

**SIGNIFICANT TURNING POINTS IN THE  
FORMATION OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL  
IDENTITIES IN ENGLAND: A NARRATIVE  
INQUIRY**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of Brighton  
for the degree of Doctor of Education

**December 2020**

## **Abstract**

### **Significant Turning Points in the Formation of Teacher Professional Identities in England: a Narrative Inquiry**

This is a study of how teachers in England used narrative to make sense of and describe significant moments of change in the formation of their professional identities. It covers the thirty years following the 1988 Educational Reform Act, a time of a neoliberal policy agenda termed the 'Global Educational Reform Movement' (Sahlberg, 2012).

The following questions guided this research, one of which addressed concerns within the professional sphere of teaching, the other with making an original contribution within the broad methodology of narrative inquiry:

1. What experiences are significant in the formation of teachers' professional identities, and do any patterns exist between generational cohorts in relation to changes in the educational system of England over the last thirty years?
2. How, and to what extent, can methods of critical literary analysis specifically focused on the different ways that significant episodes are structured, provide potentially richer understandings within narrative inquiry?

Twelve research participants across four generational cohorts contributed to this interpretive inquiry. They were drawn from publicly-funded primary, secondary and further education settings (pupil/student ages 7-18), with a variety of subject specialisms.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted and transcribed between 2015 and 2018. Each interview transcript was coded using a combination of thematic and structural literary analysis. To compare the development of the participants' professional identities, findings were presented chronologically in four broad stages: pre-career biographies; experiences of teacher training and probation; post-probation career; and moments of crisis, departure and resolution.

Amongst findings of the research was the dynamic interplay between the personal altruistic and intrinsic goals of the teachers and the extrinsic, external managerial cultures of accountability. Literary analysis also revealed patterns linked to the biographical and identity profiles of the research participants in how they had structured narratives. Potential implications for policy makers, practitioners and other researchers, including those relating to teacher professional autonomy and mentorship programmes, are discussed.

Until now, within social sciences research generally and qualitative Teacher Professional Identity research specifically, turning points have been widely recognised; however, research into the various ways in which they are structured is scant. The significant contribution of this research has been the attempt to tentatively categorise different types of turns that occur across different episodes in teachers' careers in an organised way. Recourse to recent developments in literary criticism concerned with various ways in which literary works structurally turn has revealed further means to glean potentially richer and more detailed interpretive insights from narrative accounts.

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## Glossary of Contextual Terms

Academy School	A school that is funded by government, but which is run external to the Local Educational Authority (LEA), either as a stand-alone academy, or as a part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).
CEO	The Chief Executive Officer is the most senior person in an organisation, such as an academy chain, and is ultimately responsible for all operational decisions.
Cert Ed	The Certificate in Education is a qualification allowing people to teach in further education (16+).
CPD	Continuing Professional Development is the term that describes the training and learning activities that professionals take part in to develop and maintain skills over the course of their careers.
DFE	Department for Education, is a department of government responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, presently headed by the secretary of state for education.
Executive Head	An executive head is a head-teacher who is responsible for more than one school.
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education: these subject specific qualifications are sat by students at the end of their formal secondary education in the academic year when they would usually turn 16 and are additionally used as an accountability measure for schools and teachers.
GTP	Graduate Teacher Programme: this was a primarily school-centred ITT route to Qualified Teacher Status (with some support and theoretical input from universities and schools of education) in schools in England and Wales, during which teachers were hired and paid as unqualified teachers. It last ran in 2012-2013 and was replaced by the Schools Direct route to qualification.
IGCSE	International General Certificate in Secondary Education is an international form of the GCSE, offered in many independent and private schools in the UK. They are less rigorous than the GSSE and

are not regulated by Ofqual. They were removed from national league tables in 2014. Prior to this, there had been a trend for state-funded schools to move to this qualification to increase standing in league tables.

ITT	Initial Teacher Training
Key Stage	The fixed stages into which the national curriculum is divided, setting the educational knowledge expected of students at various ages.
LEA	Local Education Authorities are the local councils in England and Wales that have responsibility for education within their jurisdiction.
MAT	Multi-Academy Trust or an academy chain is an organisation that operates more than one academy school. Directly funded by the Department for Education, they are independent of democratically accountable local authority control.
National Curriculum	Introduced in England in the Education Reform Act of 1988 and designed to ensure nationwide uniformity of educational content and standards; however, academy schools and those in the private sector are not obligated to adhere to it.
NGO	A non-governmental organisation is a non-profit association often serving social sciences or humanitarian concerns.
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher is a teacher in their probationary period, typically one academic year.
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills, a non-ministerial inspectorate department that carry out inspections of schools and other educational and care institutions in both the private and publicly-funded sectors.
PGCE	Post-Graduate Certificate in Education is an academic qualification that can be achieved on a route through teacher training and has more academic and theoretical content than more school-centred routes.
PPA	Planning, Preparation and Assessment time is an entitlement for protected time on timetables for all teachers in the state-funded sector since 2005.

PRP	Performance Related Pay: From September 2014, the new performance-linked pay framework for teachers in England removed pay progression based on length of service; instead it was linked to results and observations.
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status is a certified status following successful completion of an ITT programme, which allows the teacher to work in state-funded schools under the direction of an LEA.
SATS	Statutory Assessment Tests carried out in primary schools in England, which are primarily used as an accountability measure for teachers and schools.
Schools Direct	A training route that succeeded the GTP, combining school-centred initial training with some theoretical provision from university or other provider.
SCITT	School-Centred Initial Teacher Training programmes are run by schools or groups of schools or MATs, sometimes in partnerships with universities so that trainee teachers can complete additional credits to obtain a PGCE as well as QTS.
SLT	The Senior Leadership Team is responsible to the Governing Body for the leadership and management of an individual school and line manage other staff teams such as pastoral and administrative teams and subject departments.
Teachers' Standards	Introduced in September 2012, a baseline of expectations for teachers' professional practice and conduct.
Teach First	A school-based training programme that is run by a registered charity recruiting trainee teachers to work in schools serving disadvantaged communities. Trainees are required to work in the same school for the training and probationary periods, and obtain the PGCE qualification, with the option of additional masters credits.
TLR	Teaching and Learning Responsibility payments reward additional management and leadership posts and responsibilities for those not on the leadership scales for Senior Leadership Teams.
TPI / TPIs	Teacher Professional Identity / Teacher Professional Identities.

## Glossary of Literary Terms

As this research draws extensively from literary analysis, this glossary provides definitions of the terms that the reader shall encounter.

Agon	See Conflict.
Apotheosis	In theology or classical literature, Apotheosis is a term that refers to the climax of a story when the protagonist achieves divine status. In this study, subjects come from real life, and the term refers to the pinnacle episodes within the narratives. These often act as a thematic antithesis to the nadir experiences. These mark significant structural positive thematic resolutions and realisations.
Anagnorisis	An Anagnorisis is the term applied to the recognition of the true state of affairs, typically by a protagonist or lead character, having previously been in a state of ignorance, possibly having been deceived. It usually accompanies the Peripetia, or downfall.
Anomie	A societal condition recognisable in literature in which there is a disintegration of the bonds between an individual self and wider society, a result of a conflict of moral and philosophical systems.
Antagonist	The Antagonist is the villain of a work of fiction, often depicted as morally evil, and is the chief character opposing the Protagonist.
Apology	As a literary term, an Apology is a justification of the opinions, views and/or actions of the writer or speaker and is distinguished from the everyday use of the word in that it does not indicate an admission of fault or blame. It can have similarities to the Polemic, in that the writer or speaker is writing from a particular bias in a thorough way, and is not concerned with balance; however, whilst the Polemic is an attack, the Apology is a defence of a point of view.
Aporia	An Aporia is a rhetorical device whereby the speaker purports to be in a state of confusion about a subject, typically through the use of questioning.
Circular Structure	In poetry, a circular structure would describe moving away from a position only to return to it.
Concessional	Szybist (2007) described the Concessional Structure as a rhetorical ploy in

Structure / Turn	poetry, song, legal discourse and everyday speech used to persuade the listener of the sincerity of the speaker, by admitting or conceding a point or argument, before moving on to use this concession to substantiate or support the contrary position then taken.
Conflict	The Conflict (called Agon by Aristotle) is the common narrative structure of contest that forms the point of interest in a story and/or narrative. Typically, the Conflict, or Agon, ennobles the Antagonist.
Descriptive- meditative Structure / Turn	According to Marks (2007) this is a three part structure that, similarly to the Emblem Structure, begins with a description and then meditation; however, it has a third part, which returns in a circular to the original scene, with an altered or different understanding as a result of the meditation.
Dialectical Argument Structure / Turn	Beer (2007, pp.99-121) describes this structure as an attempt to debate and then transcend and resolve contradictory points of view through the adoption of a dialogue. More recent manifestations of this structure recognise the inherent inability of paradigmatically opposed points of view to be resolved.
Elegy / Elegiac Structure / Turn	Traditionally a lament for the dead, Powell (2007) describes The Elegy Structure as not being any particular type of structural form, but rather a consideration of something or someone beloved or admired that has been lost, used perhaps in a way to critique something in the present, and/or to celebrate or value or bring back from obscurity something now gone.
Emblem Turn / Structure	According to Theune (2007) the Emblem Structure is one that has roots in Western thought, philosophy, religion and art, and reflects the idea that there is an ordered and decipherable world of meaning. The structure begins with a description of an object and culminates with reflections of what the object means or represents.
Equivocation	This is the use of ambiguous language to conceal the truth or to avoid committing oneself. Villainous and deceptive characters in Shakespeare's Macbeth and Othello equivocate to trick the eponymous tragic heroes to their downfall. This parodied the legalistic use of equivocation by Catholics in court in the times of religious upheaval in the reformation.
Ironic Structure / Turn	Described by Bakken (2007, pp.9-26), indicating a structure whereby there is an initial, naïve assertion of a truth or reality, which is then disrupted and disturbed.

Mid-Course Structure / Turn	A turn described by Harp (2007) that is so extreme that it marks a radical reversal, where the story changes genre, or where the person becomes the opposite of what they had thought.
Nadir	The nadir is the lowest or most unsuccessful point in an episode or narrative. I have used the term to highlight the lowest points in the narratives, which often serve as antithesis to the Apotheoses, or high points. From these, broader themes in the professional identities of teachers can be identified.
Negation	Nahajec (2009) described negation in poetry as functioning to create implicit meaning through the denial of its affirmative opposite. This makes it semantically and logically difficult to work out, as the reader must infer and imagine the intended meaning.
Ode	A serious form of lyrical poetry originating in antiquity. It is used to praise or glorify a person or an event. It is marked for heightened and sincere emotions and is expressed with elevated language
Peripetia	Peripetia is the moment of downfall in a tragedy and is accompanied by an Anagnorisis (realisation).
Polemic	A polemic is a strong verbal or written attack that is marked by its one-sidedness and rebuttal of alternative or contrasting views or arguments.
Retrospective-prospective structure / Turn	Described by Yakich (2007, pp.61-82) as a poetic and literary structure, often signified by the use of temporal connectives, in which the significance of an episode of the past on the present subjective self is conveyed.
Semantic field	Semantics is concerned with meaning, and words that are linked in meaning in a particular episode or narrative would constitute a semantic field.
Subject	Subjects are the concrete and explicit topics of literary texts. They are distinct from themes, which are the subjective underlying interpretations, meanings and ideas. In this research, they are the various career stages, professional roles and institutions described by the research participants, and can be objectively identified. They have been used to order and group the various episodes from the interview transcripts of the research

participants to allow a linear comparison.

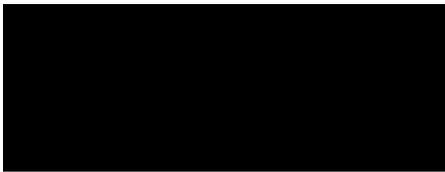
Theme	The themes of literary texts are the underlying meanings and ideas and are distinct from the objectively identified subjects of a text. Themes are, by their nature, interpretive.
Turn / Turning Point	Originally called Volta, a turning point in the sonnet. More recently, in the early years of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century, critical literary theorists have explored the centrality of a turning point as an essential element within all manner of poetry and art forms. Furthermore, poems can be categorised by the various ways in which they are structured around a turn. Theorists have used the term 'structure' or 'turn' somewhat interchangeably. This reflects an understanding in which the structure is regarded as an overall organising principle and these structures can be understood and categorised by the manner in which they turn.
Villanelle	Originally a form of French pastoral poetry with a fixed verse form making use of strict repetition. It developed to be used more often in modern English poetry, especially in the mid to late 20 <sup>th</sup> Century. It became associated with unconventional voices and the points of view of outsiders and obsessives, or those struggling against what they regard as fatalism or undefeatable forces. Famous examples include Sylvia Plath's 'Mad Girl's Love Song' (1953) and Dylan Thomas's 'Do not go gentle into that good night' (1951).
Volta	The Volta (originally Volte in Italian) was the turning point in a sonnet, representing the major shift in tone or argument. See Turning point.

## Author's Declaration

Declaration

I declare that the research contained within this thesis, unless formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. This thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed:



Dated: 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank Doctor Michael Hayler and Professor Andrew Hobson for all of their time and support. Their guidance has been invaluable.

For my supervisor, Doctor Keith Turvey, I am especially grateful. He has supported me from the final stages of my Master's in Teaching and Learning, all the way through the doctorate. Without his patience, good humour, understanding and advice, I would not have made it this far.

I am grateful for the kind contributions of the people who participated in this research. Their stories continue to inspire me.

I also wish to extend my thanks to Mary White and Ed Tattersall.

My thanks go to my family: Ann, Ahmed, Adam, David, Paul, Gail, Isabelle and Maia.

Finally, for my wife, Heather, and my son, Odysseus, who sacrificed so much to give me the time to complete this, with all my love, I dedicate this thesis to you both.

# Chapter 1: Overview of the Research

## 1.1 Introduction

This research investigated Significant Turning Points within the formation of Teacher Professional Identities (TPIs) in England across different career stages. The intention was to investigate broad patterns in such stages that had been identified in the literature review as being universal or generally relevant for a majority of teachers working in state-funded schools in England, such as transitions from pre-career to training, and various aspects of the much researched interplay between self and society in TPI (see 2.4).

Whilst this research was not stage specific, the majority of participants came from comparable settings. Ten of the twelve participants had been recruited from institutions providing either secondary (11 to 16) or a combination of secondary and sixth form (11-19). One teacher had taught in both primary and secondary sectors (7-16). Another trained for the Certificate in Education and had taught in further and higher education (16+). Participants had been drawn from a variety of subject specialisms. All of the teachers in the research had a qualification to enable them to teach in publicly-funded schools or colleges. One referred to having then taught in both the public and private sectors.

These narratives are drawn from four generational cohorts, starting with teachers whose careers began at the time of the introduction of the National Curriculum in England in 1988, until the most recent generation, who completed their probationary years in 2018. Being a cross-generational study, including more recent entrants to the profession, some career stages feature across all of the accounts, whilst others are less represented.

The literature review (see 2.3) contextualises such accounts through reference to writings on the Global Educational Reform Movement (Sahlberg, 2012; Ravitch, 2010; Ball, 2003) and how these changes have played out on teachers' professional identities (Ellis, 2011; and Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). The purpose of this research is to investigate what these narratives can reveal about how changes in the English educational landscape over the last four decades have influenced teachers' sense of professional self. For this contextualisation, I referred to the work by Goodson (2012) on 'periodisation', and that of Fish (1980) on 'interpretive communities' to investigate how the narratives fit within the broader landscape.

While an analysis of the perceptions that teachers have of such events is worthy of interest and academic study in itself, this study moves beyond a thematic analysis to investigate more specifically how teachers use narrative to make sense of their world, exploring the use of storytelling devices. Langellier (2001, p.70) writes that 'personal narrative responds to the disintegration of master narratives as people make sense of experience'. Furthermore, researchers such as Fish (1980), Bruner (1991) and Gee (1991) have championed the social research worth and literary value of the narratives of ordinary (and marginalised) people.

Turning points and critical incidents have become of increasing interest to researchers in social sciences generally (see 2.6) and in education research regarding TPI specifically (see 2.7). This research used literary close readings of narrative accounts of teachers when describing such moments. This started with adapting structural analytical techniques suggested by Labov (1972) and Gee (1991). It then drew upon more recent critical literary theorists, such as Bryant Voigt (1999 and 2009) and Theune (2007), who have investigated the various ways in which texts are structured around turns. The original contribution presented here is a more nuanced and organised approach to categorising the various ways in which people (in this case teachers) describe turning points in their life narratives.

## **1.2 Biographical Context**

After working as an unqualified pastoral, English and Maths teacher in a state-funded secondary school for four years, I trained and qualified to become an English subject teacher on the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). I completed my probationary Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year ten years ago. I have been promoted across a number of roles, and now lead an English Department. I have a role in an education union supporting colleagues in schools within a multi-academy trust (MAT).

In 2003 I completed a Master's degree at Kingston University in Issues in English 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature, where a chief focus of my research was on writing of the self. This has influenced my approach in narrative inquiry.

Since obtaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in 2009, I have been involved in Higher Education. Prior to undertaking the doctorate in education, I completed a Master's Degree

in Teaching and Learning. Over the course of the Professional Doctorate in Education, I have moved from the approach described by Schostak (2002, p.140) as being instrumentally focused to one that is more critical, challenging and human-centred. As such, I have often felt compromised by what I perceived as a shift towards a culture that has been described as more instrumental, managerial and performative (Sahlberg, 2012; Ravitch, 2010; Ball, 2003).

Having lived and worked through tumultuous changes in the education landscape as a teacher, middle-leader, trade-unionist and researcher, I am aware of how differing events, as well as conflicting ideologies, philosophies and approaches, can play out on the formations of teachers' professional identities (TPIs).

As I have been in certain regards an insider researcher, investigating the lives and accounts of teachers who have been in the same professional context, I have had the observation that my research into others has influenced my own views. This has been described by Hunt (1989, p.42) as 'the discovery of the Self through the detour of the Other', and this research provided an opportunity to consider how the epistemological debates within literary theory concerning the relationship between reader and text could provide further insights in investigating my own relationship, as a researcher, with the storied data that I collect. In my methodological section, I have provided a more detailed account of how investigating Fish's (1980) 'Interpretive Communities' has led me to investigate my own theoretical positioning.

## **1.3 Rationale for Research**

### **1.3.1 Crisis in Education and Teacher Recruitment and Retention**

As highlighted in the literature review (see 2.4), central to understanding TPI is the interplay between the individual self and the contexts within which they live and work. Research indicated that under neoliberal teaching cultures, teachers who are altruistically and intrinsically motivated have felt conflicted (See 2.3), exacerbating issues in teacher recruitment and retention.

Researchers and authors have drawn attention to a crisis for teachers working within schooling cultures perceived as being subject to a neoliberal reform agenda (Ball, 2003; Hughes and Hitchcock, 1995; and Hutchings, 2015; Sahlberg, 2012). In England, government

targets for recruitment for school training places had not been met for four consecutive years (Morse, 2016, p.10). More recently, the House of Commons report 'Retaining and Developing the Teaching Workforce' (2018, p.3) reported the following about the Department for Education:

The failure of the Department to get to grips with the number of teachers leaving puts additional pressure on schools faced with rising numbers of children needing a school place and the teachers to teach them.

Additionally, it has been recognised that although 'pupil numbers continue to rise and teacher numbers continue to fall' (Henshaw, 2018, p.1) there has been an 'ongoing recruitment and retention crisis' (ibid). A written parliamentary answer revealed that 'of 21,400 who began career in English state schools in 2010, 30% had left by 2015' (Gibb, 2015). In this research I have investigated factors influencing teachers' decisions to enter, leave or remain within the profession.

### **1.3.2 Turning Points and Critical Junctures in Teacher Careers**

As this research is concerned with critical junctures at various career stages and transitions, the findings are of use to institutions, policy makers, school leaders, teacher training providers and teachers themselves, when managing transition points. Such moments are described by Lambert (1988) as appropriate times for interventions to take place. This is because it is at these junctures that specific institutional processes, where people are at risk, can be adapted and changed. Similarly, Smokowski, Reynolds and Bezruczko (1999) have argued that many life turning points occur within institutionalised settings, such as schools. Understanding this, specific interventions, such as providing information or finding ways to motivate or educate people, could be useful. King, Cathers and Brown et al. (2003, p.202) conducted a qualitative study into how protective processes were built into institutions to assist people with chronic disabilities through turning points in their lives, and it was a finding of theirs that the 'educational environment was the setting for turning points for a number of study participants'. They unambiguously concluded that these turning points had marked highly significant moments for the life paths of the individuals concerned. A

more detailed understanding of the various ways in which teachers describe key episodes in the formations of their TPI may be generative in terms of understanding what supports may be useful in such transitions.

### **1.3.3 Contributions towards research**

Charon (2006, p.113) argues that the methods of literary criticism could provide resources for qualitative researchers. This is because the reader 'pays attention not only to the words and the plot but to all aspects of the literary apparatus of a text' (ibid). Bringing my own subject expertise as an English Subject teacher and having a Masters in English Literature with a focus on literary representations of the self, this research could enrich the research field. Riessman (2009, pp.150-151) has commented that

so few narrative scholars attend to language and form... to *how* a story is composed, including the rhetorical devices employed.

Whilst researchers have investigated the composition of narratives, recent developments in critical literary theory that relate specifically into the various ways in which texts and poems structurally turn have not yet been exploited. Riessman (1993, p.33) has further called attention to a potential rich vein of research in investigating patterns and trends in the plot structures of narrative accounts. There has not yet been a detailed attempt to investigate and categorise the various types of narrative turns in social sciences and TPI research as there has in literary criticism.

The appropriateness of using recent developments in structural literary analysis of turning points was made clear by Theune (2007, p.2), who observed that

Almost no one regularly thinks or speaks in sestinas or pantoums, but almost everyone engages in structured thinking and speech, and many everyday speech acts enact particular structures, contain effective turns.

This observation sees beyond the conventions and formalities of poetic forms to recognise the patterns and turns in poetry as being 'at once paradigm-shifting, highly sophisticated, *and* readily apparent and available' (Theune, 2007, p.2). It draws clear links between poetry and everyday speech. I argue that the nuances and subtleties recognised in literary criticism in the various ways in which texts can turn could be applied back again to these 'everyday speech acts' (Theune, 2007, p.2).

Riessman (2009, p.154) has described how

the narrative form is a universal form of sense making. Individuals interpret events and experiences in the stories they construct collaboratively with listeners.

This research explores narrative as a collaborative act of interpretation, drawing on Fish's (1980) discussions of 'interpretive communities'. It investigates how patterns in narrative constructions are influenced by cultures and circumstances of groups of people.

## **1.4 Context of Research**

Successive governments in England have introduced policies that increasingly bore the hallmarks of private enterprise into publicly-funded education. The 1988 Education Act, for example, introduced elements of parental choice into which schools their children would attend. It further introduced a national curriculum with prescribed Key Stages with educational objectives. Moreover, the introduction of City Technology Colleges (CTCs), Grant-Maintained Schools (GMSs) and the Local Management of Schools (LMS) created provision for publicly-funded schools to be removed from the oversight of the democratically accountable LEAs, with head teachers and governing bodies becoming directly accountable to central government. These were precursors to the later academy schools, which are comparable to charter schools in the USA.

Initially, 203 academy schools were opened under the premiership of Tony Blair (1997-2007) (BBC, 2016). Academisation rapidly expanded under the coalition government. By 2016, '2,075 out of 3,381 secondary schools, and 2,440 of 16,766 primary schools', had 'academy status' (BBC, 2016). Academisation has been politically controversial and opposed strongly by teaching unions. Both the Educational Policy Institute and the London School of

Economics (Andrews and Perera, 2017) found significant variations across academy schools and multi-academy trusts, and evidence of positive effects on GCSE outcomes have been inconclusive, with earlier successes possibly because of more resourcing at the programme's start.

The 1992 Education (Schools) Act, following government concerns about the variability of inspections, introduced a national inspection programme, overseen by OFSTED. Schools and colleges in England are subject to inspections in a high-stakes accountability system. Unions representing teachers and school workers have described cultures of accountability and fear, leading to disproportionately high workloads (Hutchings and Kazmi, 2010), with specific reports of teachers regarding teaching as becoming akin to a 'factory' model (p.10). The national curriculum, league tables and Ofsted were created with the intention of 'raising attainment' (p.10) by enabling parental choice, yet this has arguably led to a narrowing of the curriculum and increased managerialism in schools (see 2.3).

A further factor that plays out on schools and the working lives of teachers is the accountability linked to student progress. In 2013 career progression moved from being automatic to being linked to student outcomes. The DFE's (2017, p.17) own report revealed that the existing financial circumstances would make it 'difficult' for schools to implement research findings that would make such systems effective, including teacher involvement (Murnane and Cohen, 1986), individualised goals (Inwood, 2014), achievability (Armstrong, 1993) and fairness (Folger and Cropanzano, 2001; Levy and Williams, 2004; Neal 2011). Hulleman and Baron (2010) observed that some important aspects of teaching and education that are less easy to measure may be neglected by teachers. It is well-established in research that PRP for altruistically and intrinsically motivated individuals in the public sector is ineffective (Marsden, 2009). Additionally, such a culture may create the conditions where teachers engage in immoral or illegal behaviours, including grade inflation, fraudulence and cheating (Jacob and Levitt, 2003).

