoying it, I I I feel really strongly, really passionately about the subject matter about social mobility… erm [1.5.secs] and [2 secs] yeah… it's, it's frustrating at times having to kind of do the day job, it gets in the way… erm, but… hey-ho!	Lots of pauses in this section, looks sideways, 4:19-4:26, closes eyes and shakes head. 4:27-4:40 'Really getting into it': raises eyebrows, emphasises words, tone lifts; 'and then having to go back and sort things out form a work point of view': face drops down, tone lowers. Really enjoying it – again, tone lightens, eyebrows raise. Frustrating at times – eyes close, head shakes, tone drops again. Quite slow and hesitant in this section. The day job gets in the way – little grin, internal laugh, bit ironic? But hey-ho – lifts head, rubs chin, shakes head. *Suggestion that there is some difficulty in managing dual identity. Enjoyment (?) of working on dissertation punctuated by responsibilities of work. Feeling of inhabiting two different spaces – teacher and researcher – and having to 'bit and bat' between the two. Possible that the two identities are far removed at this point, particularly influenced by teacher professional identity and workload associated with this.*
Video diary 2 July	3:27-3:43 I just wanted to talk about, my surprise at some of the reaction… er, well, I say surprise… but I suppose in hindsight it shouldn't be a surprise, erm… but… I, I've been quite [sigh], I've felt quite annoyed at some of the research…	Looking down and away from camera for longer periods. 'My surprise' – looks towards camera, blinking rapidly, sense of discomfort? 'I've been quite annoyed' accompanied by sigh/half laugh. *Why does Nigel feel he shouldn't be surprised by this reaction?*

		Suggest he wasn't expecting such an emotive response, but was he expecting there to be a 'divide' between the research and his professional experience? *Explains some of the research and how it contradicts his own professional experiences. Potential tension here: 'researcher' suggests different outcome/focus/action to 'teacher'. This is both external (in the research he is engaging with) and internal (teacher/researcher identity – personal and professional domains).* *How does Nigel reconcile these tensions?*
Video diary 3 November	Responding to question – what would you like impact of our dissertation to be? A: 3:44-3:56 I'd really like, I don't want to sound... er... pompous, er, I don't know what the word is, but, erm, I'd really like it to make a difference, erm, I, I was really really proud of what I'd put together. B: 0:07-0:18 I'm just not sure *how* to use it... I, I know how I can use it in my job but I've kind of got thoughts about how I could use it in a wider sense... 1:09-1:36 I remember the very first session where we had the introductory session to the MA, Helen [course leader] talking about, erm... she really wanted peoples voices to be heard, and I found that *really* really motivating to be honest... [14 secs not transcribed] and I really like that I just don't know... [1 sec] I just don't know *how* to do that...	Reinforces being 'proud' and 'pleased'. Mentions 'trying to make a difference' several times. 'Pompous' - sighs, looks sideways. *Clearly very proud of the final dissertation but seems to be playing this down a little?* *Is there some tension here between researcher identity (which seems strong) and teacher identity (perhaps <u>shouldn't</u> be focusing too much on the research and outcome)?* Repeats 'I'm not sure how to use it' and 'how to have an impact' in this section. *Researcher and teacher identity back together here – outcomes of dissertation being used in professional role. But Nigel is seeking wider impact and potentially feels constrained by his teacher role.* Seems some hesitation in this part compared to earlier, especially towards the end of this extract. 'I really like that I just don't know how' - shakes head slightly, frowns. *Seems to be searching for wider impact – back to 'making a difference' and suggestion that social justice drivers are very strong for Nigel.* *Seems that researcher identity is strong and to strengthen further Nigel is seeking opportunities to develop his research outcomes and work beyond his professional role. This though is a source of some frustration. Is there some separation here between identity[ies] - is the researcher strand driving Nigel forward more strongly than his teacher identity at this point?*