The disparity between the ideologies of government teachers has led to a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention. In January 2018, the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts reported on 'the growing sense of crisis for schools in England struggling to retain and develop their teachers' (p.3), which had been exacerbated by the 'failure' of Department for Education 'to get to grips with the number of teachers leaving' the

profession' (p.3). The report described how 'many teachers cited heavy workloads as a reason for their departure' (p.3).

In a survey into teachers' occupational well-being, Ofsted (2019) reported that although teachers 'overwhelmingly' (p.13) reported enjoyment in actual teaching, they felt unappreciated (p.23), were 'disappointed' with their careers and felt that there were inadequate progression opportunities (p.33). Workload and administration (p.24) created additional burdens. Teachers often felt unsupported by their leadership teams and co-workers (p.26). Additional frustrations emerged through a lack of engagement with creating policy (p.39), and that implementing changing policies created a distraction from teaching (p.39). Furthermore, stress was created by Ofsted itself (p.40). Teachers responded positively to trusting leaders who granted professional autonomy (p.42). Other leadership models sometimes created conditions that worsened occupational well-being (pp.43-44). The Ofsted report further highlighted that such working cultures had led 'to a sense of de-professionalisation' (p.5). Given the prevalence of intrinsic and altruistic personal motivations for teachers, such working conditions appear problematic.

A further change in teacher education has been the proliferation of routes into teaching, with more Initial Teacher Training programmes occurring in schools, with less involvement from Universities.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The subject aim of this research was to examine how teachers made sense of the experiences that contributed to the formation of their professional identities. One focus was on the experiences, and the other addressed how such pivotal episodes were described, with a specific focus on how narrative constructions were structured around turning points. The research was guided by the following questions:

1. What experiences are significant in the formation of teachers' professional identities, and do any patterns exist between generational cohorts in relation to changes in the educational system of England over the last thirty years?

2. How, and to what extent, can the methods of critical literary analysis specifically focused on the variations in which turning points are structured, provide potentially richer understandings of narrative accounts?

In the first research question I sought to explore the experiences, inspirations and motivations that led to the teachers choosing to enter the profession, and the various factors that they found helpful or restrictive in developing them as professionals, in training and when they were established professionals. A further focus was what led them to choose to remain in or leave teaching, or to teach in the manner in which they did.

As outlined in the research methodology, the second research question sought to investigate ways in which the narrative turns within the accounts of the research participants in this study could be categorised, drawing upon literary criticism.

## **1.6 Outline of the Thesis**

In this introduction I have provided an overview of this research project. A rationale has been given for the focus of the investigation into the factors contributing to the formation of the professional identities of teachers in England over thirty years. I have justified the original contribution to research, which draws on critical literary theory to investigate more nuanced approaches to understanding the variety of ways in which turning points within life narrative accounts are structured. A brief overview of the context of the research and a justification of the choice of subject has been given. There now follows an outline of the following chapters.

Having already described the specific context of publicly-funded schools in England, Chapter 2 consists of a literature review that provides a more detailed background of the recent histories and theoretical debates pertinent to the subject areas in my research questions. It outlines the effects of the neoliberal, global education reform agenda on teacher recruitment and retention, and on managerial policy and accountability regimes and the subsequent effects upon the formations of TPIs.

In Chapter 3 I explain the methodological approach and research methods. A justification of the qualitative approach within the interpretivist paradigm is given, linked to the subjective nature of the narratively-described experiences of the research participants.

The strengths and limitations of my own stance as an insider researcher are discussed. The use of semi-structured interviews is described, and the justifications for and arrangements for the selection of my research participants and sample size are given. The approach of narrative inquiry is explained. The original contribution towards research, relating to how turning points within narrative accounts are identified and described, is set out. Ethical considerations are put forward.

Chapter 4 consists of a rationale and outline of the conceptual approach towards the analysis of the narrative data, exploring the relevance of recent developments in critical literary theory concerning the ways in which texts are structured around turning points. The relevant taxonomies and categories that have been applied to the data are defined. How they have been drawn upon through inductive analysis is explained.

In Chapter 5 I present pen-portraits of the research participants, grouped into generational cohorts.

The presentation of data and initial thematic findings are set out in two chapters. They are in chronological career stages, illustrated with examples from the interview transcripts. Chapter 6 covers the pre-career stage, training and probation. Chapter 7 covers post-training career, including interactions with students and with leadership and school systems. It includes moments of crisis, resolution and departure.

In Chapter 8 I present the findings of the inductive analysis that drew upon the categories from literary criticism described in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 9 I present the analysis of the findings of Chapters 6, 7 and 8 that address the research questions. It also includes the conclusions and closing reflections of this research project, as well as implications and recommendations in regard to professional practice, policy and future research.

## **1.7 Summary**

In this introductory I have outlined the problems, purposes and questions that guide this research, which is chiefly concerned with investigating how the research participants make sense of and describe the factors contributing towards the formation of their professional identities as teachers within the context of the educational landscape of England over the last thirty years. The original contribution to narrative inquiry research has been described:

how critical literary analysis concerned with structure and the turn could be used as a starting point to explore more nuanced ways of analysing the various ways that significant turning points within narrative accounts are structured. Furthermore, an outline of the thesis and chapter outlines have been provided.

In the next chapter, the literature review, I discuss the contexts pertinent to my research into the storied lives of teachers in publicly-funded schools in England. There is a specific focus on the formation of their professional identities. There is an overview of research on significant turning points within teacher narratives to foreground the methodological approach described in Chapters 3 and 4.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purposes of this chapter are to describe the societal and cultural contexts of the research, and to provide an overview of pertinent research regarding significant turning points in TPI. First, in subchapter 2.2 I set out the requirement to detail the contexts when researching education and teachers. Second, in subchapter 2.3 I describe the broad macro contexts of the growth of neoliberal agendas in education. Third, in subchapter 2.4 I give an overview of research into what constitutes Teacher Professional Identity (TPI). Fourth, in subchapter 2.5 I describe the centrality of narrative to TPI research. Fifth, in subchapter 2.6 I provide an overview of the research into turning points in social sciences research generally (2.6.1) and TPI research specifically (2.6.2). Sixth, in subchapter 2.7 I justify the methodological approach of narrative inquiry (see 3.3) and the use of literary criticism. Finally, in subchapter 2.8 I present research literature concerning the various events, stages, professional roles and transitions pertinent to the formations of TPIs.

### **2.2 Periodisation and Putting Lives in Context**

This research concerns how the changes in the educational system in England have played out on the formation of TPIs, and how teachers have articulated such experiences. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012, p.20) observed that teaching is ‘profoundly affected by the environment – by the culture’. Goodson (2013, p.38) similarly observed that teachers’ narratives reflected ‘a particular historical moment’. As this research investigates the broad backdrop of what has been termed the neoliberal ‘Global Educational Reform Movement’ (Sahlberg, 2012), generational cohorts were drawn from four broad time periods:

- Thatcherism and the Educational Reform Act of 1988 and the introduction of a nationalised inspection service of Ofsted in the Education (Schools) Act of 1992.
- The period of the Labour Governments (1997-2010).
- The period of the coalition government (2010-2015).
- The period of the Conservative Government (2015-2018).

The following subchapter describes literature and research that has been concerned with the international shift towards neoliberal policies in education.

## **2.3 Neoliberalism, the GERM and Effects on Teachers**

In this subchapter I describe the macro and meso contexts that have played out on the formations of TPIs in England since 1988. I am especially concerned with the experiences and perceptions of teachers. This time has been marked by the growth of a neoliberal policy agenda called the 'Global Educational Reform Movement' (Sahlberg, 2012).

Sahlberg (2012) contrasts the corporate and industrialised neoliberal policies, which are standardised, low risk and industrialised, with an approach in countries where there exist cultures of altruistic service towards the public good. Ball (2003) argued that the adoption of managerialism and corporate-style accountability in England had disrupted the lives of teachers who had previously been socialised towards having human-centred or democratic dispositions. Biesta (2005) has argued for a more democratic and human-centred approach towards learning, and, like Hammersley and Traianou (2012, p.59), championed the value of research in education that was not solely instrumental (2013).

Research into the perceived negative effects upon teachers as professionals has been considerable. Ball (2003, p.216) described teachers finding their values displaced by the terrors of 'performativity' and described this as 'value replaces values' (p.3), indicating a moral compromise. Data from interviews with secondary school teachers in the United States by Lasky (2005) indicated that teachers' early professional student-centred identities came into conflict when educational reforms increased cultures of managerialism and accountability. Teachers then struggled to form relationships with students. Furthermore, they found they were constrained in exercising professional autonomy. Similarly, Chong and Low (2009) found that teachers entered teaching for primarily altruistic and intrinsic motivations. However, their initially positive views had markedly dipped as a result of interactions with managerial cultures, and they remained at this low level a year after qualification.

Goodson (2013, p.18) describes the differences between teachers becoming 'technicians' whereas previously they were 'professionals who had autonomy'. Goodson

and Lindblad (2011, p.3) have described a 'de-professionalization' where teachers are 'increasingly controlled by managers and stakeholders', leading to teachers losing autonomy. Evans (2011, p.855) has similarly argued that governmental involvement in the 'designing and delineating' of professionalism has led to teaching becoming 'a representation of a service level agreement, imposed from above'.

Furthermore, Farouk (2010, p.353) has argued that as increasingly teachers 'have limited control over their own professional practice', meaning that they are 'therefore unable to attain their personal moral objectives' it would leave them 'feeling frustrated, angry and/or guilty'. Similarly, Ravitch (2011, p.259) drew attention to negative effects on professionalism by such cultures. She wrote that teachers who were altruistically and intrinsically 'perform better and work harder than those who hope for a bonus or fear getting fired' and observed that 'Carrots and sticks are for donkeys, not for professionals' (p.259). Ravitch (2011, p.259) further defined how

The essence of professionalism is autonomy, the freedom to make decisions based on one's knowledge and experience.

For teachers who are altruistically and intrinsically motivated to become autonomous professionals, working within cultures that they perceive as being controlling and restrictive could lead to conflict.

Such a contrast in ideologies could create the societal conditions that would lead to teacher anomie. Durkheim (1897) described anomie as being likely to occur when there had been significant and swift economic and industrial changes in society, leaving broad gaps between the ideology of a culture and the real-life experiences of the people within it. Merton (1968) described anomie as the inability of people to conform to a culture's aims, objectives and standards. Star, Bowker and Neumann (1997) described how 'too much rigidity and little individual discretion' could create anomie.

Given the disparity between the altruistic and intrinsic motivations of teachers with the ideologies and working practises of neoliberal educational policies, as well as the swift and disruptive nature of the institutional changes, the conditions in which anomie could exist are apparent. This reflects broader research into teachers' occupational burnout.

Dworkin (2009, p.492) described teachers feeling a 'crisis of existence' that came about not for reasons of personal failings but because of 'organizationally-induced variables', which included rapid and numerous policy and institutional changes and reforms, and increased accountability. Additionally, the irreconcilable differences between their idealistic motivations and compromised practises led to teachers feeling estranged from their professional role.

Hughes and Hitchcock (1995) point out that teachers 'are also individual human beings' (p.4) and they argue that

Many reforms over the last few years have failed to grasp the important factor that changes in education also involves changes in teachers' lives. (p.5)

In this research I have investigated the 'significance of individual biography in understanding the teaching and learning process' (Hughes and Hitchcock, p.5), and have therefore investigated how these changes have played out in the lives of teachers and how they have perceived and storied such changes through their narratives.

## **2.4 Teacher Professional Identity (TPI)**

Theoretical constructions of TPI frequently describe the interplay between subjective interpretations of the individual teachers and the wider social contexts where teaching occurs. Olsen (2008) argues that the developments of TPI are shaped by personal biography and histories and recognises that these are informed by 'immediate contexts, prior constructs of self, social positioning, and meaning systems' (p. 139). Archer (2000), similarly, argued that human agents develop agency through 'relations with the world' (p.7), and a key component to agency was individual commitment, and 'what we care about' (p.10). This seems particularly relevant for teachers.

Over the time this research covers, there has been a global shift that has challenged previous notions of professionalism (see 2.3). Coldron and Smith (1999) saw this instrumental approach running against more traditional development of TPI through 'active location in a social space' (p.711), whereby people dynamically interacted with each other

within traditional social structures. They emphasised the quality of relationships and interactions for TPI. They argued that to 'construct a plausible view of professional development' (p.713) it was essential to adopt a well-informed position in debates concerning the interplay between social conditioning and individual agency. They highlighted that an individual teacher facing considerable prescription still had personal choices to make. Sachs (2001) described how rapid governmental reforms and restructuring of education in Australia had led to a conflict between two competing professional ideologies: democratic and managerialism. Under pressures of accountability, teachers were seen to move between these when balancing their own judgements and inclinations against institutional goals.

Krzywacki and Hannula (2010) argued that TPI is wholly dependent upon both the wider cultures and the interpretation of the individual. Karaolis and Philippou (2019, p.399), likewise, put forward that even where there exists a 'sociological' model of a 'socially determined' teacher professional identity, individual teachers do make choices, move between professional spaces, and practise forms of professional autonomy and interpretation. Even in a postmodern conceptualisation of a teaching professional who was thoroughly decentralised in the formation of TPI would be incapable of sense making or of forming any professional identity. They contend that although there exists a dynamic interplay between society and the individual, the background of TPI is fundamentally psychological, in that 'psychological theory, as the process centred on the individual and his/her self-reflections in the mirror of human nature' (p.399). This reflects the conceptual framework of 'interpretive communities' (Fish, 1980) that has been drawn upon in this research.

Nias (1989), when researching English primary school teachers' narratives, contended that there was a difference between personal and professional lives, with the former influencing the latter. The predominant model of the professional self at that time was an autonomous and isolated individual expected to invest personal energies and commitment. Nias's research highlighted the negative effects on mental health arising from balancing externally-imposed pressures of curriculum, standards and class management against the personal desire to care for students. Four years later, MacLure (1993) highlighted two trends emerging as a result of externally-imposed pressures in English schools. Firstly, teachers were becoming alienated from their jobs, leading to stress and job

dissatisfaction. Secondly, teachers were speaking of the past as a golden age to critique present circumstances that had contaminated their own sense of self. These findings parallel structures identified and discussed in this research (8.5.4). Maclure's (1993) research highlighted the importance of context in how teachers described their professional identities. It found that there was significant variation within groups of teachers, as defined by age or career stage. Furthermore, teachers could vary opinions according to changing personal views and circumstances. As such, MacLure argued that teachers were a continuing yet changing self, and that research into particular career or life stages was problematic. MacLure (1993) recommended research into the patterns in the ways in which teachers narrated their perceptions and experiences.

Sikes (1992, p.40) and Beijaard (1995, p.284) each identified that teachers who shared similar biographical and career details had identifiable and predictable patterns in their descriptions of their motivations and perceptions as they aged, including periods of crisis or elation. Beijaard's research regarding 28 secondary school teachers in the Netherlands identified factors that played out significantly on the teachers' articulations of the formations of their professional identities. These were the relationships with their students, how they regarded the status attributed to their subject specialism, and the cultures of their schools. Where there existed challenges to any of these factors - such as struggling to manage pupil behaviour - it could affect the stability of teachers' own sense of their TPIs.

Reynolds (1996), researching Canadian trainee and early-career-teacher professional identities, identified the complexities arising from the struggles to obtain autonomy whilst working within various schools. The challenging of previously held assumptions became problematic, as the conception of identity itself became fraught with uncertainties. Similarly, Cooper and Olson (1996) highlighted that the ongoing complex processes of professional identity formation occurred not in an isolated, abstract space, but played out in challenging contexts in difficult work. They considered notions of the self to be 'much more dynamic, mysterious, complex and multi-faceted than any articulation of it could be' (p.78), rejecting classical notions of an abstract self. Professional identity for teachers was 'continually being informed, formed and reformed' (ibid, p.78) as individuals engage in 'interweaving stories' of experiences. People 'are creating their world whilst also being shaped by it' (ibid, p.78), highlighting the complex, social and narratively-constructed

nature of TPI. For the purposes of this research, it was the collaborative narrative constructions that these teachers had with other professionals that were of a particular interest, as Lasky (2005, p.901) has described TPI: 'how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others'.

Cooper and Olson (1996, p.82) further hold that 'the story of becoming a teacher begins early', referring to the importance teachers ascribe to their own pre-career, sometimes school-age, experiences, on the formations of their TPIs. This is especially so when they are actively engaged in such constructions through dialogue with other people. This was echoed in this research, when teachers described the significance of pre-career, including their childhoods.

## **2.5 The Importance of Narrative in TPI**

Narrative inquiry into the lives and experiences of teachers is now well established (Elbaz, 1991; Clandinin and Connelly, 1992; et al). Drake et al. (2001) observed that the narrative constructions made by teachers 'serve as the lens through which they understand themselves personally and professionally' (2001, p.2). Given the importance of narrative in the formation of TPI, it is unsurprising that many researchers have explicitly investigated within a narrative inquiry framework. Gudmundsdottir (1991, p.207) had drawn upon the 'narrative way of knowing' in her qualitative research into the ways that two history teachers made use of narrative, and was explicit in her use of story to investigate the lives of these 'characters', drawing on social sciences narrative research. She highlighted the narrative nature of the qualitative research interview. She used an iceberg metaphor to describe the richness and complexity of the implicit interpretations in the cultural exchange (1996, pp.293-306). Carter (1993) observed a shift in teacher education research from quantitative approaches to the emergence of narrative and story, and how narrative had come 'to define both the method and the object of inquiry in teaching and teacher education' (1993, p.5).

More recently, Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) conducted a qualitative study that analysed and compared patterns in the use of metaphor by trainee teachers in semi-structured interviews when describing the formation of TPI, identifying trends in how they had moved to adopting a survival mode. The analysis of metaphor revealed that the

formation of professional identity was slow, complicated and often difficult. Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994, p.45) stressed that the development of the professional behaviours of teachers could only be understood in 'the broader context of a career and a personal life history' and emphasised a 'biographical' approach that put emphasis on the 'subjective interpretation of the teacher'. In considering the various significant turning points in a career, this approach would consider how such episodes worked within an entire life narrative, from the point of view of the teacher in question.

## **2.6 Significant Turning Points within Narratives**

Many terms have been used by researchers to describe moments of change and realisation in narrative accounts in social sciences research. They have variously been termed: 'significant transition points' (Hamilton, 2010, p.409); 'pivotal events' (Bullough Jr., 2015, p.84); 'nuclear episodes' or 'significant human experiences' (McAdams, 1988); 'life events' (Cohler, 1987); 'Catalyzing experiences' (Riessman, 1993, P.26); and 'moments of transformation' (Yakich, 2007, p.61). Furthermore, they have been termed 'critical junctures' (Mandelbaum, 1973), a word that is frequently used by researchers investigating the TPI (see 2.5). The use of the word 'Critical', with its connotations of an acutely perilous and serious situation, implies that these episodes are often unpleasant and traumatic; however, the accompanying realisations and subsequent resolutions can be positive (Masten, 2001; King, Brown and Smith, 2003).

Denzin described 'epiphanies' (1989) that 'radically alter and change the meanings persons give to themselves and their experiences' (p.125), emphasising the power of such events, positive or negative, to alter how people think about and perceive things. Rutter (1990) referred to such episodes as 'Turning points', as did Bruner (1994), who held that the narrative understanding of such points was 'crucial' (p.144) in the understanding of reality as history or biography. For Bruner (1994), these 'turning points' often had a moral or a message, led to a change within a person, were emotionally significant, and could be in relation to external factors and changes. Clausen (1993) argued that for an experience or an event in a person's life to be regarded as being a 'turning point' it was essential that there was an awareness of the significance of change. Similarly, King et al. (2003) highlighted that such episodes were often the result of negative experiences, were highly emotional, and

that they involved significant realisations and new understandings of the self and the world. There is parity with literary structures, especially the poetic Volta, and the dramatic peripetia and anagnorisis: such turns are not just events but accompanying realisations. Human beings are forced to adjust their subjective perceptions in relation to externally-imposed circumstances. It parallels an arguably universal literary structure of moving from innocence to experience.

The majority of research into such turning points, as revealed in the terms used above, has been largely thematic, with structure regarded as an ancillary category, rather than as an overall organising principle. One example is in the methodology a 'life-narrative research' (McAdams, 2012, p.17) that explored fifteen creative academics and university professors describing their careers and personal lives. They provided an overarching trajectory of their life in academia, and then focussed on four events, comprising of 'an opening scene (describing how interest in the area of scholarship may have originated), a professional high point, a low point, and a turning point' (McAdams, 2012, p.18). I contend that that all such scenes should be considered turning points. This perhaps demonstrates that the turning point has been regarded as a subject (a concrete event), rather than as a universal structural element that has an array of different substructures that could be tentatively categorised.

## **2.7 Significant Turning Points and Critical Incidents in TPI**

Turning points have been recognised in TPI research. Rolls and Plauborg (2009, p.13) described how the 'terms *critical incidents* or *critical phases* are widely used within research on teachers' work lives'. This parallels the plethora of largely synonymous terms used more broadly in social sciences research (see 2.4). Measor (1985, p.61) researched how incidents could affect development of TPI and she described 'key events in the individual's life, and around which pivotal decisions revolve', elaborating that such incidents and the accompanying interpretive reflections 'end up having implications for identity'. She did not consider these events especially likely to signify a change in the teacher, but rather would consolidate or reinforce pre-existing inclinations.

Tripp (1994) considered that such critical events need not be so seismic but could be retrospectively considered critical by individuals when reflecting on their TPI. Such

reflections were typically presented in a manner which indicated a choice or positive event yet may have been of relatively less significance at the time of occurring. This signifies that the construction and interpretation of events continues subjectively according to changing personal circumstances.

In his further research regarding 'teacher development from a narrative–biographical perspective' (2009, p.30), Kelchtermans described what he termed 'Critical Incidents, Phases and Persons' (p.32), as 'operating as key experiences or turning points for the narrator', in which there had been created a 'rupture' in working life, often leading to a profound challenge of previously held thoughts, beliefs and assumptions. He clarified the use of the adjective 'critical' (p.33), as referring to incidents in an individual teacher's reported subjective experience as being 'distinctive, compelling, challenging, often with a strong emotional connotation'. These incidents and persons mark both the forced external impetus to change, and the accompanying internal reflection. The teachers are 'compelled' (p.33) by external complications and must reflect and change. Kelchtermans (2009, p.33) stressed that these critical incidents are subjective narrative constructions of real-world events, and that these events are critical for the narrator, yet would not be for other participants or witnesses of that event. Therefore, narrative constructions made to convince a listener shall have a selective emphasis or rhetorical slant to convince the listener of the narrator's interpretations.

## **2.8 The Justification for Applying Literary Analysis in TPI Research**

This research was influenced by Gee's (1985, 1986 and 1999) research concerning the poetic, symbolic and figurative aspects of everyday, spoken language. Similarly, Cortazzi (1993) argued that 'insights from literary theory may illuminate a study of oral narratives'. Riessman (1993, p.60) discussed how narrative inquiry could expand to include 'the analysis of poetic structures' and held that 'analysis of plot structures across interviews is a promising approach'. More specifically, Ginsburg (1989a and 1989b) highlights an analytical method built around investigating 'both the substance of the turning points and the way they are sequenced into the life story'. Given the preponderance of turning points in general in social sciences research (2.6) and in TPI research more specifically (2.7), the use of literary tools that specifically investigate turns is appropriate.

Cortazzi describes an 'obvious major limitation' (1993, p.84) in applying the tools of literary theory, which are usually concerned with the 'greater complexity, artistry and imagination' of 'written works' to the implicitly less complex, artistic and imaginative 'oral narratives of personal experience'. This research contends that literature provides more compression in pursuit of conveying particular ideas within the restrictions of the form than do real human beings when attempting to spontaneously make sense of complex realities of their lived worlds. Much of the work is done by the author, artist or poet to make readings more accessible. The compression in literature, in structural patterns, archetypes and tropes provide blueprints and models that could be applied to the messier narratives of real people.

It is important to recognise the similarities between narrative inquiry and literary criticism. Arguably, they share a common focus. Fish (1980, p.108) argues that

Ordinary language is extraordinary because at its heart is precisely that realm of values, intentions, and purposes which is often assumed to be the exclusive property of literature.

As David Foster Wallace (1993, no page) concisely observed: 'Fiction's about what it is to be a fucking human being'. I argue that the models and patterns investigated in literature and literary criticism have relevance for everyday human narratives. Arthur Miller (1949, p.1) argued that 'the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its highest sense as kings were', in that the literary and dramatic structures that were in classical times only used in the representation of mythical, divine or noble persons became recognisable in the lives, narratives and stories of ordinary people. Miller (1949, p.1) described the universal structure of tragedy as 'the underlying struggle' of 'the individual attempting to gain his "rightful" position in his society'. Common people, more than a wealthy elite, were more likely to feel 'the disaster inherent in being torn away from our chosen image of what and who we are in this world' (1949, p.1). The struggle found in this research is that of individual teachers attempting to attain their conception of TPIs within broader, often ideologically contrary, working contexts.

In 'the flexible lyric', Voight (1999) argues that structures and turns transcend particular types and forms of poetry. This research demonstrates that they transcend

poetry and reflect broader human experiences. Hammack (2008), a cultural psychologist, argued that individuals use and adapt pre-existing master narratives from culture in their own narratives. Given the expansion of literacy rates and the developments of mass media in recent centuries, literature and literary criticism has relevance for everyday lives. Where groups of people in similar circumstances draw on the same cultural narratives, it would be expected that they would articulate structurally similar narratives. Fish (1980) called these 'interpretive communities'. McAdams (2006) provides the example of 'the redemptive self', a narrative pattern he identified in particular types of generative citizens of the United States of America, people who contributed to society, as having broadly similar patterns, which echoed in historical documents, mass media, popular culture and intervention programmes.

We can recognise that whilst the structures and turns may be the same, the content shall be more ordinary. For example, Campbell (1949) considered the apotheosis to be a crucial stage, the climax, in the protagonist's journey, leading to an expansion of the mind. The original meaning related to a mythological hero narrative achieving divinity. Within the narrative accounts of the teachers, such a turning point would address achievement in the formation of their professional identity, which may address a thematic low point from another part of the narrative, and the narrator reflecting profoundly upon the experience.

There is ethical value in drawing on literary criticism for everyday narratives. Gee (1991) found rich symbolic and poetic meaning in the narrative accounts of a young black schizophrenic woman. Similarly, Labov and WaFocusky (1997) explored narratives from people of different socioeconomic and racial backgrounds, highlighting the complexity of grammar and language. Clandinin (2016, p.35) draws attention to the fact that a 'simplistic view' on the part of official agencies 'frequently causes narrative inquiries to be dismissed as merely anecdotal or personal'. Bringing the tools of literary criticism to these teachers' narrative accounts seeks patterns that resonate beyond the immediate subjective experiences, in ways that are respectful and nuanced. Furthermore, drawing upon these tools supports the methodological approach as, as Clandinin and Rosiek (2007, p.42) point out: narrative inquiry is 'a quintessentially pragmatic methodology'.

## **2.9 Key Subjects in the Formation of TPIs**

### **2.9.1 Theorizing Teacher Professional Identity Career Stages**

Sikes, Measor and Woods (1985) described five phases in English secondary school teachers' careers, measured in years of service. Huberman, Grounauer and Marti's (1993) research of 160 teachers in Geneva identified seven comparable professional life phases not linked to years of service. Fessler and Christensen (1992 and 1994) drew together a range of empirical and qualitative research to describe eight broad stages of the teacher career, emphasising the non-linear, fluid nature of TPI transitions and the complexities of the interplay between the personal and professional aspects.

Cordingley et al. (2019, p.19) in an international study of the formation of TPIs across seven nations identified and summarised four general procedures across these diverse contexts: individual integration of prescribed professional characteristics; perpetual interpretation of diverse and changing experiences; the use of multiple professional sub-identities to support work with various different people within different networks; and the active development of teacher professional agency and developing professional knowledge.

Day et al. (2006) conducted a study into the professional lives of 300 teachers across 100 primary and secondary schools in England, identifying six professional life phases. A key finding (pp.vi-vii) was that the ability to sustain effectiveness, motivation and resilience was influenced by TPIs. These were not clearly linked to age or experience. Significantly, these could be affected by tensions that arose between their values on one hand and their relationships with their leaders, the impact of policy at school level, as well as interactions with students, on the other. There were variations based upon the socio-economic contexts of the schools, with those in less affluent schools suffering a greater impact on physical and mental health. Professional resilience and commitment depended upon the capacity of teachers to balance the interplay of their personal and professional lives.

Generally, these studies suggest that there are discernible trends and patterns in the formations of TPI. Furthermore, they suggest that there is validity in a more holistic approach to understanding the formation of teachers' professional identities, to include experiences in and out of work, and their contexts, views, values and aspirations, and the

interplay with wider society and school culture. The following subchapter discusses research regarding career stages relevant to this study.

### **2.9.2 Pre-career and Motivations for Entering Teaching in England**

The importance of biography in the development of TPI has been attested to by Goodson (2003) and Watt and Richardson (2008). Heinz (2015, p.2) has drawn attention to the weight in research and literature now arguing for the importance of teacher biography, and a 'holistic' view of the professional, especially pre-career experiences. Similarly, the importance of earlier biographical experiences, such as teachers' own schooling experiences, has been stressed by Flores and Day (2006). Although not specifically asked about, the majority of research participants made explicit reference to such experiences (6.2.2 and 6.2.3).

Heinz (2015), in a large-scale, multi-national empirical analysis investigating motivations for people choosing teaching, highlighted the significance of intrinsic and altruistic factors, and this study included the United Kingdom. Kell (2018, pp.44-45) in a survey of 3000 teachers in England, identified three primary motivating factors for teachers entering the profession, as being 'moral imperative and making a difference', 'social contact, variety and enjoyment', and being able to work with 'a skill and a craft'. Chionga, Menziesb and Parameshwaranc (2017) have highlighted that academic research over the previous thirty years had consistently identified the primary motivations for choosing a career as teaching as being intrinsic and altruistic. This can stem from teachers' own school experiences. It has been evidenced that positive school experiences, especially interactions with inspiring teachers, has motivated people to choose teaching as a career (Book and Freeman, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Richardson and Watt, 2005; Watt, Richardson and Devos, 2012, p.191).

Cohen (2009, p.488), in a detailed study of two veteran teachers, highlighted a further motivating factor, a love of the 'self'. This is based on a genuine passion for the subject and also indicates someone desiring to be the centre of attention in the classroom, despite the difficulties presented by some students.

An emergent area of interest arising from the data was correlative patterns in motivations for entering the profession linked to various personal identity factors. One of these factors was gender. Carrington (2020), Watt et al. (2012) and Topkaya and Uztosun (2012) highlighted a lack of empirical data concerning how gender influenced teachers' decisions to enter the profession. Cushman (2005) explored the then decreasing numbers of male primary teachers highlighted various social and identity factors at play that were related to gender. Carrington (2010) in research into career motivations of primary teachers (4-11) observed that in the UK and elsewhere the teaching of children is socially viewed as a primarily feminised profession, with male teachers regarded as being "unusual", 'ambitious', 'odd' or even 'deviant' (p.287). This reflects findings in the USA (Johnson, 2008). Whilst the participants of this research were predominately secondary teachers, gender can be seen as potentially one of a variety of identity factors contributing to TPIs that are worthy of further research. A further emerging correlative identity factor in this research related to socio-economic status and geographical location. Keane, Heinz and Lynch (2018) highlighted the lack of encouragement during the school days of working-class teachers as being a motivating factor as they expressed a desire to support people with whom they socially identified.

### **2.9.3 Initial Teacher Training (ITT) in England**

Reversing a trend that saw ITT in England moving into Universities in the 1970s, from 1992, much ITT in England moved increasingly out of universities and into school settings (Ellis, 2010; Payne and Zeichner, 2017), reflecting a similar trend internationally (Cochran-Smith, Keefe, Carney, Olivo & Smith, 2020; Ellis, Steadman & Trippstad, 2019; Ellis & Childs, 2019), inviting criticism that whilst teachers had access to experiential learning, issues arose in the capacity for critical reflection (Ellis, 2010). Zeichner (2012) has evidenced that school-centred training routes are an established historical phenomena, presently termed 'practice-based teacher education' or 'PBTE', yet which have existed under various terms and iterations since the 1920s. The neoliberal 'turn' to such an approach is merely a further reiteration of this phenomenon.

Zeichner (2012, p.379) observed that such approaches run risks of training teachers to be 'technicians' who can 'implement a particular set of teaching strategies', yet who lack

professionalism, the capacity to understand complex contextual information, broader skills and ideas. Butin (2005) has further argued that such approaches to ITT deny teachers with the skills to be able to engage with the complexities of the institutions within which they work. Conversely, in the USA, Walsh and Jacobs (2007) have criticised teacher education programmes that include what they regard as non-essential skills and knowledge. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) have alternately highlighted criticisms about a narrowing of teacher education to meet instrumental goals arising from problems identified in data assessment, arguing instead for an approach of 'inquiry as stance', where teachers would be encouraged to reconceptualise and challenge this educational status quo. School-centred approaches can be broadly aligned to a philosophical stance where education can be distributed to learners in various contexts, whilst university-partnership routes provide more opportunities, in theory, to more progressive or alternate, theoretically-informed approaches. Counsell, Evans, McIntyre and Raffan (2000) have highlighted the pragmatic value of engagement in alternative pedagogies and reflexivity for trainee teachers. Edmond (2015, p.16) described how the drive for 'measurable outcomes' had led to risks of teaching and teacher training in England becoming potentially 'narrowly technicist'.

In comparing ITT approaches, Raiker and Rautiainen (2012, p.8), have argued that because 'greater emphasis is being placed on school-led and school-centred initial teacher training' in England, this has led to a difference where Finnish student teachers regard themselves as the Freirean 'cultural worker', whereas in England a typical teacher would regard themselves as being a 'competent technician acting on the instructions of others'. Raiker and Rautiainen (2012, p.10) have further described how the intense focus on meeting instrumental QTS standards has meant that there exists 'little time for meaningful engagement with the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education' for trainee teachers in England, meaning that the aversion to research may be because such instrumental attitudes are implicitly taught.

The critical attitude amongst teachers demonstrated towards the theoretical aspects of teacher training when compared to the practical experiences in the classroom reflects a 'classic and widely cited gap between theory and practice' (Flores and Day, 2006, p.224) recognised in educational research (Hauge, 2000; Hobson, 2003; Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Giannakaki, Pell & Tomlinson, 2008). This was evidenced in research into the lives of fourteen trainee teachers, when

the majority of the teachers spoke of the inadequate preparation provided to them in order to deal with the complex and demanding nature of their daily job (Flores and Day, 2006, p.224)

by their university providers. They (ibid, 2006) further highlighted the discrepancies between ideological and theoretical models of teaching that were inconsequential when faced with the pragmatic challenges of the classroom. In Flores and Day's (2006, p.224) research, examples of research participant responses demonstrated explicit reference to conflicting conceptions of the reality of teaching held by course providers and trainee teachers.

Livingston and Flores (2017) in a review of the abstracts of research articles submitted for the 'European journal of teacher education' under its various names over forty years, observed that the problematic relationship between theory and practice in ITT has been a persistent subject over the journal's existence. A noticeable trend in that journal has been an increase in researchers drawing concerns to the perceived negative effects of cultures of external accountability on ITT. They cite Hallett (1987), who argued that the emerging trend of external management and control was at odds to approaches in other areas of higher education, and reduced teacher quality. So frequently is the issue of coercive managerialism raised as inhibiting capacities for self-monitoring, critical reflection and professional development, that the authors call for it to remain a primary focus for research, analysis and criticism (Livingston and Flores, 2017).

It is important to point out that there is substantial research that is critical of such dichotomous positions, and which calls for integration of theory and practice (Kember, 2000; Hornyak, Green and Heppard, 2007; Wrenn and Wrenn, 2009; et al.).

#### **2.9.4 Reality Shock**

The phenomenon of 'reality shock' in the early careers of teachers is established in educational research (Whiteside, Bernbaum and Noble, 1969; Lacey, 1977; Lortie, 1975; Gaede, 1978; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993). It has been called 'transition shock' (Corcoran,

1981). It occurs where there is a 'mismatch between idealistic expectations and classroom reality' (Flores and Day, 2006, p.219). Hagger, Mutton and Burn (2011, p.387) have argued that this is partially because of "novices' own unrealistic expectations of teaching', which leaves them ill-prepared for the realities of the classroom. This can cause 'stress and psychological distress' (Chaplain, 2008). Hobson and Ashby (2011) have observed and described 'reality aftershock', where teachers experience further difficulties as a result of support being removed.

Veenman (1984, p. 143-144) highlights that this is not a singular moment, but is

the assimilation of a complex reality that forces itself incessantly upon the beginning teacher over a period of months and even years.

Kim and Cho (2014) discussed the failure of ITT programmes to mitigate such issues. They described how trainees were not provided with the skills in efficacy to manage workloads, or the resilience to cope with unexpected challenges. They highlighted intrinsic motivation as encouraging trainees to remain in teaching. It is conceivable that the corrosive effects described previously on intrinsic motivations (see 2.3) and on workload (see 1.4) would exacerbate trainee teacher resilience.

It is relevant to consider how individuals entering the profession could be so seemingly naïve about its realities. The increased marketization and managerialism in education has been accompanied by an increasingly ideological perception of the teacher as an altruistic and empowered individual, as Ravitch (2011, p.252) highlights the stated aims of the neoliberal educational reform movement appear to represent 'liberal, enlightened political views' (2011, p.252); however, in practice, they are 'in fact deeply reliant on free-market principles'. An example of this is presented by Ellis, Steadman and Trippstad (2018), who criticised the Institute for Teaching, an institution providing teacher training, for being 'sophistic' (p.1) and for 'presenting fallacious arguments in plausible ways about complex educational and social problems' (p.1). The disparity between how teaching is culturally perceived as being and what it actually is may create conditions for 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.).

A further factor to consider is the expectations formed in the pre-career experiences of schooling of the research participants themselves. A finding of this research was that

those who had a more positive experience of schooling (more frequently female) were more likely to report experiencing 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.). Van Broekhuizen and Spaul (2017, p.2) have highlighted disparities in academic achievement in western countries between females and males, which they attribute to a 'Martha effect', where schooling and education is more suited to females, or females more suited to schooling.

## **2.9.5 Mentors and Mentoring Relationships**

### **2.9.5.i Introduction**

Relationships and interactions with mentors featured prominently in many of the accounts of the research participants. As has already been highlighted, interactions with 'critical persons' (Kelchtermans, 2009, p.30) can form or be part of significant turning points in narratives describing the formations of TPI. There were parallels in the narratives with archetypes from the heroic monomyth (see 4.8.3) that this research drew upon, with specific reference to the 'mentor' (Vogler, 2007, pp.39-48). Additionally, Campbell (2008, p.81) referred to stages of 'initiation' and 'trials' where the hero was supported by helpers. This section described the history of formal mentorship programmes in English schools (2.9.5.ii), the benefits of such programmes (2.9.5.iii), what research informs about institutional requirements for successful mentoring (2.9.5.iv), and finally, the negative consequences of inadequate mentoring (2.9.5.v).

### **2.9.5.ii History**

Similar to other countries, formal mentoring programmes increased in English schools from the 1980s, as government directives meant that more ITT occurred in schools, partially to increase the number of teachers available. Hobson, Ashby, Malderez and Tomlinson (2009) describe this movement as having two broad purposes: Firstly, to bridge the duality of theory and practice when this shift occurred, and secondly, to retain teaching staff by ameliorating the effects of 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.). Mentoring programmes developed to provide support to teachers in their probationary NQT

years. Formal mentoring programmes involved practising teachers supporting mentees, initially in University and school partnerships. Wilkin (1999) has criticised mentoring and ITT provision in schools as an attempt by governments to de-professionalise teaching by separating it from customarily critical University provision.

### **2.9.5.iii Benefits**

The benefits of successful mentoring of trainee and probationary teachers have been widely reported in research (Hobson et al., 2009; Carter and Francis, 2001; Marable and Raimondi, 2007; Su, 1992). Ingersoll and Strong (2011, p.201), in a review of fifteen empirical studies in the USA, found general positive trends as a result of formal mentoring programmes in three key areas, of 'teacher commitment and retention, teacher classroom instructional practices, and student achievement', although they acknowledged some inconsistencies. Similarly, Hobson et al. (2009, p.209) in their review of research had found widely-reported positive effects on mentees in regards to emotional and psychological wellbeing and capacities of self-reflection (Bullough, 2005; Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson, 2005; Lindgren, 2005; Marable and Raimondi, 2007), with positive implications for retention. They drew attention to research that highlighted benefits of formal mentoring regarding practical classroom management skills and time and workload organisation (Lindgren, 2005; Malderez, Hobson, Tracey, and Kerr, 2007; Moor et al., 2005). Furthermore, they highlight research that evidences the key role mentors play in the 'socialisation of novice teachers' (Hobson, et al., 2009) to specific and more general schooling cultures (Bullough and Draper, 2004; Edwards, 1998; Wang and Odell, 2002). Hobson et al. (2009) emphasised that there are difficulties in researching specific effects of mentoring because of the range of simultaneous support strategies, agencies and persons involved in ITT more broadly, and in the variety of durations, approaches and experiences within individual mentoring relationships.

### **2.9.5.iv Institutional Requirements for successful Mentoring**

Hobson et al. (2009) highlight the importance of matching mentor and mentee appropriately and draw attention to issues that can arise from potentially inappropriate

pairings, such as having a line manager acting as a mentor. Other factors which have a resonance with the narratives shared in this research relate to problems that may arise where there is not sufficient time allocated to mentoring in timetables (Bullough, 2005; Kell, 2018) and where mentors 'are themselves subject to a range of pressures (Kell, 2018, p.19) that prevent them from engaging in the role. Additionally, there may be difficulties where there are issues with institutions being overly restrictive and prescriptive in teaching (Edwards, 1998; Gay and Stephenson, 1998; Yusko and Feiman Nemser, 2008). Further issues may occur where mentors may engage in what has been termed 'Judgementoring' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013), whereby an inadequately trained, school-based mentor may be too ready to provide their 'judgements on or evaluations of the mentee's planning and teaching', rather than encouraging reflexivity on the part of the mentee. Further problems may exist where there is 'fragmentation' (Goodlad, 1990) and a lack of communication and organisation between partner organisations, such as schools and universities (Hascher, Cocard and Moser, 2004; Hobson et al., 2008). There is research evidence of more effective mentoring where there are positive and supportive mentoring relationships across a school culture, beyond the relationship of mentor and mentee (Edwards, 1998; Lee and Feng, 2007; Whisnant, Elliott, and Pynchon, 2005).

#### **2.9.5.v Negative Effects of Mentoring**

Hobson et al. (2009) draw attention to three broad areas arising from research where failures in mentoring can lead to negative consequences for trainee teachers and schools: Firstly, where mentors are not available to support trainee teachers (Hardy, 1999; Smith and Maclay, 2007), or where mentors make unreasonable work demands (Beck and Kosnick, 2000) or engaging in what trainee teachers reported as bullying behaviour (Maguire, 2001). These all led to anxiety and other negative consequences for mental health. Significantly, student teacher wellbeing can be harmed, leading to attrition, where emotional support is expected but not provided (Hobson et al., 2009). Secondly, some research has evidenced mentors being reluctant to give trainee teachers autonomy or responsibility, or of allowing them to take risks (Edwards, 1998; Malderez, 2007). Thirdly, research has highlighted many instances of mentors providing narrow practical instrumental approaches to supporting trainee teachers (Edwards, 1997; Franke and Dahlgren, 1996; Lee and Feng, 2007; Sundli,

2007; Wright and Bottery, 1997), leading to missed opportunities to engage trainee teachers in more critical pedagogical, sociological and ethical reflections (Feiman Nemser, 2001; Franke and Dahlgren, 1996; Lindgren, 2005), which can lead to mentoring reinforcing traditional or conservative pedagogical approaches and social attitudes (Feiman Nemser, Parker, and Zeichner, 1993; Sundli, 2007; Wang and Odell, 2002).

### 2.9.6 School Leaders

Gewirtz and Ball (2010) have argued that the cultures of accountability have moved school leaders away from humanistic and student-centred approaches to satisfy organisational and instrumental goals. This is because they perceive their schools as being small businesses struggling in a large market. As such, it could be argued that the business culture that schools have adopted have parallels with 'Theory X' (McGregor, 1985, pp.33-44), an authoritative approach adopted by managers and businesses where employees are not trusted, and are viewed as disliking their work. This contrasts with the participative management style of 'Theory Y' (McGregor, 1985, pp.45-58), where employees are trusted, well-motivated and enthused by their professional autonomy.

Gunter (2011, p.1) argued that the Labour government purposefully emphasised the role of leadership and management in schools to drive the destruction of previously held professional teaching cultures, specifically to drive business managerialism inspired reform agendas, in that

the problem of standards has been represented through creating solutions for identified workforce deficiencies, and how New Labour constructed and deployed leader, leading and leadership as solutions

This could be seen to create a situation whereby TLR holders and SLTs in schools would be defined by their identifying and managing problems in the workforce (teachers). When investigating how power was structurally distributed in schools. Hatcher (2005) observed that teachers operated under hegemonic hierarchal structures that ensured compliance with governmental policies and agendas. This was despite governmental claims of management power distribution enabling teachers.

The application of such a model of managerialism to a workforce that is intrinsically and altruistically motivated could create ideological conflict, with an accordant resistance to managers and leaders. Forrester (2000) described primary schools where teachers in search of professional autonomy found themselves in conflict with managers working towards narrow indices of statistical success and targets. The changing nature of school leaders towards a more managerialist approach has been described by Case, Case and Catling (2000), Mausethagen, S. (2012), Dworkin and Tobe (2014) and Keddie (2017). Criticisms from trade unions are well established, the mood captured in the title of an NUT publication, referring to schools as 'Exam Factories' (Hutchings, 2015).

Gunter, Hall and Bragg (2013), in their research in mapping leadership discourses in English schools, found that there was a statistical prevalence of functional approaches to learning, education and school leadership, and attributed this to the political dominance and neoliberal hegemony over schools. In research carried out on the written responses of ten serving head teachers in England, Hammersley-Fletcher (2015, pp.198-213) found that the constraints and pressures of working within the neoliberal macro culture, often balancing contradictory requirements, meant that it was common for the moral, altruistic and intrinsic values and motivations of head teachers to be compromised. She argued for a continual questioning of the benefits of various policy agendas on the students. She situated her research in the context of a culture where teachers' work meant that they could not develop as professional and autonomous human beings. Fielding (2007) similarly argues that as part of a democratic society that it was necessary to re-evaluate and challenge an education system that had become unquestioningly instrumental at the cost of human agency and development.

## **2.10 Summary**

In this literature review I have provided the contextual background of publicly-funded schools and teachers' lives and careers in England. I have described the literature specifically related to the formations of TPI and provided a rationale for the use of the tools of literary analysis in investigating how significant episodes are structured around various types of turning point. The following chapters outline the methodological and conceptual analytical approach within narrative inquiry.

## **Chapter 3: Philosophical Framing, Methodological Approach and Methods**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodological choices made to carry out the research arising from the research questions. I have provided my own stance as a researcher, detailing my ontological and epistemological positioning (3.2) within both the social sciences (3.2.1), and within literary criticism (3.2.2). I have described the stance taken within narrative inquiry (3.3). In 3.4, I discuss my position as a researcher in relation to my research participants, and address some of the complexities and opportunities that I had to be cognisant of. I explain the reasons behind the choices made in relation to the specific methods of data collection (3.5), including details and justifications of my research sample (3.5.1), the rationale for the use of semi-structured interviews (3.5.2). I have provided descriptions of the logistics of how research was conducted, and how the narrative accounts were transcribed (3.5.3), coded (3.5.5 and 3.5.6) and organised for analysis. Additionally, I have given a brief explanation of why I chose to use transcripts of interviews rather than asking for written texts (3.5.4). Furthermore, I have outlined how I have approached restorying and representing the narrative accounts of my research participants, including choices regarding presentation of findings and analysis. Finally, I explain the ethical considerations that underlined my research (3.7). The following chapter describes the conceptual approach to the analysis

### **3.2 Ontological and Epistemological Positioning**

#### **3.2.1 Ontological and Epistemological Positioning within Social Sciences Research**

As a qualitative researcher within the interpretivist paradigm, I worked from the position that whilst there is an objectively real physical world, humans experience that world from unique subjective viewpoints that are partial, biased and incomplete. Polkinghorne (1988, p.2) described how human 'reflective consciousness and narrative' had created a 'unique level of reality' that he termed 'the order of meaning'. This subjective reality created by

human beings still remained 'conjoined in interaction with material and organic realms' (ibid, p.4). As people move through the world and interact with each other, they are required to adjust and amend their perceptions of reality. This has parity with the literary anagnorisis, the realisation of the true state of things.

Within the interpretive paradigm, I worked from the position that human beings, in making sense of this world, do so through their interactions with each other. In this, we people use narrative constructions (Bruner, 1986 and 1991) to make sense of and negotiate our positions in the world. Mackay (1997, p.96) argues that the lived experience of humans is fragmented and chaotic, and that it is through narrative structuring that people give meaning to these experiences.

Understanding that humans have partial and subjective perceptions, and that the narrative sharing that shapes reality has intrinsic limitations, I took the same position as Clandinin and Rosiek (2007, p.39) in thinking that all representations 'involve selective emphasis of our experience'. This research investigated how the participants had interpreted the world through the processes of narrative construction and sharing, with an emphasis on the formations of their TPIs.

### **3.2.2. Ontological and Epistemological Positioning Within Literary Criticism**

Clandinin (2016, P11) highlighted the 'diversity' of approaches within narrative inquiry and stressed the necessity for clarity of researchers' epistemological and ontological commitments'. The analytical methods within this narrative inquiry that drew significantly upon aspects of literary criticism paralleled the approach taken within social sciences research (3.2.1.). Fish (2012, p.7) observed that language enabled humans to 'organize the world into manageable, and in some sense artificial, units'.