JANE: Video diary moments for discussion

Source	**Transcript (times) or summary of key points**	**Verbal/physical cues** ***Initial interpretations***
Video diary May	0:19-0:59 I feel that it is very much more valuable now, especially with the up and coming stuff when we go back to school and how we're going to be dealing with children in school, over the COVID-19, and how their social and emotional, mental health erm will be affected, so, for me, it's given purpose purpose to my dissertation, erm, which has helped me with the reading, erm, especially long winded policies, from the government [laughs]. Erm, and so, so I've been, I've been doing that so I found that that it sort of like inspired me a bit more and really helps me to get on with it.	*Lots of discussion in this section about the increased relevance of dissertation – seems to endorse Jane's dissertation topic. Seems to be a perception that the context now adds value, whereas previously the research could have been considered as more abstract.* *Potential to make a difference – links in to social justice motivations?*
Video diary July	Context: talking about a new focus on SEMH related to Ofsted framework and post-Covid 'recovery curriculum' 9:25-9:53 … but changing those mindsets – and coming across so much, so much resistance, erm… has been interesting, and, you know, and how people are different, erm, and you think of people being in primary education as being caring nurturing people when actually a few quite a few of them are just data driven … machines… erm, erm and yeah, it's been really interesting…	Shaking of head at 'data driven machines'. Speech slows at this point – thinking about the phrasing of this? *Is there a sense of disappointment in colleagues – expecting something better from them in terms of their professional attitudes and personal beliefs? Dissertation is more relevant than ever yet colleagues don't all have the same beliefs.* *'Interesting' – word choice – some diplomacy here? Was Jane thinking of something stronger but self-regulated?* *Does everyone have the same social justice drivers within the profession as Jane does? Is this a moment that highlights some of the tensions that arise from her focus on SEMH in her dissertation?*

		Potential link back to initial interview and comment about colleagues reluctance to engage with research findings.
Video diary July	10:43-11.54 And when I reflect on myself as a practitioner it really has changed the way my practice is… Erm, and, you know, sort of like I go into classes and I, I cringe when you almost see this traffic light system up of naming and shaming children. Erm, and I just thought, um, eek, you know, it does make me want to stop and go, you know, there's other ways. So, when I reflect on my own practice yes it has changed. It has changed my own practice, erm, quite a lot in the way that I think things like that, I think, think, thinking more as the whole child, erm, rather than just the academic things that we do in school…. Erm, so yes so that sort of that sort of has changed and that's where I am at the moment. Erm… I think this process has been really good for me. I think it has made me reflect on my own proce-process is what made me reflect as myself as a person. Erm.. I mean, I've I changed careers, I've taken up, not changed careers, I changed jobs in the middle [of the MA programme], from one set- from one school to another.	Shaking of head talking about traffic light system and naming and shaming of children. *Seems some discomfort here with accepted practices of colleagues – relates to previous point.* *How is Jane managing this tension? Does the change in job role afford opportunity to address some of these issues in school?* *Seems to perceive a dichotomy here between thinking about the whole child and focusing on academic attainment – is this an issue related to policy? Could link to reflection in October about no longer considering difficulties in professional practice as individual, but more systemic.*
Video diary October	Impact of MA as a whole on personal and professional aspects: reflecting on own practice, recognising that 'failings' as a teacher were not individual, awareness of systemic issues, changing schools part way through.	*Confidence in talking about research suggesting stronger researcher identity but also articulates clearly impact on teacher identity. Suggest that at this point the two identities are strongly wound together and complementary.* *Discusses significant personal changes, mostly linked to researcher [academic] identity. Will these be sustained?*

	Building a network and community of practice. Mentions increase in confidence throughout this entry. 'empowered' to work with research – not for dissertation, but in guiding professional choices. Personal impact – 'I never thought I had the intelligence to complete a Master's, the stamina to complete a Master's… coming from the background I have'	
Video diary October	4:02 – loss of dissertation, 'emptiness' now it's finished.	*Suggestion that researcher identity grew during dissertation but that this could diminish without the purpose or structure of the MA. Suggests there could be difficulty in sustaining a researcher identity outside of higher-level study.*