Ontologically and epistemologically, literary criticism, as with social sciences research, has two extremes. New criticism is positivistic and holds that 'the text's meaning is held wholly within the text' (Howe, 2010, p.193). This is opposed to deconstruction, originally postulated by Derrida, in which 'language is inherently unstable and constantly evolving, thus allowing for many shades of meaning' (Howe, 2010, p.192). At the extremes of this approach, many subjective interpretations are possible, all of which are equally valid.

Within literary criticism, I reject the positivism of new criticism as it is incompatible with my stance within social sciences research, in that as I am within the interpretive paradigm I do not work from the position that there is one objective reality. Neither do I take the stance that all interpretations have externally verifiable validity. This position runs the risk of solipsism. I take the approach that all interpretations are constructed, and that these constructions occur between people within cultural communities of individuals who have similar or relatable worldviews.

Within literary criticism, I am within 'reader-response criticism' (Howe, 2010, p.193) in that I work from the assumption that meaning 'is produced by the reader as well as the author' (ibid). I am particularly interested in the concept of 'interpretive communities' (Fish, 1980), which moved to recognising that individuals who share language, culture, beliefs, and who live in the same or similar historical, social and geographical contexts, will both create and interpret texts with degrees of similarity. Creating a text is itself an act of cultural interpretation. Schostak (2006, p.29) points out that when a research participant describes the people, places and events in their lives that 'none of these were physically present in the room with us', yet there are elements of shared culture that allow people to 'fill in the gaps'. When my research participants shared their narratives, we drew upon a bank of cultural references, signifiers and understandings.

In exploring 'interpretive communities' (Fish, 1980), there exist links with 'new historicism' (Howe, 2010, p.189), in that 'history itself is a construct rather than an objective truth' (ibid). Furthermore, the authors of the narrative accounts are act not fully as 'Autonomous creators but as transmitters of the codes prevalent in their cultures' (ibid), and so the narrative data that I collected was inextricably tied to the socio-historical contexts in which the accounts were shared. This has some resonance with ideas concerning 'periodisation' (Goodson, 2014, p.4), specifically how larger social events are embodied 'within individual biographies'. At the same time, it is important to recognise that these individuals experience the world from their unique subjective viewpoints and are actively engaged in constructing their own identities.

This research balanced intuitive, sympathetic and subjective human reading with an organised and objective approach to identifying trends and patterns. It was influenced by Frye (1963, p.7), who wrote that

Criticism deals with the arts and may well be something of an art itself, but it does not follow that it must be unsystematic. If it is to be related to the sciences too, it does not follow that it must be denied the graces of culture.

The intention, therefore, was to make explicit the implicit cultural readings and interpretations.

### **3.3 Methodological Approach: Narrative Inquiry**

I have taken the position that human understanding of the world is interpretively constructed through narrative. I have demonstrated the prevalence of narrative in research in the formation of TPI (2.5). Narrative inquiry is therefore an appropriate methodological approach for this research.

Barthes (1977, p.79) wrote that 'narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society'. Similarly, Clandinin and Rosiek (2007, p.35) have described how 'human beings have lived out and told stories about that living for as long as we could talk'. Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p.2) observed that 'the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world' as human beings are 'story-telling organisms'. For Salmon (2009, p.78), 'Narrative shaping' is a process by which the discordant nature of reality, of unconnected events and experiences, are formed into patterns, forms and structures that have human meaning. That the patterns that occur are meaningful suggests that investigations into the structural variations that occur within and across narrative accounts could reveal important ideas about how people interpret the world.

It is necessary to recognise that narratives are subjective and biased, representing a partial view of the world. Clandinin (2016, p.16) writes that 'narrative inquirers understand experience as a narratively composed phenomenon'. As such, it is not a concern to discern whether or not my research participants are faithfully producing an accurate description of an external reality; rather, this research is concerned with their narrative accounts as socially constructed phenomena, as acts of cultural interpretation that construe a world of meaning. Such constructs make use of narrative strategies, techniques and patterns. This research does not therefore assume objective veracity. Instead, it asks why narrative descriptions were constructed in particular ways.

Clandinin and Rosiek (2007, p.35) describe how what seems 'new is the emergence of narrative methodologies in the field of social science research'. This is a reference to the narrative turn, a shift in social sciences research that seems to be clearly and succinctly articulated by MacIntyre (1981, p.197), who wrote that

It is because we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of the narratives that the form of narrative is appropriate for understanding the actions of others.

Narrative Inquiry is now widespread in the social sciences and is chiefly marked from other forms of qualitative inquiry in that it is concerned with form as much as it is with thematic content.

Central to this methodological approach is the importance of understanding narratives in their contexts. Trahar (2013, p.XI) points out that whilst narrative inquiry researchers work with the understanding that 'storytelling is a universal practice', it remains that 'a rich description of the context(s) needs to be to the fore', or else it becomes 'difficult for the reader' to understand the narrative reality that the researcher and research participants are attempting to 're-represent'. Riessman (2008, p.105), Chase (2011, p.422), and Clandinin (2016, p.18) have all similarly highlighted how individual narratives exist as culturally influenced subjective accounts that are intricately combined with the narratives of others in a complex social world. Goodson (1997, pp.111-117) similarly examined 'the relationship between stories and the social context in which they are embedded' with specific regard to teachers, and he has described how in the narrative accounts of teachers, that the 'storyline therefore reflects a particular historical moment were teachers' work is constructed a particular way' (2013, p.38). This research identified such patterns in the narrative accounts of teachers from the same and interlinking 'interpretive communities' (1980) when describing experiences in the formation of their TPI.

Atkinson and Delamont (2006, p.165) observed that narrative interactions perform 'important social functions' and 'have moral force and may accomplish social status and professional authority'. They further particular social contexts had corresponding 'narrative conventions' (p.165). They emphasised that stories are performances and warned researchers against assuming the truthfulness or accuracy of the information contained.

Ordinary and commonplace narratives contain poetic, artistic and dramatic elements (Tedlock, 1983; Richardson, 2002; Atkinson and Delamont, 2006). This research investigated how teachers structured their narratives and used storytelling devices to persuade the interviewer to accept their subjective interpretations of social reality.

The contention of this research is that there are richer readings available when investigating patterns in how the participants have manipulated the form and structure of their narratives. Riessman (2008, p.77) has written that

Structural approaches are concerned with content, but attention to narrative form adds insights beyond what can be learned from referential meanings alone.

By structure and form, this research is concerned with the manipulation of the order of the plot of a narrative to influence the reader or listener. It includes choices made in how literary and linguistic devices are deployed, deliberately or intuitively. Riessman (2008, p.78) has already written that 'structural analysis is tied to theorizing in narratology that initially interrogated literary texts', and as literary criticism and theory has continued to develop and undergo significant theoretical shifts, bringing these developments to narrative inquiry is a worthwhile endeavour.

The original contribution of this research is of particular relevance and benefit to researchers using narrative inquiry (see 9.6), as the application of literary analysis to the ways in which narrative accounts of particular groups of persons turn addresses particular contexts as well as the specific means of communication. This enables 'thick description' (Geertz, 1993) through 'an interdisciplinary field of cultural critique' (Thompson, 2001, p.63).

### **3.4 Position as a researcher Relative to the Research Participants**

Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p.54) argue that there is a case for moving beyond the 'dichotomous perspective' in qualitative research to enable researchers to 'occupy the position of both insider and outsider rather than insider or outsider', and similarly McAdams (2012, p.16), in discussing the use of narrative inquiry in psychological science, argued that a combination of qualitative and objective approaches can be complementary, in that

Qualitative discovery research generates new hypotheses to be evaluated in systematic ways, and the results of hypothesis-testing studies inform new narrative explorations.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.123) have similarly highlighted the paradox of qualitative research, of being both 'acutely tuned in' whilst being aware of how 'one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing' the research. This is particularly acute in my own case, as I fall into the category described by Adler and Adler (1987) of being a complete member researcher, of being an English teacher, middle-leader and trade-unionist.

By drawing on the work of Fish (1980) on interpretive communities, and on literary criticism, this research sought to be culturally sensitive and engaged with the narratives that were shared with me. However, the tools of literary analysis in investigating how key turning points were used were beneficial in allowing me to occupy a 'space between' (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009, p.61). I was able to collect narrative accounts in interviews as a sympathetic, subjectively aware member of the same community. I was then able to analyse the interviews using the tools of literary criticism within narrative inquiry, to step outside of the texts. This enabled reflexivity by bringing a degree of objectivity.

## **3.5 Methods of Research**

### **3.5.1 Research Sample**

This research required a balance between a sample size small enough to enable a sufficient depth of detailed literary analysis with one large enough to enable generational comparisons of teachers. The primary consideration was for how many participants would be needed to adequately address the aims and questions of the research.

Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) discuss 'saturation', where further interviews and analysis reveal little new information for the specific inquiry. They argue that in homogenous groups saturation is achieved at approximately twelve participants. Malterud, Siersma and Guassora (2015) have provided an alternative to saturation: 'information power', whereby sample size is considered around the intentions of the research, the specific nature of the research sample, the application of existing theoretical models, the worth of the qualitative data and the analytical approach. The narrative data of my twelve

research participants was particularly rich. It remains a concern that the presentation of the findings cannot adequately convey this. Gee (1991) and Bullough Jr. (2015) each provided examples of research that carried out deep and extensive analysis of the narrative accounts of lone individuals.

In investigating how developments had played out on formations of TPIs since the Education reform Act of 1988 to 2018, I chose participants from four generational cohorts corresponding to the government then in power. Mannheim (1952) in the essay 'The Problem with Generations' (first published in 1923) argued that people are influenced by their youthful active participation in shared experience. These generational cohorts are based in identifiable social, cultural and historical contexts. Crosnoe, Johnson and Elder (2004, p.9) wrote of the benefits of studying generational cohorts: these groups favoured 'some types of self-stories over others'.

The sample was limited to teachers who had obtained the qualifications necessary to serve in publicly-funded English schools. I used 'quota sampling' to ensure that there was a representation of generations and genders (Dodge, 2003). In seeking to recruit teachers from the same 'interpretive community' (Fish, 1980) with whom rapport could easily be established, a combination of 'opportunity sampling' (McCleod, 2019) and 'Respondent-Driven Sampling' Heckathorn (1997 and 2002), was used. This involved inviting participants met through extended professional relationships, and then through the recommendations of those participants.

Ten of the twelve teachers were secondary teachers (11-16), with two of these describing having taught further education in sixth form (11-19). One teacher was drawn from the primary sector (4-11), yet had experience of also teaching in secondary (11-16). One teacher had taught in further and higher education (16 onwards). With the vast majority of experience being at secondary (11-16), there was insufficient data to establish any meaningful variation by sector. Of these secondary teachers, six taught English, two taught Science, one taught Modern Foreign Languages and one taught history, as subject specialisms.

A significant limitation was the lack of black and minority ethnic participants. All the participants came from white backgrounds. Furthermore, it happened to be that the female participants all came from middle-class backgrounds and reported largely positive experiences of schooling, whilst four of the six male participants identified coming from

marginalised socio-economic and geographical backgrounds, and five males happened to have reported negative school experiences as being important.

Whilst an obvious limitation is that my sample is non-representative of the broader and diverse teacher populations and professional and ITT contexts, the sample was sufficient to allow broad, tentative identification of some patterns across the generational cohorts, as well as to identify emerging identity factors that may indicate future areas of research.

### **3.5.2 Conducting the Interviews**

Chase (2005, p.660) describes how many narrative researchers have, as a result of frustrations in their research, been challenged to move from 'the interviewer-interviewee relationship into one of narrator and listener', as their research participants tended to 'break through (the) structure' (Czarniawska, 1997, p.28) of the formal interview, and to tell stories of their own lives in ways that suited them. Polkinghorne (1988, p.163) pointed out that formal interviews were an unnatural form of dialogue, and that human beings will naturally, even within formal interviews, tend towards storytelling, if the researcher allows the participants to complete their answers without interruption. Labov (2013, p.2) has observed that within formal interview situations 'the speech that emerged was more compressed, more guarded and less interesting' and observed that the way to 'reduce this level of formality' was to 'elicit personal narrative' rather than their 'general opinions'. Schostak (2006, p.50) similarly advises avoiding 'the more formally, stilted' approaches of the traditional question and answer interview, in favour of a more spontaneous approach. In researching the storied lives of teachers, a data collection method was required that would elicit narrative accounts from the research participants, rather than answers to fixed questions. Central to this was to establish rapport and mutual respect. For this reason, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews.

Riessman (1993, p.31) discusses how 'Personal narratives are produced in conversation' and highlights the need for researchers to be aware and take account of 'the nature of the interaction' that produced the narrative accounts. Chase (2005, p.657), too, has observed that 'narrative researchers treat narratives as socially situated interactive performances', and that where and when the interviews take place has a significant bearing

on those performances. For this reason, research participants were invited to select a location where they felt comfortable. Interviews were conducted in cafés, empty lecturing rooms on a University campus, and classrooms during non-teaching hours. The use of modern social networking technology meant that some participants chose to be interviewed remotely, so that interviews were conducted whilst they were in their own homes.

The interview process was designed to be collaborative. Participants were informed of the methodological and analytical approach, and of the broad focus. My opening question was to typically ask how the participant had got into teaching. Although my focus was on the use of significant turning points within narrative as a structural element, I did not make direct reference to turning points. This was because I worked from the assumption arising from research literature (2.6 and 2.7) that turning points, of a great variety, would be employed naturally.

The interview stage of the research was conducted by myself as an 'insider researcher' (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009, p.1) and a 'complete member researcher' (Adler and Adler, 1987), in that I was part of the same 'interpretive community' (Fish, 1980) as the participants. Dawson (2012, p.28) highlights that an important factor in qualitative research is the need for interviewers and researchers to 'establish rapport with the participant' in order to create trust so that 'intimate life information' can be shared. It seemed that the shared cultural experiences and background had led to my research participants quite soon feeling comfortable in sharing narratives, and avoiding what Labov (2013, P.6) described as 'unremarkable and ordinary conversational exchanges'. Our shared identities as teachers, sometimes as middle-leaders or trade unionists, enabled us to *talk shop*. I remained aware of the need to act more as an encouraging listener than to make contributions that might guide discussions.

### **3.5.3 Recording**

Schostak (2006, p.50) points out that as part of the external validation of the interview, it is necessary for the interview itself to be somehow recorded. As the research concerned treating the narrative accounts of my research participants as literary texts, it was necessary that they were electronically recorded and transcribed into data word processed computer

files. I used a small Dictaphone to make these recordings, which I then transferred to my computer. The computer was kept always locked in a secure location, and I deleted the files from the recording devices after they had been transferred. With the permission of some of my research participants, I made video recordings. These were more of an aide to my own memory for when carrying out the analysis, or to clarify where there had been an ambiguity in the sound recording. It was the transcripts that formed the data for coding and analysis.

### **3.5.4 Why Interviews and Not Written Stories?**

Although I was using the tools of critical literary analysis, methods that are usually reserved for literary works that have been composed as written text, I chose to rely upon the spoken narratives of my research participants.

Clandinin (2016, p.34) described how

Most narrative inquiries begin with telling stories, that is, with a researcher engaged in conversations with participants who tell stories of their experiences.

For me, it was important that the stories that I collected, and the narrative accounts that made up the data of my research, were anecdotal and conversational, formed through the interactions of people as a co-construction by members of the same 'interpretive community' (Fish, 1980). Clandinin (2017, p.24) has pointed out that interactions within the 'narrative inquiry relationship' are 'an intentional co-composition'. It was important that the research participants were communicating with not imagined reader, but an active listener. Additionally, Riessman (1993, p.69) observed that 'considerable adaptation' would be required for investigating written prepared accounts.

### **3.5.5 Initial Subject and Thematic Reading to Refine Analytical Approach**

After being transcribed, interview transcripts were read in an initial 'finding' (McAdams, 2012, p.18) to identify concrete subjects in the formation of TPI (see 4.8.5 for a more detailed discussion of subject and theme). The interviews were divided into these

embedded anecdotes. These episodes were parts which constituted the entire narratives (see Appendix 4). They were further broken down into numbered clauses (4.3) that allowed for coding. These were organised broadly chronologically (Appendix 5), for ease of comparison. They included career stages, such as pre-career motivations or descriptions of ITT courses. They included significant encounters with other professionals and persons, as well as various anecdotes and digressions related to moral and ethical dilemmas, and various stressors or joys of teaching.

McAdams (2012, p.18) points out that 'it is not necessary to specify strict or formal parameters for determining themes', at the same time, he does highlight that it 'is critical that the themes derived of be amply supported by verbatim textual examples' (ibid). I chose to take an inductive, rather than deductive, approach, moving from investigating specific examples in the text to identifying the broad emergent themes. Polkinghorne (1995) discusses using an iterative process of data smoothing to refine the goals and questions guiding the research, by moving back and forth between the data and the analysis to explore emergent themes and subjects. The concrete subjects were easy to identify, as the participants were drawn from the same profession. The themes were more subjective and tentative.

As is evident in my second research question, the thematic reading has limitations. Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou (2008, p.50) write that a purely thematic approach does not 'differ greatly from many other qualitative procedures, for instance a thematic content analysis'. Pavlenko (2007, pp.163-188), too, has argued that content and thematic analysis of narrative accounts, when used in social research, is too broad and not sufficiently sensitive to the variations within the subjective nature of autobiographical data. She argued that it would be more appropriate to explore links between content, context and the forms of the narrative, specifically how narratives are shaped to persuade a listener. A similar approach has been taken by Squire (2008, p.50) has highlighted how within narrative analysis there is 'foregrounding the 'specifically narrative aspects of texts' meaning'. Riessman (2008, p.90) has described the limitations of a purely thematic analysis:

Thematic narrative analysis assumes that the accounts of individuals in a group resemble each other because the accounts are organised around the same themes.

This means that a thematic analysis alone, whilst helpful in identifying broad trends, proves inadequate in identifying or analysing individual variation in interpretation. The combination of both broad, comparative subject and thematic analysis, and a further, more focused analytical approach upon the variations in structural choices made by the individuals allowed me to 'describe broad patterns (thematic similarities across the sample) but also variation in meaning for individuals' (Riessman, 2008, p.90). As detailed in Chapter 4, a further reading and coding for structural devices was completed.

It is important to note that the readings for subjects, themes and structures were iterative in nature. Sometimes the appearance of patterns in how structures had been used necessitated adjusting and refining the thematic analysis, or a revisiting of the source data.

## **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

### **3.6.1 Ethical Considerations of the Aims of Research**

I hold that research should be ethical in nature, and that it should lead to deeper understandings of the lived experience of human beings, ultimately to make things better; furthermore, I think that research should be conducted in a way that is ethical. To maintain such a stance, I adhered to the procedures outlined in the guidance issued in The UK British Educational Research Association's ethical guidelines (BERA, 2011 and 2018) in how I conducted research with my participants, and worked from a position whereby 'All social science should aim to maximise benefit and minimise harm' (BERA, 2018, p.4).

I have followed what Bolton (2010, p.14) has described as a

critical focus upon beliefs, values, professional identities, and how they affect and are affected by the surrounding cultural structures

Therefore, I regard this investigation as being 'a highly responsible social and political activity' (ibid), in that it is concerned with how teachers construct their TPIs within social contexts. Cortazzi (1993, p.10) has written that

Proponents of teachers' voice argue that teachers are key participants in education, that they should be heard and that they have a right to speak for and about teaching.

This project has an ethical basis in seeking to find out the experiences of teachers, and to do so by restorying narratives as research.

Routes into teaching and obtaining Qualified Teacher Status have become more diverse, and this research contributes to knowledge about the extent to which particular approaches or programmes are supportive or hindering for early career professionals.

### **3.6.2 Conducting research in a way that is ethical**

Schostak (2002, p.201) observed that

Working with rather than imposing on people brings research and academics face-to-face with the circumstances and concerns of individuals in their daily lives

and as in this research I explored the complex relationships that existed between reader, writer and text, there was ethical value in working openly with the research participants, to acknowledge the reciprocity in the research and the creation of text and the discovery of meaning. Furthermore, as this research aims to give voice to teachers, narrative inquiry has the potential, above other, more traditional, forms of qualitative analysis, where Riessman (1993, p.32) described how analysis would involve 'taking bits and pieces, snippets of a response, that supported her evolving theory' to instead present such voices in a way that had integrity and respect. According to Riessman (1993, p.34)

The challenge is to find ways of working with texts so the original author is not effaced, so she does not lose control over her words.

In my methodological discussion, I hope I have been able to make clear my argument for developing analytical processes and Focuses that are particularly appropriate for the communities and cultures of teachers from whom I have drawn my research participants,

that I can restory and analyse their narrative accounts in ways that provide more detailed understandings, and in ways which are honest and have relevance to them. The use of critical literary analysis, usually reserved for works of literature, for that which has been published, I hope demonstrates a respect for and appreciation of the narrative accounts

### **3.6.3 Taking account for the potential of harm**

Christians (2005, p.144) highlights that ‘proper respect for human freedom generally includes two necessary conditions’ relevant to qualitative research: firstly, that the research participants should take part voluntarily and without coercion; and secondly, that their agreement is based on ‘full and open information’ (ibid). I provided my research participants with my research aims and questions and endeavoured to explain the premise of my research. I informed them that I would contact them at the conclusion of the first full draft to invite feedback. I followed the guidance set out in the 2010 copy of Brighton University’s Research Ethics document. I provided the participants a consent letter in the format suggested by the University, and I approached them in the desire to be open and transparent.

Christians (2005, p.145) has highlighted that ‘confidentiality must be assured as a primary safeguard’. For this reason, I anonymised the participants, and the institutions and persons mentioned within their narrative accounts. I used made-up names. Schostak (2006, p.53) has justified such an alteration of the text

where the more general indication is of more importance (for the purposes of the project, the thesis or the publication) than the particular.

Additionally, the nature of my research, which is investigating teacher narratives of disruption to their professional identities at times of upheaval in their lives, has the potential to cause emotional upset to my participants. I recognised my own limitations: I am a doctoral student researcher, and I have no training in counselling. Wolgemuth and Donohue (2006, p.1027) point out that

A common theme... is the recognition that narrative research is a potentially transformative process that can deeply change participants' and researchers' ways of viewing and being themselves.

This has been referred to by Wolgemuth and Donohue (2006, p.1022) as the 'inquiry of discomfort within an emancipatory narrative study'. Whilst there is value in thinking that 'those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly' (Freire, 1970, p. 60), such research may pose dangers to researcher and participants, if dealing with experiences which are troubling, and which have the potential to provoke significant change perception. I therefore established the limitations of the research relationship and the scope of the research.

#### **3.6.4 Sharing Findings and Interpretations with the Research Participants**

BERA (2018, p.8) highlights a responsibility for researchers to consider 'what the most relevant and useful ways are of informing participants about the outcomes of the research' when the project reaches its end. It asks whether to debrief participants in an 'audience-friendly format, or by eliciting feedback on the findings' (ibid), with a mind to explore ways in which to 'reflect participants' views. For this reason, invitations for clarifications, amendments and reflections were sent to all my research participants on completion of the initial transcription of the interviews, and on the completion of the first full draft (see Appendix 3).

Of the twelve participants, two did not respond (one because the contact details provided had elapsed). Two reported significant changes in their professional and private lives that had significance for the research (and have been included and explicitly referred to in the findings and interpretations). One participant made both a factual clarification and requested the substitution of a word I had used in interpretation for a brief phrase, which did not substantially change the overall point being made. The remaining seven indicated acceptance of my findings and interpretations.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter has outlined the interpretive philosophical framework and described the ontological and epistemological position that has led to the methodological choices of this research. I have justified the approach within narrative inquiry as being consistent with this framework, and as being appropriate for the focus on TPI. The use of semi-structured interviews to elicit data has been explained. I have set out why the analytical approach that draws upon the tools of literary criticism, specifically those related to how dramatic and poetic turns can be classified, has been used. As such, I have made a case for addressing the gap in theoretical knowledge relating to the lack of classification in the various ways that turning points in narrative accounts are understood by social science researchers. I have set out the ethical considerations of the research. In the next chapter I describe the conceptual analytical approach.

## **Chapter 4: Conceptual Approach to Analysis**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to make explicit the approach to the analysis of the data, and to provide a rationale for the use of models drawn from literary criticism. It clarifies how the close reading of the ways in which narratives have been structured around various types of significant turning points has been conducted. First, in Subchapter 4.2 there is a discussion of how to balance the use of such models to illuminate narratives without becoming restricted by them. Second, in 4.3 I explain the more conventional initial socio-linguistic coding of the narrative transcripts to identify the subjects and themes of the episodes. Third, in 4.4 I describe how the data was organised for analysis and then reordered for presentation into chronological order for ease of comparative analysis. Fourth, in 4.5 there is a brief discussion of issues surrounding the necessary compression and restorying of narrative data. Fifth, in subchapter 4.6 I explain the inductive approach of how models have been used to create a context-specific taxonomy to be applied to significant turning points in narratives of TPI. Sixth, in 4.7 there is a rationale of the use such models in the close reading of turning points when investigating members of the same or interlinking 'interpretive communities' (Fish, 1980), explaining how teachers dynamically draw upon structures that exist in their cultures (Frank, 2010). Finally, in subchapter 4.8 I provide an overview of where the literary models and concepts used have been drawn from.

### **4.2 Finding a Balance When Drawing upon Classifications**

Potential difficulties from this approach have come from Belsey (1983), who argued that focusing on the underlying structures of texts could be overly reductive. This could distract the critic from the more complex primary source of data. Frank (2010, pp.118 - 119) has warned of the risks of becoming dependent upon or restricted by taxonomy, pointing out that 'Typologies risk putting stories in boxes' which can lead to the 'monological stance that the boxes are more real than the stories'. Frye (1963, p.13) argued that exploring patterns led to 'drawing closer to the archetypal form' yet held that literary criticism should not seek to apply ideological structural models upon texts, or to apply subjective value judgements

upon them. Rather, investigating structural patterns within and across texts could allow them to be related to their broader cultural contexts. This research attempts a balance between imaginatively-engaged subjective readings and the more objective, yet cautious, application of structural analysis.

Theune (2007, p.5) argued that 'it is virtually impossible to imagine a final word on poetic structure' because structures 'intersect and overlap to such an extent' that one too rigid taxonomy would not accurately reflect the myriad varieties. This research does not aim to create a strict taxonomy or exhaustive list. Instead, by reference to classifications of the more common turns in poetry and literature, it aims to be 'revealing and generative' (Theune, 2007, p.5). It brings a more nuanced and detailed approach to cautiously categorising the different turns employed by the research participants.

This cautious categorisation is possible because cultural patterns exist in the ways in which groups of people construct narrative experiences. Frank (2010, p.119) highlights that the forms and patterns that exist in culture are taken and used by people to create stories, as 'stories depend upon stories', and this is because 'individuals do not make up stories by themselves' but do so, as Fish (1980) has said, by these individuals being part of 'interpretive communities'. The model of inductively moving from the narrative data to models in literature, according to Frank (2010, p.119), can be useful, in that:

A typology of *narratives* recognizes that experience follows from the availability of narrative resources, and people's immense creativity is in using these resources to fabricate their stories.

It follows from this that the participants in this research, whilst recognised as creative individuals, communicate within a culture using narrative tropes and structures that will reveal patterns. What this research seeks to do is to make explicit the structures and frames of references that the teachers in this research themselves used, purposefully or inadvertently, when constructing their narrative accounts. This was as members of their communities of teachers in England when describing events and persons that played out on the formations of their TPIs.

### 4.3 Initial Transcription and Coding of the Narrative Data

Narrative inquiry includes a plurality of analytical approaches. It was appropriate to use an established structural taxonomy for the basic units of the narrative data in the initial coding. This enabled the more complex later coding and analysis of turns. It has made the data and analysis more accessible for other researchers. Riessman (2008, p.81) has described the influence of Labov and Waletzky and the categories provided for coding aspects of narrative in the field of narrative inquiry, in that 'most narrative scholars either cite it, apply it, or use it as a point of departure' in their research. Labov's (1972) structural elements were used in the initial coding of the narratives. He (2013, p.5) described how:

A fully developed narrative begins with an abstract, an orientation with information on persons, places, times and behavior involved; the complicating action; an evaluation section, which identifies the point of the narrative; the resolution; and a coda, which returns the listener to the present time.

Similarly, to both Labov (1972 and 2013) and Gee (1991), narratives were broken up into the natural clauses that occurred in speaking. Information regarding the subject of career stage or person was obtained from information in the abstract and orientation and was used to generate titles for the embedded anecdotes.

In addressing the level of linguistic detail recorded and investigated in this research, I followed Riessman (2008, p.89): She pointed out that overly detailed descriptions that are not pertinent to the research remit and its intended audience could be distracting and unnecessary. Details such as the lengths of pauses, for example, were omitted.

Riessman (2008, p.89) highlights the importance of structure, and asks: 'how is this story put together? How are structural elements arranged by this storyteller?' As the focus of this research concerned the variations and patterns in how narrative accounts were structured around their turning points, in addition to the 'structural coding of clauses' (Riessman, 2008, p.89), language features pertinent to how turning point were structured were applied (see Appendix 4).

## **4.4 Organisation of the Data for Analysis**

Because this is a comparative study of different generations of teachers over a thirty-year period, with twelve research participants, a pragmatic way to chart and compare the embedded anecdotes was necessary. Riessman (2008, p.12) has called for the need to maintain 'the sequential and structural features that are the hallmarks of narrative'. Similarly, Labov (2013) has argued that smaller episodes can be read as part of larger or 'epic' narratives. For this reason, this research used my close reading of particular key episodes or turning points as structural elements within larger narratives. Each anecdote was considered as being a particular episode or episodes in the overall story of the ongoing formation of that person's professional identity.

For each research participant's interview, a name and order number for each of the embedded anecdotes and linking exchanges was recorded. An analytical table (See Appendix 4) was given for each separate anecdote, to compartmentalise the different organisational aspects guiding analysis. Above each of the tables was the coded anecdote in its entirety. To chart the similarities and differences between the narrative accounts, a comparison chart was created for each of the generational cohorts (See Appendix 5).

## **4.5 Restorying and Representation**

A particular difficulty presented in this research related to restorying and representation. Within literary criticism, the texts subject to analysis are fully available, and they have been presented by the authors in a pure state, unencumbered by the analysis and interpretation of others. I faced a dilemma in how to have a sample small enough to allow for a rich depth of analysis, yet large enough to enable comparison. Riessman (1993, p.43) observes that 'It is naïve to think one can just "present the story" without some systemic method of reduction'. This research further explored what Riessman (1993, p.43) called representing the 'core narrative', which is 'a way of rendering the "whole story" into a form that allows for comparison' for which she uses the metaphor of 'radical surgery'. Chapter 5 presents pen portraits of the teachers. Chapters 6 and 7 present summaries of the data and emergent themes shared by the participants by subject of career stages. This is in career chronological order, starting with pre-career experiences and motivations, then Initial

Teacher Training, and so on. These were illustrated with example extracts from the transcripts. These extracts were presented without the coding notations. Chapter 8 provided the specific analysis related to how particular episodes relating to TPI were structured, by drawing explicitly on models from literary criticism.

## **4.6 Inductive Approach to Analysis**

To identify patterns in the way that different narrative constructions were structured around turns, an inductive approach was used. In addition to the initial coding, transcripts were coded for particular turning point episodes and moments (See Appendix 4). Such structural patterns and turns are not completely definitive, as are word classes, yet a table of those which had strong parallels with the narratives investigated in this research have been provided below (see Figure 4.1 below). Sometimes, these structural patterns were signified through the use of particular word types, such as particular types of connectives. There were some patterns that were determined by the use of particular rhetorical devices. Others were indicated by the subject and the manner in which it was described, such as a particular person being described in a certain way.

Often, turning points could only be understood as part of a wider narrative and career. It was for this reason that a table was created (See Appendix 5) for each of the generational cohorts, divided into chronological career stages. Into these the various episodes and corresponding turn types were recorded. This allowed the mapping and comparison of variations and similarities of career stages and trajectories. This enabled comparisons and identification of patterns, though the small sample size made any such observations necessarily tentative.

**Figure 4.1: Table of Structural Turns, Signifiers and Descriptions**

The following table presents a brief the various turns that were identified in models from literary criticism. More detailed descriptions are presented in the glossary of literary terms.

Structural Type	Signifiers	Description
Apotheosis	Can resolve issues in nadir episodes. Marked by elevated language and positive resolution.	Pinnacle episode or climax. A positive structural resolution.
Anagnorisis	Use of contrasting connectives and adverbs explicitly addressing perceptions of reality.	Moment of significant realisation accompanying a Peripeteia or reversal of fortune.
Anomie	Expressions indicating moral indifference and alienation. Can follow dialectical argument structure or villanelle.	Disconnect between the self and society. A conflict of philosophical systems. Can lead to emotional limbo.
Antagonist	Described with negative language. Can appear in nadir episodes.	Opposing individual.
Apology	Extended one-sided justifications.	A defence of a point of view.
Aporia	Use of rogatio (self-questioning) and rhetorical questioning.	Rhetorical device where the speaker expresses doubts.
Concessional Structure	Use of seemingly contradictory statements opening narratives.	Conceding a point or argument, before taking contrary position.
Descriptive-meditative Structure	Focus on an object, location, person or symbol, with potential use of contrasting connectives.	Similar to the Emblem Structure, description, meditation, and change of view.
Dialectical Argument Structure	Potentially various forms of questioning. Form of dialogue.	Attempt to debate and resolve contradictory points of view.
Elegy / Elegiac Structure	Use of time words, elevated language and contrasting connectives.	A positive consideration of the past used to critique the present.
Emblem Turn	Description words and implicit or explicit reference to symbolism.	A description of an object to convey ideas about what it may represent.
Ironic Structure	Use of contrasting connectives and adverbs explicitly addressing perceptions of reality.	Naïve assertion of a truth or reality, which is then disrupted and disturbed.
Mentor	Person described with elevated language acting in mentoring capacity. Can appear magical.	A supporting character of exceptional ability who guides the protagonist.
Mid-Course Turn	Can be marked by time words and contrasting connectives indicating extreme change for the self.	A radical and extreme shift or change in trajectory. Can lead to Anomie.
Nadir	Marked by negative language and emotions. Structural low point.	Lowest or most unsuccessful point and is the opposite of anagnorisis.

Peripetia	Possibly a nadir episode. Events leading to an anagnorisis.	A downfall or reversal of fortune and circumstances. A disruption.
Polemic	Marked by biased position. Negative assertions of opposing views.	Strong attack marked by its one-sidedness and refutation of compromise.
Retrospective-prospective structure	Use of temporal connectives, linking past to the present.	Reflection of past events leading to consideration of present and future.
Villanelle	Marked by repetition and emotional frustration.	Obsessive outsider argument against fatalism or undefeatable forces.

## 4.7 Rationale for Approach

Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p.97) and Riessman (1993, p.25) argued that narrative researchers needed to select analytical methods most appropriate for their research questions. Riessman argued further that they develop and use ‘a valid interpretive frame’ (2008, P.50). There was validity in seeking out specific analytical approaches and reference frames from the ‘interpretive communities’ (Fish, 1980) from which research participants were drawn. Murdock (1997, p.188) wrote that interviews ‘are always performances in which respondents assume identifies and manage impressions’, and it was the intention in this study to look in close detail at the means by which such performances were conducted through narrative. Polkinghorne (1988, p.163) pointed out that when uninhibited by the constrictions of formal interviews, research participants will naturally tell stories. This research required an interpretive frame that could maintain imaginative engagement with such stories, whilst allowing a more objective attempt at partial classification and categorisation. Given my particular investigations into the significance of various Significant Turning Points within narratives related to formations of TPI, it was appropriate to adopt an analytical approach that made sense of the various ways in which such episodes turned around specific parts of narratives, by close reading those particular junctures.

Both Charon (2006, p.113) and Howe (2010, p.1) argued that close reading narratives allowed researchers to investigate literary devices and methods as well as meaning, and Howe (2010, p.2) said that this allows researchers to investigate ‘*how* the text achieves its effects, and how it is structured, rather than to simply repeat what it says’. Howe (2010, p.1) describes how a ‘close reading analyses poems or short passages of prose in depth’, rather than lengthier texts. Given the particular focus on turning points in TPI, the close

readings were applied to particular pivotal episodes within narratives. These enriched understandings of narratives in their entirety. As Howe (2010, p.98) close reading is inadequate 'unless you are well acquainted with the whole work because you need to relate it to the whole'.

It is important to recognise difficulties that can arise for social sciences researchers using such analytical approaches. Close reading, according to McGraw (2011, p.31), is a means by which the reader can receive, from just one word, 'numerous significations, a complex web of possible meanings, a skein of traces and inscriptions'. In addressing narrative inquiry within criminological research, Aspden and Hayward (2015, p.240) warned of risks of a 'narrativist retreat into the intertextual language games associated with postmodernist analysis', with the researcher being pulled away from original thematic concerns and institutional purposes. Therefore, a systematic approach of using analytical literary frames around structural turns was maintained to retain focus. However, there lies a further risk in overly relying upon such models.

## **4.8 Drawing upon the Structural Turn within Literary Criticism**

### **4.8.1 Introduction**

In this subchapter I describe the various structures and patterns that have been drawn from literary criticism to enrich understanding of the different turns in the narrative data. It is not an exhaustive list of the various devices in the western literary canon, but it explains and justifies the particular models drawn upon through an inductive reading of the data.

### **4.8.2 Poetic Structures**

This research drew upon recent developments towards poetic structural analysis focused on the use of the structural turn, or Volta, and its different variations (Theune, 2007). The use of the term **Significant Turns within Narratives** in this research emphasises the word 'significant' as having a literary dual meaning. It stresses the importance of the episode, and, from the word *signify*, calls attention to the literary devices and linguistic methods used.

Until recently, according to Theune (2007, P1), the majority of critical literary theory regarded structure as 'ancillary to form', and it 'received very little attention', to the extent that the various types of ways in which a text might be structured would have been treated as 'just one more feature'. More recent approaches foreground the structure around a turn as a primary organising feature, through which all other aspects are deployed to achieve particular effects upon the reader. Voight (1999) argued that analysing poems through how they were structured around a turn provided a richer and more detailed set of classifications than did the more restricted types of form, and that such turns transcended these forms.

This research drew upon literary theorists who had discussed particular structures that had resonances with my participants' narratives. Particular poetic structural turns that have been drawn upon are 'The Ironic Structure' (Bakken, 2007, pp.9-26); 'The Emblem Structure' (Theune, 2007, pp.27-40), 'The Concessional Structure' (Szybist, 2007, pp.41-60), 'The Retrospective-Prospective Structure' (Yakich, 2007, pp.61-82), 'The Elegy's Structures' (Powell, 2007, P.83), 'The Dialectical Argument Structure' (Beer, 2007, pp.99-122), 'The Descriptive-Meditative Structure' (Marks, 2007, pp.123-146) and 'The Mid-course Turn' (Harp, 2007, pp.147-166). Additionally, similarities with the poetic form of the villanelle have been explored.

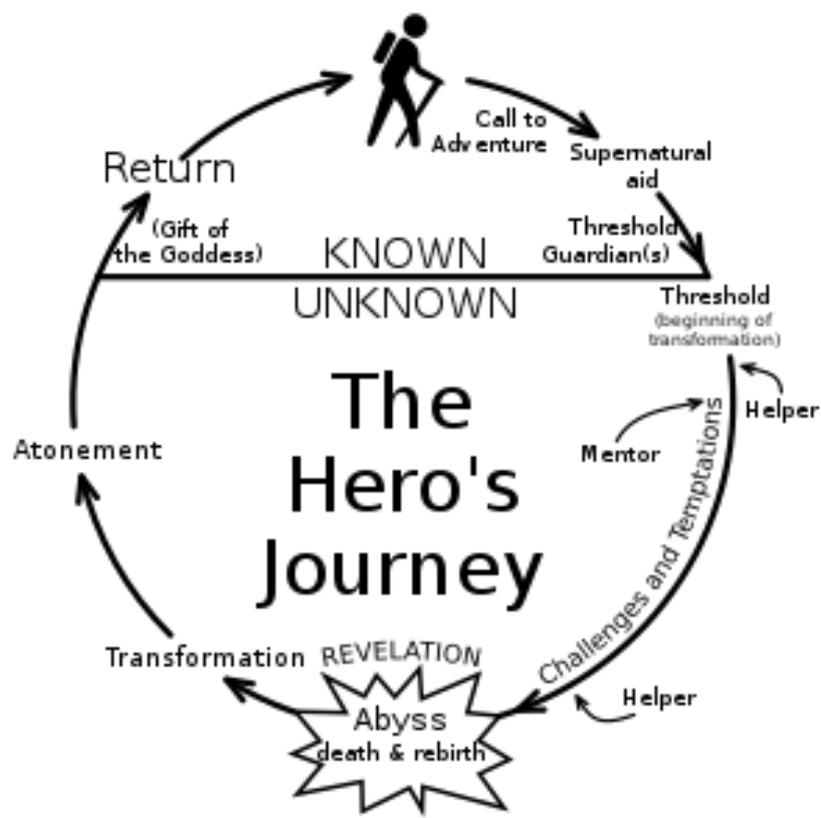
It is important to recognise that research highlighted in the literature review concerning particular career stages had already suggested particular types of turns occurring, and so to a certain extent coding became partially deductive. The widely recognised 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) in ITT seemed to indicate, in its terminology alone, strong parallels with a literary ironic mode and structure. Similarly, Maclure's (1993) research highlighted a tendency for teachers under increasing external pressures to speak of previous professional cultures as a golden age. This had strong resonances with elegiac poetic structures (Powell, 2007). A future research endeavour could be to apply the structural patterns identified in TPI narrative research to models from literary criticism around turning points.

### 4.8.3 The Teacher as Protagonist and the Heroic Mythos

A predominant pattern from the data was that of the altruistically and intrinsically motivated heroic teacher. Other persons appeared as secondary characters. Inductively, there appeared to be strong parallels with certain persons and events in the formations of TPI with archetypes from the heroic monomyth or hero's journey. These have been described in the theoretical work concerning the universality of story elements, by those including Campbell (1949, 2008), Leeming (1981), Cousineau (1990) and Vogler (2007). Below is a representation of Campbell's (1949, 2008) heroic monomyth, detailing the various stages and character archetypes. In the same manner that various turns from poetry and drama were applied in the coding of the narrative accounts, so were the aspects from the hero's journey. Where there appeared significant variations, alternative monomyth models and criticisms from different theorists were considered.

The 'call to adventure' (2008, p.41) parallels the pre-career experiences and motivations of the teachers. Participants who had opened their narrative accounts with a 'concessional turn' (Szybist, 2007), stating their own dislike of schooling, showed similarity with 'the refusal of the call' (Campbell, 2008, p.49). Inspirational figures recalled from their childhood experiences, as well as supporting mentors and ITT course conveners, bear strong resemblances to both the 'supernatural aid' (Campbell, 2008, p.57) and 'the meeting with the goddess' (Campbell, 2008, p.91). The threshold between the known and unknown would seem to mark a similar point as 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) for professionals engaging in ITT programmes. The 'land of trials' (Campbell, 2008, p.90) has resonances with various episodes from the participants' accounts when describing difficulties in the formations of TPI. Villainous antagonists are frequently manifestations of school leadership and reflect Campbell's 'Woman as the Temptress' (2008, p.101) and 'The Atonement with the Father' (2008, p.105) stages. Similarly, the revelations and transformations when the participants reported climax episode and positive experiences in the formations of their TPIs mark structurally the 'apotheosis' (Campbell, 2008). Significantly, such experiences are often evidenced in positive descriptions of interactions with students that achieve their altruistic sense of self, what may be seen as their returning with 'The Ultimate Boon' (Campbell, 2008, p.148).

**Figure 4.2: The Hero's Journey (Adapted from Campbell, 1949 and 2008)**



Investigating parallels with the heroic monomyth is relevant because of the prevalence of the cultural stereotype of the lone hero teacher in contemporary western literature (Johnson, 1992; Gruwell, E. and Writers, 1999), film (Weir, 1989; Smith, 1995; LaGravenese, 2007), television (Shergold, 2005) and academic discourse (Pickower, 2009; Brown, 2013). It is both exemplified (Groves and White, 2020) and criticised (Leland, 2016) in the popular press, and is critiqued and debunked in personal memoir (Boland 2016). The stereotype is so widely recognised that it has featured in parody and satire (Bochner, 1996; MTV, 2007). Interestingly, the monomyth has explicitly been drawn upon by advocates of neoliberal policies in education, such as the charter schools model in the USA (Guggenheim, 2010). In England, an education NGO, The Ambition Institute, made use of it in materials provided on residential training courses (See Figure 4.3) for middle leaders.

**Figure 4.3: The hero's journey (Ambition School Leadership, 2017)**



It is important to recognise the possibility that the features present in the data were encouraged by the manner of collection, where individuals reflected on their own individual life story. Chase (2005, pp.656-657) has observed that narratives are unique in that

a narrative makes the self (the narrator) the protagonist, either as actor or interested observer of others' actions.

As such, the parallels with the heroic monomyth inductively found in the data may be partly attributable to the methodological approach of narrative inquiry. Furthermore, perhaps this is a psychological consequence of the nature of the interview, which has some parity with the processes undertaken within psychiatric therapy. Yalom (2013, p.12), for example, argues that the universal human attempt to order 'unpatterned events' is done so in order to 'gain a sense of control over them', which then creates meaning. Perhaps the parallels with the heroic monomyth in the participants' narratives reflect a psychological drive for consistency and mastery of one's own narratively constructed life, a means of bringing significance and control to events that are otherwise chaotic, aversive and frustrating. Perhaps narrative sense making is a heroic endeavour.

It may be that narrative constructions in the 'interpretive community' (Fish, 1980) of teachers in England encouraged a more individualistic attitude. Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou (2011) describe a difference between the shared collective narratives of other cultures with the more individualistic narratives in the west. Goodson (2012, p.12) has observed that 'we can see in contemporary cultural activity how the move to smaller, more individual life narratives is emerging'. Kahneman (2012, p.387) wrote that in the 'narrative of our own life' we 'want it to be a good story with a decent hero'. Similarly, Yakich (2007, pp.62-63) observed that

we seem to be a society that enjoys talking about itself as a means of self-promotion, self-obsession, catharsis and penitence

Miller's (1949) notions concerning tragedy rest upon a notion of individual self in pursuit of aspirations that people feel are rightfully theirs, yet which potentially reflect earlier mythologies of undemocratic elitism.

It is important to recognise the limitations of applying mythological archetypes. Literary theorists have described taxonomies as being overly generic to the point of losing specific cultural and ethnographic meanings, consequently having limited value within the social sciences (Crespi, 1990; Ellwood, 1999; Consentino, 1998). Furthermore, the model offered by Campbell (1949) is restricted by having an exclusively masculine focus (Frankel, 2010; Murdock, 1990). Moreover, such heroic structures in modern culture have been criticised for reflecting and perpetuating traditional, elitist and undemocratic patterns of privilege (Brin, 1999) and of propagating conceptions of human progress being dependent upon heroic individuals rather than collective human agency (Ellwood, 1999). Franklin (2014), for example, theorized that the typical masculine mythological pattern involved a male coming of age to supplant his master, whereas 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century female tropes had females seeking sanity, equality and a return to normalcy and the status quo. At the same time, this research was inductive, moving from observations to tentative findings, and the parallels with aspects of the heroic mythos potentially reveals challenging ideas about the 'interpretive communities' (Fish, 1980) of the teachers in this research (see 8.2.4).

#### **4.8.4 Identifying Conflicts**

Within literary texts, there is usually a conflict that drives the action. Arguably, without a conflict, there is no drama or story. In classical terminology, this conflict is called the 'agon' (Baldick, 2008, p.6) and is most commonly dramatically represented in the archetypes and characters of the protagonist and antagonist, though other conflicts exist. Such roles can often be read as being representative of deeper conflicting world views or ideas (Bloom, 1994). In the tables used to analyse the anecdotes, central conflicts that underlined the anecdotes were described in a conflict statement (See Appendix 4).

#### **4.8.5 Subject and Theme**

The terms *subject* and *theme* are not synonymous. Baldick (2008, p.334) describes how 'the subject of a work is described concretely in terms of its action', whilst the theme of a work is 'a salient abstract idea that emerges from a literary work's treatment of its subject matter' (2008, p.333). Howe (2010, p.97) observes that an overarching theme is 'a central idea that does not equate to a summary of the events'. In this research, the subjects were the objectively identifiable stages of TPI, whilst the themes concerned the more subjective and implicit ideas surrounding them.

For each anecdote or event, subjects were identified, with a statement describing what the anecdote was explicitly about in terms of its concrete action. Following that, the tentative identification of themes that occurred within that particular subject was iterative and emergent. Whilst the subject of an anecdote or narrative account are often explicitly and objectively stated through the abstract (Labov, 1972) and Orientation (Labov, 1972), the themes are open to interpretation. It was important, as Howe (2010, p.97) argues, to 'give evidence supporting' tentative interpretations.

### **4.9 Summary**

This chapter has set out the ways in which the narrative data has been analysed with a specific focus on significant turning points, with a rationale for the application of literary models. The following chapter presents the pen-portraits of the research participants.

## Chapter 5: Pen Portraits of the Research Participants

### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters described the methodological approach and rationale for collecting and analysing the narrative data. This chapter presents pen-portraits of the teacher research participants. They are framed within the broad socio-historic contexts from which they came. They have been foregrounded to allow ease of cross-referencing. They have been grouped within the generational cohorts, which are based around the government then in office when the research participants undertook their ITT. Relevant personal and family information shared by the research participants has been included.

### 5.2 Pen Portraits of the Research Participants

#### 5.2.1 First Generational Cohort (1988 – 1997)

Three of the four teacher research participants in the first generational cohort trained and entered the profession in the years immediately following the Educational Reform Act 1988 of Lord Baker and the Introduction of the National Curriculum. Three of the participants from this cohort were male, and one was female. I was unable to find research participants who had trained at that time and left the profession shortly after.

**Mike** described coming from a white, working-class, disenfranchised background. He received help as a student with special educational needs whilst at primary school. He moved into teaching after being inspired when he entered higher education as a mature student as a result of an accident whilst labouring on a building site. Whilst geographically mobile, he had always worked in inner cities, with predominantly working-class demographics. He spent his career teaching the final years of primary school children. Approaching his sixties, he had recently taken early retirement, and was uncertain about returning to teaching. He was an active member of a national teaching union and had taken part in national conferences. He spoke positively about teaching and interactions with students. He spoke negatively of his interactions with figures of authority and of changes imposed on the education system by government and politicians. He is a single parent, of an adult daughter.

**Fred** is a Head of a Languages Department in a secondary school in the north of England. Like Mike, he described coming from a white, working class background, 'the wrong side of the tracks', and his overall career trajectory had seen him moving schools until he returned to a community to which he felt he could relate and belong. Much of his narrative focused on difficulties he had experienced when he moved to a school in a more affluent area before returning to and then struggling to teach students from a similar background to himself. He made no reference in our discussions to his family life.

**Louise** is a Head of a Science Department in a secondary school in the midlands. She trained shortly after the introduction of the National Curriculum and referred to disquiet felt by colleagues at the time. She is white, and her background was more middle-class than the other people in the generational cohort. Her mother had been a teacher and a politically-active trade-unionist. Louise described being inspired to enter teaching following her example. Experiences of school and university were described positively. Before training to teach, she experienced sexist, chauvinistic and bullying behaviour in her career as a young research physicist. This experience led to her to enter teaching. She described a significant experience where she was supporting her husband who was suffering from a terminal illness, and the lack of support she received from the SLT and Head Teacher. She contrasted this to a school she moved where she felt more supported.

The fourth member of the cohort was **Jack**, once Head of an English Department in the South of England. I had interviewed him an earlier project in the Doctoral programme. It had been a particular anecdote he had shared that had led me to move away from purely thematic analysis to narrative inquiry. With his permission, I used the recorded transcript from that earlier project, which covered the same subject areas (motivations to enter the profession and career turning points) as the interviews with the other research participants in this research. I was able to approach Jack's transcript with a more developed methodological and analytical approach. Jack is white. He came from a particular geographical location that he discussed as being an important part of his identity as a teacher. At the time of the interview, he was in his mid-forties. He trained in the final years of the Conservative government in the mid-1990s. He has two teenage children and is divorced

### 5.2.2 Second Generational Cohort (1997 – 2010)

I interviewed three participants from this generational cohort, and they entered training and the profession during the years of the Labour Government.

**Mary** came from a white, middle-class background. She described a ‘traditional’, sexist childhood education compared to modern education. Completing a degree as a mature student was ‘transformative’, inspiring her to train to become a teacher. Not having the requisite C grade in GCSE Mathematics, she could not undertake the PGCE. She completed a CertEd, allowing her to teach both further and higher education, chiefly in Sixth Form, in Comparative Religious Studies. She did not remain in teaching and left to pursue a career in a county council, providing information for adults receiving various forms of social support. She has grown up children.

**Lucy** was in her mid-thirties when I interviewed her. She had recently been promoted to Head of an English Department in the South of England in a school in a large academy chain. She had decided to leave her position to work again as an ordinary English teacher in a free school, having not anticipated the scale of problems and pressures she would face in her promotion, one that she described as being pressured to take by the SLT of that academy. She came from a middle-class background and attended private school. Her route into teaching was complicated by her not having the then prerequisite mathematics qualification. She worked in a variety of support roles in different schools before obtaining QTS and the PGCE. Her career has seen her teach at a variety of schools, including state-maintained, private, academy and a free school. She discussed having siblings who had settled down and had children. At one point she described teaching as potentially being an obstacle to personal and family life.

**Kevin** was interviewed when he was in his mid-thirties. He came from what he identified as a white, progressive, left-wing, middle-class family, with one parent a social worker and the other a teacher. He disliked school. After University, his parents tried to dissuade him from entering the public sector. He became a TA and completed his ITT on a salaried route through the GTP. Shortly before the interview, he had left teaching to take up a position as an organiser within a teaching trade union, having previously served as a work-place representative for the same union. He is married, with two young children.

### 5.2.3 Third Generational Cohort (2010 – 2015)

All three of the teacher research participants in the third generational cohort trained and entered the profession in the years of the coalition government formed of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties. This time saw a rapid expansion of the academisation programme and the proliferation of ITT routes and providers.

**Amy** came from a white, middle-class family, and was in her late twenties when interviewed. She had taken the PGCE route to QTS, after a brief time working in low-skilled jobs in the private sector at the recommendation of her ITT course providers. She described having always wanted to have been a teacher since she was a child at school. She had recently left an Academy Chain for a Secondary School in a Local Education Authority, having been promoted to a Second in Department. She was engaged to be married at the time of the interview.

**Becky** was in her mid-twenties when interviewed and had been in the initial intake who undertook the Schools Direct Route into teaching. She described having wanted to have been a teacher since she was at school. Her training academy was where she herself had been a student prior to its conversion to academy status. She had worked there as a Teaching Assistant. She cited her teaching career as having led to the break-up of her relationship. She left teaching one term after the end of her induction year, moving on to work in a supporting role in another school. She has recently returned to teaching in an LEA school.

**Matthew** was in his late twenties and described himself as coming from a white, working-class family (though he identified himself as middle-class), with parents who valued, though had not benefited from, education. He had taken the PGCE route into teaching in the midlands. He went on to teach in a small number of highly successful schools in inner cities that had high staff turnover rates. Despite having returned briefly to teach in an Academy School as an English teacher between research contracts, he had undertaken a master's degree in Educational Research, and had left teaching to work carrying out coordinating and leading international research projects for international NGOs and charities. He described having a partner and looked anticipated being able to settle and start a family.

#### **5.2.4 Fourth Generational Cohort (2015 – 2018)**

I interviewed two participants who had trained to be teachers in the years following the election victory of the Conservative Government. This time marked a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention. Both took salaried routes into teaching, taking part in a School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme run by a multi-academy trust (MAT), with one electing to complete additional work to obtain additional QTS status and credits towards a master's; however, both spoke negatively of university involvement and were broadly dismissive of theoretical pedagogical training. They were interviewed near the conclusion of their successful probationary years.

**Sue** is white and she was in her mid-twenties when interviewed. She described having attended an outstanding, all-girls secondary comprehensive school in an LEA in an affluent market town. She was the first person in her family to attend university, following involvement in a programme whilst at school. She worked in the library service for the county council. She chose to enter the profession after working as a school librarian. At the end of her training year, she chose to leave the academy to work in a school within the LEA in the same town, citing the lack of opportunities for promotion available following a proposed restructure of the school then being implemented. She lives with her partner.

**Jules** was in his mid-thirties at the time of the interview and had recently completed his probationary year following his SCITT training in a MAT, working as a science teacher on a salaried route into teaching. He came from a privileged, white, middle-class background, and attended Grammar school. He had a PhD and had worked in the pharmaceutical industry for a number of years. He had taken a pay cut to enter teaching, his wife's income being sufficient to support this move. He described having a young family. At the time of the interview, he had just been successful in obtaining a position at an LEA school in an area that he described as having a largely working-class and deprived demographic catchment area.

### **5.3 Summary**

This chapter has presented the biographical pen portraits of the research participants. The next two chapters present the analysis of the data gleaned in the interviews.

## **Chapter 6: Presentation and Thematic Analysis of the Data Concerning Pre-career and Training Stages**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter I provided pen-portraits of the research participants. Here, I present the first set of data ordered by career-stage subject, with discussion of emergent themes. Whilst not all episodes and transition points occurred in the same order for all teachers, presenting episodes in the most frequently occurring chronological order made for ease of comparison. There is a risk that presenting the data in this way creates a false sense of neatness in career trajectories. A further difficulty arose in presenting narratives sequentially when dealing with chronological jumps made by the participants, such as when they compared and contrasted events from different time periods in their lives.

Areas covered include various aspects of participants pre-Career Experiences and Motivations (6.2) and their experiences of ITT courses and probationary periods (6.3). The emergent themes, which are the interpretive underlying meanings and ideas, are tentatively identified to allow for a fuller discussion in the subsequent chapters on the analysis of turning points in TPI through literary criticism (See Chapter 8) and the findings and implications of the research (See Chapter 9). In Appendix 4, examples have been provided of the coded and annotated transcripts of one of the research participants, to show how analysis was conducted. Appendix 4 is an example of the linear comparison table of one of the generational cohorts. I have indicated the pseudonym and the generational cohort from which the participant belonged within parenthesis, in this format: (Alex, 2G).

### **6.2 Pre-Career Experiences and Motivations**

#### **6.2.1 Introduction**

This subchapter presents details shared by the research participants concerning their biographical and social identities prior to their becoming teachers. Often, these include their educational experiences, and earlier occupations. These were frequently cited as motivating career choice, and as having relevance for the formations of their TPI.

## 6.2.2 Biographical and Social Background

### 6.2.2.i First Generational Cohort

All three of the male participants referred early in the interviews to having come from a clearly identifiable geographical or social class that was at odds with the perceived middle-class culture of the schools they attended. Their backgrounds motivated them to teach students from similar backgrounds.

In Jack's first anecdote, he described visiting a school when first considering teaching as a career, and sitting with teachers whose denigrating comments of the student body inspired him:

*I remember sitting there at lunchtime with them, and a girl there, a woman that worked there, saying, 'The kids here, I was told they're Essex boys and girls, and they are.' It was meant as a very derogatory way of doing it... because I'm from there, I was sort of, 'Oh, these are people teaching kids...,' it kind of geared me up a little bit to be more proactive (Jack, 1G).*

Clear here is a sense of outrage on behalf of students, with whom he indicates a cultural and social affinity that other teachers, who are outsiders, do not.

Similarly, Fred, in his first anecdote, observed that the area that he 'lived in was a very deprived area' and he 'wanted to become a teacher' because he 'grew up on what you might call the wrong side of the tracks'. After returning from University, he found that many of his previous friends had 'either ended up in prison or institutions for young offenders'. He explained that

*I could have gone that way, but I didn't, and I wanted to pass on my experiences, you know, in a sort of idealistic way, wanted to sort of say to the people like me at the time, "You don't have to go that way. You can go this way by being a teacher." (Fred, 1G)*

His 'sort of idealistic' attitude is grounded in a socio-geographical and class identity, yet it is significant that it is necessary to be exceptional within that community.

Mike described working 'in inner city schools', explaining that because 'that's where I was from' and this inspired him to work as a teacher

*in a very inner city, very culturally mixed area, a big city. I did have a sense of wanting to give something back. I did have that sense that somehow I could give back to, you know, ordinary kids (Mike, 1G).*

For these males, there is a sense of belonging to and understanding what it is to be of the communities they serve as teachers, yet they are apart from that community in wanting to improve or better it through their individual effort.

Louise described her parents as middle-class, educated professionals: her mother was a teacher and trade union school rep, and her father was a draftsman who played cricket. The gender aspect of her identity became more significant in later experiences.

### **6.2.2.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Of a middle-class background, Mary's school experiences prepared her for 'specific gender roles':

*I think it's a very different world from when I grew up, absolutely. You know, when I was at school, we were taught to cook breakfast for our husbands. (Mary, 2G)*

These inequalities are a predominant theme in her accounts of University and employment in further and higher education.

Being middleclass, Kevin made reference to having parents who worked as a teacher and a social worker. He described being politically left-wing. He went into education to do 'something public servicey' and he 'wanted to do something with a social conscience'. He did not reference identifying with the social background of the students.

Privately-educated Lucy came from a middleclass background. She made no reference to being motivated to support any specific socio-economic demographic. She did, however, identify with positive female role models, described concerns for a female student from a background that she perceived might inhibit engagement with further and higher education and she was critical of career situations that she described as being negatively patriarchal.

### **6.2.2.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Although she made no explicit reference to her own socio-economic background, Amy's anecdotes indicate that she appreciated the middle-class values of school.

Becky came from a middleclass family that valued education, her aunt being a head teacher. She, like Amy, and unlike female participants from earlier generations, made no reference to gender. She attended an LEA school that included a significant proportion of students who were less-advantaged.

Matthew described coming from a working-class background with 'not very academic' parents. He said that 'School was always represented very positively', and although there 'was no one in my family who had been to university, or anything like that', he attended himself. In another anecdote, he described himself as 'middleclass', suggesting upward social mobility.

### **6.2.2.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue described attending a successful all-girl, LEA secondary in an affluent southern town. She was the first person in her family to attend university, following her taking part in a programme to encouraged identified groups of students to apply.

Jules described having attended a grammar school and having a family confident enough to challenge the headmaster of that school. He had been able to enter the profession and begin training despite this representing a substantial drop in his income, having already earned a PhD and having worked for a number of years in the pharmaceutical industry. He explained that his wife's income was sufficient to support the financial implications.

## 6.2.3 Experiences of School and Schooling

### 6.2.3.i First Generational Cohort

Jack did not describe his school experiences. Mike described how he had not wanted to be a teacher when he was a child, and that

*In many ways I didn't enjoy school. I hated school, you know, because I was dyslexic. You know, it wasn't a pleasant environment. (Mike, 1G)*

He provided further details of a teacher who was routinely violent towards him on his return from receiving special educational needs support, whom he described as being associated with a particular item of furniture:

*He was really a horrible, horrible teacher, but every week I'd go into class and he'd call me over to his desk, because in those days you sat at a desk and you didn't move around the class. You just sat and the kids did the work. He'd say, "Where have you been?" I'd say, "I've been in Mrs so-and-so's class," whoever it was, and he would always slap me across the face. (Mike, 1G)*

Mike provided a further example of a female student being physically assaulted. Such experiences are a thematic low point, yet

*actually, I think having that experience made me a good teacher, because I could relate to those kids who hated school. I understood why they hated school, and it actually gave me a sense of empathy with them. (Mike, 1G)*

This is similar to Fred, who described how his own experiences with poor teaching motivated him to do better. Although he described how teaching as being ‘always in the back of’ his ‘mind’, he explained that:

*some of the teachers I had weren't great. It wasn't that they didn't know their stuff, but in terms of interacting and communicating – no idea. I thought, you know, "I can do better than that. I can ease on from that. I can contribute more to society." (Fred, 1G)*

These males are citing their experiences of poor teaching, as well as an affinity with the students in the previous section, as inspiring their altruistic purpose as teachers.

Louise described positive experiences at school:

*Traditionally, girls always picked to do biology, and as somebody who really enjoyed physics and maths, and was never – I never ever at school or at university felt like I shouldn't be doing it, as a female.  
(Louise, 1G)*

As with other female research participants from this project, it appears that her positive experiences of school provided some inspiration to enter the profession. At the same time, these positive experiences did provide her with a naïvely positive perception of the scientific research industry.

### **6.2.3.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Previously Mary had described limited aspirations for middle-class female students in her school. She described one primary teacher who was ‘Absolutely delightful, very kind’, whom she recalled saying ‘Every one of you are good at something’, which she had found significant, and ‘another little shite’ who had broken ‘a ruler over a girl’s back’. She did not

attend University until after the birth of her daughter, and this would prove more influential on her decision to train to teach.

Lucy 'always wanted to be a teacher', inspired by an infatuation, a 'typical girl thing', with a young teacher at her private school, whom she described as being 'graceful' and 'like a movie star', who metaphorically 'blossomed', explaining that

*I suppose when I thought that there was a possibility that I could be like her, then I thought, "Well, maybe I could be a teacher like her too." (Lucy, 2G)*

The perception of the teacher is romanticised, perhaps naïve, as indicated by a description of Lucy liking her appearance and movements, and a semantic field linked to the glamour of the film industry. After an extended description of what she perceived as strong, effortless teaching, Lucy drew a comparison to herself

*She looked like she had the life of Riley. She came in, she did her thing, she was good at it. She was professional all the time, and then she'd go. It looked like a really great job to have, because she made it look so breezy, whereas now I dread to think what some of my students think of me, because I'm sitting there looking like this, going, "Oh ..." you know. (Lucy, 2G)*

A further aspect that is significant is that of a thematic highpoint that occurs during her school career. Whilst the grade achieved for the subject is relatively modest, structurally, it represents a significant achievement, and marks Lucy out from her peers, making her exceptional:

*I wanted her to like me, and I wanted to impress her, and in the end I did, because I was the only one with a C for history A-level, and everyone else failed. (Lucy, 2G)*

This marks a strong affiliation with the person whom she judges herself against and who had inspired her to enter the profession.

Like other male research participants from this study, Kevin's perception of school was negative, revealing that he

*Hadn't really enjoyed school as a kid, secondary school. I had quite a lot of stuff going on in my family life, and I found it quite difficult and, you know, bullying and stuff (Kevin, 2G)*

Although this situation was alleviated as he grew in confidence and gained friends, his opinion of his schooling was negative.

### **6.2.3.iii Third Generational Cohort**

The two female teachers identify strongly with their own teachers, and cite their own early academic ability in schools, as being key inspirations for wanting to become teachers themselves. Becky described how she

*always wanted to be a teacher, actually. I really didn't entertain the idea of anything else, I don't think. My auntie, up until about ten years ago, was a primary school teacher, so when I was a lot younger, that's what I wanted to do (Becky, 3G).*

The only reason cited for studying English at university was to become a teacher, referring to a 'love' of the subject from school, concluding repeating the thought that she 'never ever thought about anything else'. A further anecdote revealed a fondness of a 'nice' teacher, whose lessons Becky enjoyed, who acknowledged her (relatively) exceptional academic ability:

*I remember her saying ... it sounds awful to say it, but I remember after a GCSE, I think, she told me that I'd got the highest mark, I think, in East Lotham, or something, and I remember being like, "Whoa, that's amazing." Like, I never knew I could do anything like that. I remember, it sounds so cheesy, but she was so proud of me. I thought, "Oh, you know..." I don't know, I just loved it. I thought she was really brilliant (Becky, 3G)*

Structurally, there are similarities with Lucy from the second generation (5.3.3.ii), in the description of a positive female role model in a position of authority as a teacher, who they reported a thematic highpoint when winning recognition from.

Amy cited positive experiences of school, evidence of some form of exceptional ability, and a relationship with a teacher as inspiring her from a young age. Her early achievement came in her home life, when she helped her brother to overcome a 'severe speech impediment' and

*Being his older sister, I kind of took it upon myself to mother him a little bit and be the teacher, and try and teach him things [...]. I think because I helped him, I then became interested in it. I'd do at school with my friends, and became a little bit of a teacher's pet, and helped her out with stuff, and then just as I got older, decided actually, yeah, I became very fixated upon becoming a teacher. That was the only thing I wanted to do, the only thing. I had no backup option (Amy, 3G).*

Similar to other female teachers, Lucy and Becky, the early positive experiences are so inspirational that other careers are dismissed whilst in school. Her supporting her brother is significant in her becoming an English subject teacher. In describing her secondary school, she noted that although it was 'the worst school in the area', it had a strong community spirit, and students were valued as people. She admitted 'looking back with rose-tinted glasses' yet emphasised that the teachers 'knew more about you as a student. You weren't just data to them'. This contrasts her descriptions of the present and repeated this use of the word 'knew' a further four times in the anecdote. She described an inspirational

teacher who was 'crazy' and 'out there'. After providing an extended description of his unusual pedagogical methods and the support he provided Amy during a difficult time, she said:

*I think that's why I went into English teaching, really, in the end, because of him (Amy, 3G).*

Becky and Amy shared early aspirations to teach because of conformity to the culture of schooling, a bond formed with an inspirational teacher, exceptional academic ability, and the exclusion of all other possible careers. This is similar to Lucy (2G).

Conversely, Matthew had 'hated' school, being 'basically one of the naughty kids', explaining that

*I just didn't enjoy it. I didn't enjoy how we were taught. The pressure annoyed me and got to me (Matthew, 3G).*

Two factors contributed to this, one being his own anger stemming from his lack of academic ability, being a 'C grade' student, and that of negatively perceived teachers:

*I had a couple of terrible teachers. I had a guy called Mr Jameson, who told me I had no artistic talent whatsoever; I should never look into the arts. I had some pretty horrendous approaches in teaching, telling me I didn't have much talent and should not really pursue certain things. Yeah, it was not good. I hated it. (Matthew, 3G)*

The negative language marks a particular nadir low point. He discusses this particular teacher at various points, yet contrasts this with an inspiring teacher:

*I went from being C/D borderline to getting two As, and it was him, really. It was him. I hated school, but I didn't hate sitting down with Mr Wolf (Matthew, 3G).*

Matthew described this teacher as providing a 'representation of masculinity (...) that I could get involved with'; despite this, he said that 'I think it's quite useful for teachers who don't like school to go into teaching' specifying that it was more the negative experiences that were vital in his decision to become a teacher. Interestingly, his academic achievements at school are strong, yet it was his negative experiences and academic difficulties that were cited as being influential.

#### **6.2.3.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue indicated that she had enjoyed school, had been successful, attended an outstanding sixth form college, and went on to study at University (the first in her family), receiving support from a programme whilst at secondary school.

Jules, although having been successful in education (having achieved a PhD), spoke negatively of both primary and then selective grammar school, chiefly through being 'bullied', including by a teacher, and of this putting him off teaching when he was younger. Despite his middleclass background and academic aptitude, Jules struggled academically and had negative experiences with teachers. He described how a head teacher had wanted to remove him from the grammar school because of a lack of attainment, without recourse to offering support. He said

*I think it would be unfair to say that's a grammar school issue. I think it was more a case of a bad headmaster, rather than a problem with the system itself. (Jules, 4G)*

In elaborating on this, described how a friend of his had a negative experience with the same head teacher, who was berated of in front of his mother. This friend, having achieved good grades was invited to return to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, and Jules reported that 'his mum just

said, “Fuck off,” and put the phone down, because she knew that they didn’t care about him’.

## **6.2.4 Experiences of Work and Higher Education**

### **6.2.4.i First Generational Cohort**

Mike entered higher education after an accident on a building site. Being bored, dyslexic and lacking qualifications, he completed an access course. As a single parent he was entitled to a grant. Encouraged by tutors who recognised his intelligence, for initially ‘selfish’ reasons, he took a degree in economics. This proved transformative:

*It really did open up my mind, and I was very closed, really, before I went to Uni, to what was there. I was closed off, sort of, almost prejudiced. You know, sort of inverted snobbism (Mike, 1G).*

He became interested in education, research and culture, coming to appreciate modern dance and ballet, things previously dismissed as exclusively middleclass. He described how

*It weren’t my world, but education liberated my mind. It liberated me as a person. So I saw the advantages of education in itself for working class kids (Mike, 1G).*

This pinnacle episode thematically balances his negative experiences at school and marks a significant change, and it is an experience he then wishes to share with others from his own background.

Jack’s original intention to enter the media industry was thwarted by a ‘recession’. He explored teaching as an alternative.

Louise’s experiences of university were happy. Despite being within a minority of female students, she never encountered chauvinistic attitudes. She was surprised by the

bigoted approaches apparent when working within the scientific industry as a 'research physicist', a position that she did not enjoy:

*it was quite important work, but I was the secretary in meetings, and I had to sweep up the lab at the end of the day, and things like that. So I found that quite bizarre, having come from university, where, you know, everyone was treated equal, and I really wasn't. (Louise, 1G)*

This led, following discussions with her parents, to her entering teaching. Her later experiences as a positive role model for female students address this thematic low point.

Fred had attended University, and then immediately undertook the PGCE. He made no specific mention of his studies or of any other working experience before entering the profession.

#### **6.2.4.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Mary studied comparative religion as a mature student after the birth of her daughter, finding study 'transformative'. Her MPhil centred on critiquing patriarchal structures in religious institutions. These experiences inspired her to train as an educator.

Lucy completed a joint degree in 'English and classical literature'. Not having the requisite qualification in mathematics to train to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), she undertook support roles in secondary schools, eventually becoming an unqualified teacher (UQT), whilst retaking her Maths GCSE. She worked her way 'up from the bottom'. She felt she had been tenacious, describing how although it took 'a long time', she 'stuck with it'.

Kevin enjoyed university, particularly when presenting to other students. Before training, he worked as a teaching assistant to gain experience. He 'grew to quite like the kids', and he observed that

*there were some quite bad teachers, so I started getting that sort of, "Oh, actually, you know, I could do it better," kind of attitude (Kevin, 2G).*

He provided examples and discussed sympathy for students he felt were not being taught well, observing that it 'would not take much' to engage them.

### **6.2.4.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Matthew, like others who were the first in their family to attend University, viewed higher education positively. He decided to pursue 'doing an arts degree', and invited a teacher who had previously berated him to attend 'a photography exhibition' of his work, noting that it addressed a wrong in that

*It was symbolic of this idea of telling someone they're not very good at something. That makes me angry. That still makes me angry... It was like, you know, you can temper people's wild expectations, sure, but you don't tell them they haven't got any talent (Matthew, 3G).*

Subsequently, he taught English as a foreign language for 'an anti-nuclear NGO' (Non-Governmental Organisation), enjoying interactions with mature students and the opportunities to engage in research; however, he had limited knowledge of technical aspects of language, requiring him to study. These experiences led to him thinking that not enjoying school could be a useful experience for teachers. He undertook training to teach in further education.

Amy described how:

*It didn't quite go to plan, because the whole get your A-levels, go to uni and then go straight into teaching, the dream that I always had, didn't work (Amy, 3G)*

It is significant that her plan was a 'dream', and she discussed a realisation that she was not yet mature enough to become a teacher and marked an appreciation of the differences between her initial perceptions and reality. This came from an encounter with her PGCE course convener:

*I wasn't mature enough, didn't know enough about life, and it took a very interesting woman from Grampton Uni to sit me down and say, "Go away and go and do..." and at the time I thought, "I don't know why you're telling me to do this," she was so right. (Amy, 3G)*

Amy described working in a variety of jobs and voluntary positions to gain life experience, including working as a teaching assistant. Academic ability alone was not enough; she gained an appreciation of the cultures she would teach within. The work as a teaching assistant was described as being significant, in that without it she would have 'struggled', to the extent that she would have 'perhaps dropped out at Christmas', having not 'been able to deal with the reality' of the course. Like other research participants who had been TAs, Amy claimed that this provided a better understanding of teaching.

Becky described University as a necessary step to becoming a teacher; she explained that 'that was my sole intention for studying English at uni; I wanted to do it so that I could teach English'. Following a gap year working as a receptionist, she was approached by her secondary school head teacher to take the Schools Direct route to teaching, after working happily as a Teaching Assistant.

#### **6.2.4.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue was the first person in her family to attend University, following her taking part in a programme at school. Not intending to teach, she was recruited when working as a school librarian, having met a 'glass ceiling' in the county's library service. Describing her intended career progression of moving to prisons, there are parallels to female participants from the second and third generations describing teaching:

*I watched 'The Shawshank Redemption' when I was a kid, and I liked the idea of this little kind of book trolley going around, and I felt like libraries are such an important part of a community, and in something like a prison that, for any number of people, could be like a*

*beacon of hope that they could look at, and I loved that idea. I liked the idea of the challenge as well. (Sue, 4G).*

The reference to film (Dir. Darabont, 1994), to a 'beacon of hope', and speaking of an 'idea' that is 'loved', suggests an idealistic attitude reflects a perhaps naive understanding of the reality of prison services.

Whilst working as the school librarian, prior to training, Sue described a supporting, inspirational teacher whose lessons she observed. This teacher had a 'magic element', that 'it was magic' watching 'her teach', and Sue jokingly describing her fascination as 'creepy'. She elaborated she could 'balance between being their authority figure and being a figure of care and warmth'. The skills and abilities seen without the insight of professional training and experience appear to be supernaturally extraordinary.

Jules had more positive experiences in college and University and earned a PhD. He worked for a decade in the pharmaceutical industry and started a family. Like Louise (1G), career frustrations led to his choosing teaching. To earn extra money, he worked as a private tutor for secondary and college students. Moving from the corporate culture 'felt like a natural progression'. He found tutoring 'brilliant', being preferable to his day-to-day work. Additionally, he described how he 'really, really enjoyed teaching people and training people' in his previous job. He had disliked the 'mundane' aspects, was frustrated with his professional development, and evidenced altruistic and intrinsic motivations:

*I mean I've always said I wanted four things out of any job: I wanted to be able to support my family, I wanted to be respected, I wanted to be able to be creative and I wanted to be able to make some kind of difference (Jules, 4G).*

He provided an impassioned anecdote illustrating his frustrations and reactions to being expected to take phone calls whilst in hospital on paternity leave:

*I'm like, "If I'm going to work this hard, you know, and you're going to treat me like that," I was just like, "fuck*

*this.” You know, just a complete lack of respect, a complete slap in the face. I was just like, “I’m not happy doing this anymore. I’ve learned nothing in two and a half years. Fuck this. You know, I’m going to do something that I enjoy, something I really like” (Jules, 4G).*

These reflections highlight that his frustrations acted as a catalyst to move into teaching, a career seen positively. The use of the expletives indicates the depth of feeling.

### **6.2.5 Summary**

The following patterns emerged in how pre-career experiences motivated the desire to enter the profession. Some (Mike and Fred, 1G; Kevin, 2G; Matthew, 3G; Jules, 4G) highlighted their own negative experiences and/or perceptions of school as inspiring their altruistic social purpose, with all of these but Kevin and Jules making explicit reference to supporting those from similar working class backgrounds. Some (Mike and Fred, 1G; Matthew, 3G; Jules, 4G) described having an affinity with students who shared their own initial dislike of school. Others (Louise, 1G; Mary and Lucy, 2G; Becky and Amy, 3G; Sue, 4G) cited positive school and/or university experiences, inspirational teachers or colleagues and early academic ability as inspirations to teach. Matthew (3G) also described an inspirational school teacher. Females from the first two generational cohorts (Louise, 1G, Mary, 2G) referred explicitly, and one implicitly (Lucy, 2G), to addressing gender inequality. This was not evident in females from the third and fourth generational cohorts. University is cited as being inspirational for two teachers (Mike, 1G; Mary, 2G) who disliked aspects of school. Two (Louise, 1G; Jules, 4G) left the private scientific industry, which they described negatively, as they saw teaching as a preferable career choice. Sue (4G) left the library service that she had initially joined for idealistic reasons because of limited opportunities for promotion to become a school librarian and then teacher.

## **6.3 Initial Teacher Training and the Probationary Period**

### **6.3.1 Introduction**

In the previous subchapter I presented descriptions of the periods between the participants leaving school to choosing to enter teaching. This subchapter presents and analyses descriptions of the participants' experiences and professional relationships in their ITT and probationary periods.

## **6.3.2 Teacher Training Courses, Course Conveners and Providers**

### **6.3.2.i First Generational Cohort**

Mike's obtaining his PGCE was a thematic highpoint of his narrative, serving as an antithesis to the experiences he had as a disenfranchised school student, the PGCE being 'the happiest years' of his life, chiefly because of his interactions with the tutors:

*I used to get a really good response from the tutors around me. Somehow I was valued as an individual, which I'd never experienced. If you're brought up and you can't read or write, people don't value you. They just think you're stupid (Mike, 1G).*

He explained that he was valued as 'mature student' and 'manual worker', something he had not experienced 'up until that point'. Factors that previously excluded him from education became important within this setting. He was able to return to his community to support students similarly disenfranchised:

*Also, the other thing I did learn from that was because the tutors, if you like, the teachers' teachers, valued me, and the other students valued me, then I realised that, as a teacher, how important that was, and how important it was not to be seen to devalue somebody in class, because their peers pick up on that. I think that's a fundamental mistake that teachers do (Mike, 1G).*

The verbs 'learn', 'think' and 'realised' mark these evaluative comments as being a significant turn in his personal development.

Fred described that during his ITT, he was expected to 'get on with it' and that whilst there was support and guidance available, 'you were given the class; the teacher left. They didn't stay with you. They just left you on your own'. He did describe the course positively:

*The course was great. The tutors were fine. And the school, when I sort of realised, when I asked for help they were fine. They gave me help as well, but it was very much a case of, "Let's see what you can do first of all, and then if you can't, then we'll help you. If you can, great." (Fred, 1G)*

Louise described opting for a University PGCE provider that had a reputation for being 'very progressive', chiefly for the large amount of time spent within schools, where she had a number of different placements. She did not make any specific reference to the University theoretical provision. She viewed her training and the opening years of her career as giving her an excellent and stable start, though she indicated a preference for pragmatic, class-based practice in a professional and supportive context.

Of his PGCE course tutors, Jack observed that

*Some of them weren't always great. Some of them were better than others, because once you step one foot out of the classroom, you've lost it. I think there are certain posts that should almost be sabbatical, because if you know you're going back in, I think it's a different ballgame than if you're well and truly out. I think there were certain people on the university course that were teachers, and then coming in and talking to them, they're just disengaged. They don't really know (Jack, 1G).*

Jack's critique of university-based tutors, not working in school, having less knowledge of the realities of teaching practice, echoes views of participants who view theoretical aspects as being out-of-touch.

### **6.3.2.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Not having requisite Maths qualifications to be able to teach primary or secondary, Mary undertook took a Certificate in Education, to teach further and higher education. She described her interactions with tutors positively, and was inspired by the progressive pedagogical theories, such as those of Freire (1970), these marking a personal highpoint. She became frustrated with the 'railway track kind of learning' and the lack of interest in 'self-reflection' and alternative 'teaching methodologies' by those on her course. She was able to develop her theoretical interest in challenging patriarchal, dogmatic and authoritarian ideas in education, and she wanted to challenge the assumptions of her students and work with young people who would be as motivated as she was. This expectation she would retrospectively view as naïve (see 6.4.3.ii).

Lucy, having experience of support roles in education, found her PGCE course frustrating. She had a mix of University involvement and school placements, and listed typical aspects of 'assignments', 'reading lists', 'deadlines', and a 'big lecture' that provided the opportunity to meet with colleagues from other subject specialisms. She compared this 'fairly typical' course progression positively to present-day training, which she described as being poorly-administrated and lacking oversight, providing a negative example of a trainee in her school. Whilst critical of the more class-based teacher training programmes, she commented negatively on the theoretical aspects of her own training. She felt that her lecturer/course provider was disconnected from classroom realities, and she was dismissive of theory, describing how

*You know, you've got to actually do it, and watch it, and people don't necessarily go into teaching to do all the academic theory behind learning. Obviously it's important, but I can't say that I've really thought about*

*it that much. You just get on with it, don't you? (Lucy, 2G)*

Despite acknowledgement of its abstract importance, the practicalities of the job do not allow the time for theory, or it lacks practical relevance.

Kevin described coming across the GTP ITT route accidentally, and it being 'little known'. Being salaried, he thought it a 'great gig'. Other than thinking that those on the course were expected to take on more teaching initially, he did not feel that he 'got any lesser deal than the PGCE students'. This may reflect the increase in theory intended to raise the status of those completing that route into, and to raise the quality of, teaching. It could be a consequence of the continued devaluing of theoretical content in ITT.

### **6.3.2.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Amy was initially rejected from a PGCE course because of a lack of life experience, yet was eventually accepted. She described completing academic assignments and placements, with established relationships between University and schools, with clearly defined roles for those in schools and on University staff. The course was well-administered, and she was able to seek support when encountering difficulties.

Although describing engagement with pedagogical theory as 'fundamental', Matthew said 'the PGCE was a sham', describing tutors as 'jaded, tired and disillusioned' people who 'didn't care about the schools'. He bemoaned the lack of 'critical engagement' in a course that was 'product', suggesting that system had negatively affected the tutors' motivation. The situation was 'stressful' because of an onerous workload, and the provision inadequate:

*it was just nihilism from those above me. They were nice to talk to, but they weren't trying to improve me. They never came in and watched me teach, ever, and the kids knew it (Matthew, 3G).*

The collective 'nihilism' suggests something systemically wrong; there is a way that things are supposed to be, yet it is not here. He later completed a Master's in educational research and moved into conducting educational research for NGOs in international contexts (see 7.5.2.iii).

Becky was similarly dismissive of her University's provision. She was in the first cohort through the Schools Direct Programme undertaken by her University, which had replaced the GTP. Theoretical content was reduced. She attended 'about five times'. Consequently, she did not 'have a particularly strong, sort of, pedagogical knowledge at all'. Sessions were non-compulsory, poorly-run, leading her and her fellow trainees to question

*what is actually benefitting us more at the minute? Is it being in school or going to University and then not ... do you know what I mean? Not having what we were supposed to have there (Becky, 3G).*

She commented that her cohort were 'guinea pigs' and that 'I couldn't tell you a thing that I learnt from the university'. This indicates institutional failure by the university, yet she regarded herself 'a really good teacher' by the conclusion of her training, because of her own efforts and the support of school-based colleagues:

*I wouldn't accredit that at all to the university, which I know sounds really quite harsh, but I wouldn't... you know, they were the one that gave me the certificate, but it was all to do with the people (Becky, 3G).*

It transpired that she left the profession because of an inability to prioritise workload in her early career leading to a work/life imbalance (7.5.2.iii), and because of a misalignment between her own values and those of the school (see 7.4.2.iii), aspects that may have been supported by the outsider perspective of a University mentor. By comparison, Amy (3G) reported receiving such support (see 6.4.4.iii) when struggling with prioritising workload in a school placement, leading to her remaining in teaching.

### 6.3.2.iv Fourth Generational Cohort

Sue described the University involvement in her School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) through a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) negatively. Whilst the MAT provided QTS, additional academic assignments through the university earned what Sue described as ‘an evidence-based PGCE’, that was ‘research-based and very practical, rather than sitting in a classroom learning things and then passing an exam’. She expressed the dissatisfaction felt by her and another trainee, that time having elapsed since her graduating university, resulting in anxieties, that they were not supported; furthermore:

*We had several issues with the course convener from the university speaking to us in a less than professional manner (Sue, 4G).*

The plural ‘we’ indicates the concerns were felt by the cohort. When asked to elaborate, she described an antagonistic tutor, ‘quite intimidating’, who acted with ‘incredible hostility’. The situation was resolved by involving the SCITT provider:

*We actually got an incredible amount of support from the academy trust, because, I mean, we were mutinous and we were all going to quit (Sue, 4G).*

The cohort did pass the assignments and gained the PGCE; however, none attended graduation. Overall, ‘it was a very, very negative experience’. She acknowledged that the concerns were specific to that university; she expressed enthusiasm for an upcoming research project at her school.

Jules, although having a PhD, shared Sue’s suspicions of university involvement in ITT. He commented that he wanted to ‘get on with it’ instead of ‘just sit there in a lecture room writing essays’. In this, his views were aligned with the DFE, where there had been an ambition to ‘Reform initial teacher training so that more training is on the job’ (DFE, 2010, p.22). Although he briefly acknowledged the importance of learning about the theory of differentiation and literacy, he described at length the various issues he had with ITT in

universities. He preferred learning in school with experienced teachers. This suggests a similar attitude to the then secretary of state for education (Gove, 2010, p.1), who opined that teaching 'is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman'.

### **6.3.3 The Reality of the Classroom and Difficulties**

In presenting career episodes broadly chronologically for ease of comparison, it is necessary to point out that teachers' careers have not all followed the same course or trajectory exactly. This section deals with descriptions of difficulties in the classroom experienced by all teachers. For many, such difficulties occurred when transitioning from pre-career into the classroom. There are teachers who experienced difficulties at other transition points or stages.

#### **6.3.3.i First Generational Cohort**

Mike described no difficulties in the classroom, or in his training. His background gave him an affinity with students, helping him to deal with behaviour, a problem he felt other teachers faced.

Students and workload had not caused Louise problems during her ITT. She referred to problems caused by difficult colleagues and leaders and negative school cultures later in her career. She discussed 'an old sage' from her ITT and probation year, a teacher within her department, dismissive of her contributions in meetings. She attributed this to attitudes towards younger teachers by older professionals, rather than to attitudes regarding gender. She contrasted her own positive experiences of school-based support and a positive and collaborative culture on her ITT (see 6.4.4.i) with the difficulties and stresses around workload she envisioned that trainees at the time of our interview would experience.

Although he did not make much specific reference to classroom experience in his ITT, Jack described an early strength, as an engaging performer, which had potential difficulties:

*If at the beginning of the year-, and the whole-, they've had a great time but they've not made any progress, then all you've really done is kind of entertain them. You know, there are times when I've felt guilty of doing that, earlier in my career. The kids have loved the lesson and I've come out going, 'Yeah, it's great,' but actually, what have they learned? (Jack, 1G)*

This realisation came later in his career, when observing and mentoring colleagues. He described problems during training with the practicalities and moral issues of working with data.

Fred described a significant experience from later in his career, when moving from an easier school with an aspirational demographic to returning to teach working-class students, and struggling with managing the behaviour of a Year 10 group:

*I was really strict with them. I couldn't get them on side at all. I couldn't really work out what to do with them (Fred, 1G).*

Fred seems to have become like the teachers he was critical of from his own schooldays, strict, and not engaging with the students. He found that he had 'lost... not lost, but forgotten, if you like' the desire and ability to communicate with students. Perhaps not only skills have been lost; arguably, Fred became estranged from his original motivations to be a teacher who prioritised relationship building.

### **6.3.3.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Mary's initially high expectations of working with students (see 6.4.2.ii) did not match reality:

*I just thought, "Oh, this is going to be great. We'll be able to have this interesting discussion, and sixteen-to-*

*eighteen-year-olds love that challenging ...” It didn’t all work out like that (Mary, 2G).*

Inspired by more progressive approaches to become a facilitator of learning, she found the students disappointingly desirous of more support:

once I’d done the Cert Ed and found, you know, the Freirean stuff, I just found that so inspirational. I thought, “I want to do that.” But it’s disappointing when you’ve got people that just want the didactic stuff, and open your head and pour it all in. (Mary, 2G).

Furthermore, she described students ‘rocking up’ when they wanted to, avoiding poor excuses for not completing independent work, and she did not feel as if she had ‘a lot of support for wanting to do things differently’ from her leaders, making this a ‘very frustrating time’, further compounded by the fact that she did not have a lot of teaching time.

Lucy described herself as being ‘quite pushy’ having been disappointed at what she had observed in ‘rough schools’, with firm ideas about what sort of teacher she would be. This keenness led to difficulties at her first placement:

*I was like, “What? This is awful.” There was, like, chaos around me. They’re not doing the basic things that we’ve been told to do, and sometimes I would say that (Lucy, 2G).*

She gained a reputation for being ‘bolshie’ and irritating people on the course, yet reflected that ‘I think it’s very easy for someone who has got so much more free time to say, isn’t it?’ She struggled with workload and stress in a school described as a ‘nightmare’, observing that

*The course, I think, there should have been more emphasis on well-being. I think there should have been more of an emphasis on work/life balance, because*

*they've got to retain teachers, and we have a big problem in this country (Lucy, 2G).*

She would describe in her early career, post-probation, coming to realise that she would not have as much autonomy as she had anticipated (see 7.3.2.ii). She discussed the difficulties she had when she had her first, unexpected promotion to a TLR middle-management role, evaluating that she had been 'naïve' and of then becoming aware of 'the realistic picture of the department' and its problems. This resulted in a downward 'domino effect'. She used anaphora to repeat the phrase 'I didn't envisage' multiple times, and 'I didn't realise', to describe the various difficulties that she was not aware of prior to her promotion, things which she was not told by her predecessor or line managers, highlighting the disparity at various stages of her career between her initial perceptions with more challenging realities.

In comparison to poor teaching observed as a TA, Kevin thought he 'got along quite well' and 'enjoyed teaching', citing good lesson observations and positive interactions with students. He did, however, say 'I think I always, you know, struggled with the workload. Marking was the bane of my life, really', and that he never developed the discipline to 'plough through' marking until the end of his teaching career.

### **6.3.3.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Matthew faced chaotic school environments in his training (see 6.4.2.iii) and early career, with a heavy workload, working across multiple subject areas, with marking particularly difficult. He described these particular difficulties continuing in the next school that he worked in, shortly after his probationary year:

*I had thirteen classes in the second year. I was marking well over three hundred books. I was just a shell by Christmas. I was absolutely destroyed. Across three or four... yeah, across four subjects. You know, I work hard, but it was, like, seventy hour weeks. It was ridiculous (Matthew, 3G).*

The issues of workload are linked to wellbeing and mental health, and the idiomatic, metaphorical language indicates extreme emotional distress. His difficult situation was compounded by the managerial cultures of the schools. What he had previously described as inadequate training made this time more challenging.

Amy describes an important realisation in her ITT, when on one of her placements on her PGCE course. She described being 'disgustingly enthusiastic', 'doing everything over the top' and being 'obsessed' with being perfect, until:

*I just thought this whole idea of perfection is not real, and you can't perfect everything. You don't have time. There's not enough hours in the day to perfect everything, and that's when it hit me that the idea of being a teacher and the reality of being a teacher were two very different things (Amy, 3G).*

Significant here is the explicit discussion of the differences between initial perceptions of teaching and the difficult realities. Particularly problematic was the workload from 'planning', 'deadlines', 'time management' and the 'reality of being in the classroom'. Additionally, she faced problems in knowing how to approach school-based mentors who had line-management responsibilities, for help, when 'not wanting to be seen as weak'. This was particularly evident with her taking on the classes of her placement school's Head of Department. She explained that

*you kind of get trapped in a bubble where you think, "If I don't do this, this will happen." I didn't want to ask for help because I didn't want the fear... it was that fear of, "If I ask for help and she realises I'm struggling, they'll start looking at me a little bit more closely, and then I might just get kicked off the course and fail overall." (Amy, 3G)*

Whilst seeking guidance and support is an important part of training, difficulties existed in her being able to approach those who had line-management responsibilities.

Becky, a Schools Direct trainee, said of the quick immersion into the classroom that the 'positives outweigh the negatives', citing the quick formation of relationships with the students and being able to immediately teach. She highlighted excessive 'workload' as negative: 'it was really stressful'. She began with an 80% timetable, including KS4 and KS5 classes in the year of their final qualifications, and described wanting to do justice to the students.

#### **6.3.3.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue indicated dealing with typical issues, such as behaviour and differentiation, when discussing the support that she received from colleagues in her working as an unqualified and then trainee teacher. She described how the difficult circumstances of the school where she worked (high staff turnover and a restructure) made her following NQT year (in the same school) more problematic:

*NQT year was very much sold to me by the training programme as the year that you can take away everything that you've learned, and develop, and find areas of particular interest, and study days, and I've not had that at all. It's literally just been fighting fires, and I think that's partly to do with what's been going on at the school (Sue, 4G).*

As a result of these circumstances, issues around workload and excessive marking, the lack of support from her mentor and pre-existing, yet not specifically described, mental health conditions, she found the situation stressful. As with other teachers from more recent generations, workload and wellbeing are concerns. Significantly, the use of the adverb 'literally' marks 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) as it draws a distinction between the false perception created by 'the training programme' of what the NQT year would entail, and the reality. The idiomatic figurative expression emphatically illustrates the contrast, which is of stressful workload with no time for reflection or personal development.

Jules identified behaviour management of disruptive pupils as his most significant problem in his ITT year, explaining that 'obviously you get the kind of unruly kids who are

just there to get attention and disrupt and what have you'. Whilst emphasising his desire to achieve learning for all of the students in his class, these comments perhaps lack nuance, empathy and perspective in relation to the disruptive students. This forms a contrast with participants (Mike and Fred, 1G; Matthew, 2G) who demonstrated an affinity with such students.

### **6.3.4 Supporting Mentors, Course Conveners and Colleagues**

The previous sections of this chapter described the participants' experiences and perceptions of their ITT, probation and early years, and problems encountered in the classroom in training, probation and other career stages. This section presents relationships with key individuals, such as mentors and tutors. ITT and probationary years are when such formal mentoring relationships are set up, and many of the mentors described came from such career points. This research included descriptions of other professionals who provided such support at other stages or in less formal capacities.

#### **6.3.4.i First Generational Cohort**

Mike's experiences on the PGCE course were the 'happiest' of his life, because of the support and respect from his tutors. This taught him the importance of valuing those from more disadvantaged backgrounds. He did not describe specific individuals. He did describe a colleague in school in his early career who he wanted to be like, a cynical, older teacher who had chosen to never leave the classroom to enter management.

Fred, in an anecdote from later in his career, described a senior colleague who supported him in the difficulties he had engaging with a behaviourally challenging class (See 6.4.3.i), the 'head of Year 10' who was 'a very larger than life figure' who 'always seemed to have a good rapport with all the students', a quality that was identified as important in Fred's pre-training experiences. He was invited to observe him teach the same class and described how

*it was really interesting. Inspirational? Yeah, perhaps, in some ways, but – see how he was with them, how very much different they were with him, to what it was with me (Fred, 1G).*

Fred recognised that overly strict approach to behaviour management came from his lack of experience in that school and he understood that he had been deskilled by working in a school without such behaviours. He admired the senior colleague because he

*knew how to get on their wavelength and to get them on side, and to get them working, respecting, all those things (Fred, 1G)*

There was a moment of uncomfortable self-discovery, yet Fred reconnected with his original motivations for becoming a teacher.

Louise described how the stability of the schools where she worked, and the supportive environment of the catholic school where she spent her NQT and subsequent seven years of her professional teaching career, as meaning that she ‘couldn’t probably have had a better start’. This had been ‘the making’ of her as a teaching professional. Her colleagues ‘really looked after’ her and this phase of her career she described as ‘lovely’. She explained:

*I think the reason I enjoyed it so much was because of the people that I worked with, and not necessarily the children. The children were great, but it was the other staff that made me feel that I could do what I was doing, and the other staff, and the school, and the culture of the school, were the supportive thing for me, as an NQT (Louise, 1G).*

This can be directly contrasted with some of the accounts of the research participants from the more recent generational cohorts, who were not in such supportive cultures.

Despite having mixed views of course providers, Jack spoke positively of an LEA advisor working with NQTs:

*I had a lot of time for Daniel. He was a good guy. He said, "The thing about data is that you'll be teaching a class and if you know the class and know the data, there'll be certain students with a big neon sign almost pointing at them, and you'll be going, 'God, why aren't they achieving?' There'll be some kids in a class that you go, 'Oh, they're not very clever,' and you look at the data and go, 'No, actually, they are clever. So why aren't they engaged?'" (Jack, 1G)*

This person shares features with mentors from other anecdotes: he is an expert in teaching, is in a position of authority, and exhibits professional autonomy, and he is able to reposition concerns to draw insights. Jack evaluated the influence of this mentor when he opined that 'teaching was too reliant on what happened in the classroom', revealing that he valued this perspective from outside school. This does not contradict his stated distrust of people working purely in a University setting, as he values this person being present in schools, describing how

*He would go round and see schools. He would know the schools. When I was an NQT, he would come in and he observed every English NQT within the county. That was part of his role, quality control... He'd know departments. He'd know connections (Jack, 1G).*

The use of the passim (repetition) of 'know', and the verbs 'see' and 'observed' indicates a perceptive capacity that is contrasted with the description of university tutors who 'don't really know'.

#### **6.3.4.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Kevin described his 'professional tutor... who looked after all the trainees'. Kevin's university training had focused on student-led, progressive pedagogies, yet this mentor encouraged him to use traditional teaching methods, which were 'old-school', relying upon

'teacher talk'; he evaluated this 'revisionist' approach as being 'really good'. He described another older teacher he was assigned to, similarly traditional:

*there was also a really good old teacher who was... fairly old-school, and the kids really liked him, you know. He was just a very good sort of storyteller. It was actually completely inappropriate. He'd sort of like kick the kids up the arse out the room and stuff like that (Kevin, 2G).*

Whilst Kevin acknowledges issues in such behaviours, he admires this teacher because of the effectiveness and professional autonomy demonstrated in the unconventional approach.

Lucy reflected that trainees were keen and were driven by their perception that the mentor would judge them; if not paired wisely, and if the trainee sensed that the mentor regarded mentoring as 'drudgery', it could have a detrimental effect on the trainee. Her first mentor was a 'lovely man' who dealt delicately with her pressing him to complete a number of tasks. He approached her university to speak with her, which had left her 'mortified', yet this was resolved positively:

*That was a bit of a, "Calm down, dear," moment. I was like, "For Christ's sake," but he did pull me aside, and he said, "Do you know what, though? I think you're going to go far, Lucille." Damn right I am. Would you be saying this to a man? Probably not. (Lucy, 2G)*

However, this indicates a perceived sexism, referencing a British television advertisement that suggested a feminine tendency to become over-excited. Similarly, the full name suggests condescension.

Mary, frustrated with the teacher training course, spoke to a mentor:

*Again, I was very enthused; it was wonderful, and he replied. He was a really inspirational guy, and he went, "Yeah, Mary," he said, "but quite frankly, what's coming in now, the level of people coming in and training as teachers, they want to come in, get through it as quickly as possible and go out." (Mary, 2G)*

The positive words used to describe this mentor are similar to other research participants describing mentors. This mentor provides more than just pragmatic lessons, acting as an inspiration.

### **6.3.4.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Amy previously described difficulties in seeking support from her Head of Department mentor. She turned to her University course leader because she didn't feel as if she 'was being judged as much by him'. She explained:

*nothing you ever said to him was stupid. Nothing was wrong. You could have the most ridiculous idea ever, or thought in a lesson, or anything, and he was so supportive. I think because he was in the classroom loads himself, and then he was at Uni as well ... I don't know. There was something really comforting about him. Not that I didn't trust the head of English, but... I really can't explain it. I don't know. If he wasn't the person leading the course, and if he wasn't the way that he was, if he wasn't caring and really supportive - he really took the time to think about what our needs were and how to help us individually – I don't know if I necessarily would have stayed past Christmas (Amy, 3G).*

Here, the inspirational mentor figure is able to balance being an autonomous professional with the demands of the managerial culture. He is able to move between different institutions and roles. He provides emotional comfort and creates conditions for insightful

reflection and guidance. Amy provided a further example of a prioritising exercise where she was encouraged to reflect and make decisions to resolve workload difficulties.

Matthew's description of his school-based mentoring was negative. His mentor had a breakdown 'three weeks' into the term, leaving him taking her classes full-time, without support, for the year. When explaining her departure, he used a semantic field linked to things being broken:

*She just walked out. She'd had enough. Teaching had broken her, and it was teaching that had broken her. She'd been asked to do too much stuff, and I'd argue she didn't really actually have the skill set that allowed her to deal with everything that was in front of her, and the poor woman just had enough. She was on the point of a breakdown. You know, like, breakdowns are a normal thing in this industry (Matthew, 3G).*

Here, he refers to teaching as an industry, highlighting typicality, suggesting broader dysfunctional, systemic failures.

Whilst Becky made no specific discussion of her school-based mentor, this becomes significant when she refers to not asking her mentor or others to support her with guidance in facing issues related to prioritising workload. She reflected that

*You know, if I'd thought about it, maybe I could have asked for a bit more advice about how to split it all up and what to prioritise. That's what I found really difficult as well. I didn't know how to prioritise, because in my head, everything was equally as important, because no one... it's not that nobody said, "Oh, do that next week," or, "Don't worry about that, I'll do that for you." That's not what I was asking for, but I thought everything was super, super important, which of course it is, but I now know that some things are more important than others (Becky, 3G).*

Significantly, there is a mention of 'no one' that then breaks off, perhaps because of a reluctance to attribute blame to colleagues who failed to provide her with the guidance required. She had little involvement from the University, and although she speaks positively of various school-based mentors and colleagues, none provided her with the outsider perspective of how to prioritise her workload.

#### **6.3.4.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue spoke of her contrasting experiences with her ITT school-based mentor, and then her NQT mentor (who was the executive head teacher who worked across two schools). The first was described positively:

*so Mandy Redford was my mentor, and it was fantastic because she was always here, so I was always able to talk to her, and I was always able to ask her questions. If something suddenly cropped up, I could just run across to her classroom, which is across the corridor, and ask her a question, and she'd tell me the answer and I could go away and fix it (Sue, 4G).*

Whilst support is readily available, as indicated by the repetition of the adverb 'always' to indicate an absolute and ever-present quality, there is no challenge or reflection, rather a provision of instrumental quick fixes. The adjective 'fantastic' is telling, and the mentor is viewed highly positively. It is important to note that this anecdote is used as a contrast to the more negative experience of mentoring in the NQT year following:

*The difficulty I'm having this year is that my mentor is the executive head of the school, and she's also the head teacher of another school, which means that her time is money, and I am, I imagine, very, very far down her list of priorities. So it's been very, very hard to organise regular mentor meetings (Sue, 4G).*

Sue did not rate guidance offered by managerial colleagues, preferring the support of classroom teachers. She commented further that when she went to her mentor with concerns about managing her anxiety as a result of workload (Sue is open about suffering with mental health concerns), she was dismayed by the attitude shown:

*I'm fully aware that it's all in my head. I know that. It's a mental health issue. But to be told by the person who's supposed to be essentially, kind of, your number one supporter throughout the year, that my anxiety issues were just me being a little bit ridiculous, I feel like that was a huge turning point for me, and from then on I will admit that I have been very, very reluctant to contact her about anything (Sue, 4G).*

Whilst the first mentor is regarded favourably, it could be argued there was an overreliance upon support without the opportunity for reflection. The position in the school of the mentor in the NQT year seems to have presented different difficulties, such as lack of availability, and issues around a failure to provide emotional support.

Jules, like Sue, describes positively a mentor who provided immediate instrumental solutions. This may reveal a potential gap in training that the participants are unaware of, although they dismissed University for its perceived passivity of learning experience. Jules's perceptions of the purposes of teaching do seem hegemonic, instrumental and lacking in criticality:

*I mean we all know we're trying to all go for the same cause, which is to try and get these kids making as much progress as we can, and getting as good results, around about this time, really, with the GCSEs and the A-levels coming out soon (Jules, 4G).*

This is different to the attitudes shown to data and progress teaching as seen by some of the other teachers in this research, who were more critical and reflective of how a standards-based culture affected them and their students (see 7.3.2.i Mike and Jack; 7.3.2.iii Matthew,

Amy and Becky; 7.4.2.i Mike and Jack; 7.4.2.ii Lucy; 7.4.2.iii Matthew, Amy and Becky). In addressing the problem of behaviour presented by students in the previous section who are perceived as being 'the kind of unruly kids who are just there to get attention and disrupt', his mentor's intervention comes across as perhaps instrumental rather than developmental, providing only 'two choices, really'. These were to either just continue trying to cope with disruption in the 'hope' that things would get better, or to 'follow the policy more rigidly' to have the student excluded. Jules described how

*And, you know, and kind of reflected on what was said, and then I kind of re-established my boundaries and what I would and wouldn't accept and why, and then, yeah, when kids started acting out then I followed the policy a lot firmer, as I was allowed to do, and got those kids out of the lesson. And yeah, they weren't thrilled, but the rest of the class, the lesson was so much better. They learned so much more, and it was reflected in their progress as well on those particular topics (Jules, 4G).*

A mentor in a position allowing objectivity who was more concerned with Jules's progression as a teacher, rather than with immediate organisational goals, may have encouraged reflection and alternatives to this solution.

### **6.3.5 Summary**

Over time, descriptions of the provision of universities and theoretical knowledge have become more negative.

A particular concern that becomes more prevalent over time is that of workload and the effects on wellbeing during ITT, with no reported concerns in the first generation. Explicit reference to 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) was entirely absent in the first generation. An interesting correlation emerged in the explicit reports of this amongst those who reported positive pre-career expectations as inspiring the choice to enter the profession (Mary and Amy, 2G; Lucy and Becky, 3G; Sue, 4G), and it occurred at various stages in ITT, probation and early career.

Four broad types of mentor figure were described. One participant of the third generation (6.3.4.iii), and both participants of the fourth generation (6.3.4.iv), cited positively those who provided immediate, practical solutions, yet with little challenge or reflection recorded. Two of the first generation (6.3.4.i), two of the second generation (6.3.4.ii) and one of the third generation (6.3.4.iii) made reference to an influential inspirational mentor who combined practical skill and knowledge, positions of authority, and professional autonomy in relation to institutional structures. One of the third generation (6.3.4.iii) and one of the fourth generation (6.3.4.iv) provided negative accounts of mentor figures who occupied managerial positions in the organisational cultures in which they were training to teach. This was because of a lack of availability for meaningful interactions. Two teachers from the third generation (6.3.4.iii), both of whom left teaching, referred to not having a mentor figure or someone who was able to provide structured, external support.

## **6.4 Summary**

In this chapter I have presented the data and thematic analysis of the narrative accounts in relation to the pre-career and training stages. In the next chapter I present the data and analysis of the accounts that deal broadly with the post-training and post-probation periods.

## **Chapter 7: Presentation and Thematic Analysis of the Data Concerning the Time Following Qualification and Probation**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The previous Chapter presented the narrative accounts of the research participants that broadly aligned from pre-career to qualification. However, this included relevant episodes and interactions, such as classroom difficulties and the support of mentors, which occurred at later career points. This chapter presents the data and corresponding analysis of narrative accounts of events that occurred following qualification and the probationary period. This includes when teachers were established practitioners (7.2) and moments when they were challenged to make decisions about their careers (7.3).

### **7.2 The Established Teacher**

#### **7.2.1 Introduction**

This subchapter presents findings related to three key subjects that appeared in the narrative accounts concerning the formations of TPI when teachers were becoming or had become more established teachers. These were: firstly, interactions with students (7.2.2); secondly, interactions with leadership and school systems (7.2.3); and thirdly, personal professional compromises made to meet organisational goals (7.2.4).

#### **7.2.2 Encounters with students**

##### **7.2.2.i First Generational Cohort**

Mike's journey from school-hating, working-class student with learning difficulties to a respected professional culminated in his supporting students from a similar background to himself:

*so then you had this environment where they could genuinely explore, and question, and ask. I'm not saying I always succeeded. I didn't. That became less and less as time has gone on, with the more prescriptive*

*nature of the curriculum and all that type of thing, and testing, obviously, but that was always my aim. That's always been my driving force, I think (Mike, 1G).*

A lexical field of verbs associated with higher-order thinking, including 'Explore', 'Create', 'Opening', 'Possibilities' 'Question', 'Ask' and 'Think', suggest an intellectually enriching idea of education that is liberating. He therefore stresses a student-centred attitude. Although he felt that education became more 'prescriptive', he defined himself in opposition to such approaches.

Fred, like Mike, taught to address the disenfranchisement of others of his socio-economic background. His overcoming his own failures to communicate with students culminated with him returning to a more student-centred approach. He criticised teachers who were 'still a bit more aloof', emphasising the benefits of 'being on their wavelength, so you can talk about things'. He provided a description of imagined effects on the students:

*I think that makes the student, the kid feel great, you know. It would make me feel great, just if someone said, you know... "Oh, thanks, Sir." You know, just that general recognition of, "Well done last night." Or, you know, a football team, "Oh, you won last night. They won the cup. Brilliant, well done," you know. Just that sort of thing, I think it makes such a difference (Fred, 1G).*

The repeated reference to thinking reveals a significant intellectual development. Having returned to his primary purpose of communicating with students from his background, having overcome being deskilled and diverted from his purpose by being in a 'sniffy' school, he had come 'full circle'.

Jack moved into middle-management early, and themes in his interview addressed balancing consistency and creative autonomy. He explained:

*You do want consistency. You know, if my child comes to the school, I'd like that child to get the best possible education, irrespective of which teacher had them, and then you've got to be accountable and you've got to be able to monitor that (Jack, 1G).*

He described being able to bring 'order out of chaos' whilst head of department, yet he encouraged creativity and well-being. He cited the importance of engaging and communicating with students to establish rapport.

Louse discussed working to encourage girls who were good at sciences to pursue it, addressing issues she had suffered with chauvinistic behaviour when a research physicist:

*I suppose I probably do try and encourage the girls to do physics more, because there's no reason why we shouldn't be equals, and I think, certainly at BP, that was the first time it really crossed my mind that I was in a male-dominated subject. [...] So I think I do like to try and encourage girls to go into those areas, or at least try and see if it's for them, and try and point out that they're just as good as everybody else. They've got a right to be there. If they don't want to be there, that's fine, but if they do, great (Louise, 1G).*

This is similar to the males in this cohort, who saw teaching as a means to supporting their own community, altruistically tackling social injustices they had themselves experienced.

### **7.2.2.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Mary overcame initial concerns regarding students when she diversified the subject areas in which she taught, reflecting her interests in 'women's studies', 'teacher training', 'religious studies' and 'English'. She described a highpoint:

*I also taught reflexology, because I trained as a reflexologist before, and I was doing evening classes.*

*That was more inspirational, in many ways, because everybody, you know, was really excited by it. I got GPs coming along; it was fantastic; so, they were quite engaged (Mary, 2G).*

What makes this 'inspirational' is that it she was teaching a subject in which she felt passionate and knowledgeable, with enthusiastic participation from students.

Lucy described experiences with students in which she was concerned about being perceived as being too strict, because of wanting the students to do well, yet the managerial pressures and the emotive nature of working with young people made mental wellbeing difficult:

*I think it's just because I'm so, like, into everything being done really well that sometimes I can get a bit manic. Do you know what I mean? And I can see that as more of a goal, and I can sometimes get a bit snappy, because I get impatient, because the kids aren't with me on it all the time. I can usually win them over, it's just... yeah. So I think that's my fear, is being misunderstood and being too snappy (Lucy, 2G).*

Her discussions of interactions with the students were, in the context of the interview, coloured by the fact that at the time she was shortly to leave the school, as the pressures of her middle-management role had made her 'unhappy' and 'unwell'. She described her concerns regarding a female student from an Asian background who she hoped would be able to progress in her absence, as she was concerned about cultural expectations that may have inhibited educational and career opportunities.

Kevin described his favourite aspects of the working life of a teacher being classroom interactions with the students, which he 'enjoyed'. He described achieving strong examination results and reported that none of the negative aspects of teaching related to students.

### 7.2.2.iii Third Generational Cohort

Amy spoke positively of having abandoned formulaic aspects of lesson plans in favour of a student-centred and improvised approach on a topic they had instigated, in which the class critiqued celebrity culture:

*We had no success criteria. We had nothing like that, none of the peer assessment and all the stuff we have to do. We just had this picture, and they were arguing back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, and listening to each other, and developing what each other were saying (Amy, 3G).*

She thought the same understanding would not have been achieved had she taught in ‘a very mechanical way’, expressing satisfaction in being ‘allowed to be me a little bit’, where the students had ‘felt at ease’ in discussion, making a ‘great lesson’. This parallels the inspirational, eccentric teacher from her childhood. Whilst a one-off, the difference from the formulaic lessons she disliked mark a highpoint that perhaps explains her feeling like a ‘hypocrite’ (7.4.2.iii) in later discussions.

Matthew’s most positive experiences focused on interactions with students whom he valued, addressing thematic concerns from his experiences as a school student, trainee teacher and early-career professional:

*I naturally enjoy talking to students, working with people and that, and encouraging people to realise they’re smarter than they think they are. It’s just a massive drive. I really enjoy it. I think it’s a real privilege to be able to tell people they’re smarter than they think they are (Matthew, 3G).*

It is significant that Matthew was not only proud of having altruistic purpose, yet in being recognised as being a competent professional who could teach well and achieve results. He described when he had to help 120 students to complete coursework, requiring him to be ‘more organised’, and leading to the realisation that he was ‘not a terrible teacher’. Whilst

the external verification of his competency by the school he was contemptuous of was significant, he highlighted the subversive nature of his interactions with the students positively, for example:

*the truth is they didn't know what we did in the class. They had a centralised planning system, which is useful, especially if you've got low teacher standards, but when the door was closed, you know, I could create a different bond with them. It almost felt like a rebellious act, which actually almost drove me back to teaching (Matthew, 3G).*

He is at odds with a teaching culture that is perceived as autocratic and dogmatic, in particular through the 'centralised planning system', and perhaps marks his authenticity as a teacher through opposition to negatively perceived hegemonic cultures.

Becky described having felt 'lucky' to having 'classes full of students that I really liked as people', describing how even the 'naughty ones' still 'had something about them'. She was explicit that the interactions with the students remained her favourite aspect of teaching.

#### **7.2.2.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

In final stages of his NQT (probationary year), Jules related two positive teaching experiences that addressed thematic concerns from his interview. He described extraordinarily high test scores for 'a middle-ability Year 8 class' who he had 'jump eight sub-steps of progress within six weeks, which is pretty fucking special' with 'the top three highest marks of the year, out of 270 kids' coming from that group. Jules described how these students were 'sad' at the news of his departure as they had 'formed' a 'bond' and wanted to be taught by him. Possibly this does not fully reflect the progress of the students (which may not be sustainable or embedded after such a short time), yet this research is not concerned with the veracity of the claims made; rather, this research asks: why did Jules related this particular anecdote in this manner? He established his effectiveness in

achieving statistical progress, twice referring to having an ‘impact’, yet highlights the emotional connection.

This second experience was given in the context of a similarity to an incident in episode 8 of the fly-on-the-wall, educational documentary ‘Educating Yorkshire’ (Dir. Brindley, 2013), in which a student was able to overcome his speech impediment through a particular strategy suggested by a teacher. Jules described a girl ‘pretty far along on the autistic spectrum’ who he encouraged to present her research on stem cells to her class, which was successful:

*And it was just amazing that someone who does have significant special educational needs was able to put herself out there and do something of that high quality, and she got this massive round of applause at the end. It was a little bit of, kind of, an emotional kind of thing. It’s nice to know that I’d created an environment where she felt she could do that, and she did it, and the class responded so positively (Jules, 4G).*

The two anecdotes together highlight two predominant themes: exceptional academic success, and valuing students by forming supportive relationships, reflecting thematic concerns evidenced in his school days and pre-teaching career.

In a follow up interview, Sue described a recent promotion that had her working with students deemed unlikely to attend university to encourage them to consider it. She had been the first in her family to attend university following her own participation in such a programme when at school.

### **7.2.3 Bosses and Systems**

#### **7.2.3.i First Generational Cohort**

Mike provided an example of a head teacher from his childhood as a positive example of leadership:

*I can remember we had a new head, and the first thing he did was to scrap corporal punishment in the school, and I thought it was a really cool thing to do (Mike, 1G).*

This encounter is used to demonstrate Mike's own more progressive and modern attitudes towards education. He made a number of negative references to the growth of managerialism in education, as well as frustrations at the failure of teaching unions to combat this. He referred to a speech he made to an educational union conference, which received a standing ovation, where he criticised the system. He described how 'the whole education system is focussed on test results' to the detriment of staff and students, saying that

*education is broken. It is broken. It's broken. It's breaking teachers, and it's breaking our students, and it's breaking our parents (Mike, 1G).*

He was forced to take early retirement after attempting to stand up against authority figures he accused of corruption, and was involved in a legal dispute with his previous head teacher, who attempted to 'gag' him, and he explicitly described being victimised.

Jack made no reference to any individual leaders. He described the education system becoming restrictive, with teachers increasingly responsible for the students' grades, denying them agency and narrowing the curriculum. He addressed the difficulty of balancing autonomy with consistency and accountability, observing that

*There's always going to be management and checks and balances, but we're not a profession where we are trusted anymore (Jack, 1G).*

He thought that such a system would 'have to be a faulty system'.

Louise described her mother, a teaching union representative, and colleagues, raising concerns about the educational reform act, yet made no other reference to wider factors. She provided contrasting experiences with different head teachers she had worked

for. In one school where she was a middle-leader, her request to go part-time to support her husband during his terminal illness was refused; this, and an oppressive managerial culture, led her to leave the school:

*I counted for nothing, and I just think to be treated... I wasn't surprised, because I'd seen how they'd treated lots of other people, but I think I felt that, you know, they treated me really poorly, when I needed their support most and they weren't there for me. They just weren't interested (Louise, 1G).*

She contrasted this with the supportive nature of the school where she was working at the time of the interview and reflected how these contrasting experiences had made her a more considerate middle leader and mentor to NQTs.

Fred neither discussed leaders he had encountered or the broader context, other than noting that colleagues at the time of the Educational Reform Act had voiced concerns.

### **7.2.3.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Mary made no reference to managerial systems or leaders in the institutions she served in during her four years of teaching.

Lucy, who had been inspired to enter teaching by a young teacher in her private school, described working in a 'big private school' where the fee-paying parents were the clients. She would not get the professional autonomy she had envisioned. Her use of the adverbs 'essentially' and 'really', after the contrasting connective 'but', mark this as a significant turning point and realisation:

*You get some lovely things. You get the hot meals and, you know, you get your glass of wine, or you get whatever you have, and you have your strawberries and cream on sports day. They will give you certain things to make you feel like you're being treated with a luxury, and you're being treated as an equal to the*

*management, but you're not, because you're essentially, really, one of the kids, and you can be summoned to the head master's office, for example. It's a very odd feeling, and he's got his mahogany desk, and it's exactly what you'd picture in a film (Lucy, 2G).*

Lucy had equated teaching with becoming a respected and independent adult, yet the reality of being a teacher within this school is to remain, figuratively, a child: she has been unable to attain professional autonomy. She made comments indicating that this head teacher was himself in a position where he was himself deluded into thinking he had power, whilst actually being subservient to the fee-paying parents of the school.

She described after being promoted to middle-management in a secondary academy how she been pressured into changing her department's data to satisfy external audiences, and considered there to be a 'business' culture, where 'it's dog eat dog' and where 'Management, you know, shit on the ones below'. She described how her SLT attempted to emotionally blackmail her into remaining in post by telling her she was letting the school down. She wryly noted that the students were not mentioned. Her treatment by the SLT was negative enough for her to involve the support of her union, and she reflected that

*I think they need to have a softer type of management. They need to talk to people. They need to make people feel valued (Lucy, 2G).*

Despite Kevin initially enjoying teaching, over time, accountability and workload increased. An antagonistic relationship developed between him and his head teacher. He admitted getting into 'bad habits', that he 'did need a bit of a kick up the arse', and intervention made him a 'better teacher'; however, the way this was carried out was not supportive, but 'confrontational' and 'accusatory'. He was told that:

*"You're not doing enough for the kids," and this, that and the other, and I was quite on the defensive about*

*that. I think that could have been handled better, really (Kevin, 2G).*

Whilst he became a more competent teacher, he would go on to lead collectivised action to challenge the managerial culture. He provided a detailed description of his head teacher as being 'very odd', 'like an academy head before academy heads', and that she was 'really quite scary' and 'very intimidating'. There were 'many colleagues' who suffered this behaviour and that 'she just really made life very difficult for people if they crossed her'. Unlike other teachers who responded to such practises by moving schools, Kevin became proactive in working with colleagues to take union action, drawing on his political, socialist viewpoint, and his interest in trade unionism:

*And so that sort of drove me towards the union stuff, to kind of think, you know, actually, we could make a better workplace if we had a stronger union, and take on this head who was just obnoxious, really. You know, she liked to make people's lives difficult (Kevin, 2G).*

Kevin described that he found out that the leader in question 'understood people who stood up for themselves'. Although his situation improved, it is merely described as being 'quite nice'. Because of his students' results, and because of his position as a workplace representative, he was 'left alone'. Despite his success, he was still not fully happy in work.

### **7.2.3.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Amy described the processes of marking, assessing and managing the data of students in one of her initial school placements, thinking 'that it was crazy four years ago'. She then described how she felt that since then education in England had been moving increasingly that way, a situation that she described as 'confusing' in that 'there didn't seem to be a consistent approach' between schools. This was exacerbated by a change in the status of a school in which she worked.

Amy described her school's transition to academy status as seeming innocuous:

*I thought, "Oh, academy, it's just another word for school. It won't make any difference. Things won't change," and actually for the first couple of years I don't think it really did make a difference (Amy, 3G).*

This changed when she described the 'academy chain getting more involved in everyday school life', with burdensome requirements of lesson plans and observations, her being made 'to justify every single little thing', with a change in that 'It no longer was about the teaching' or 'the kids', rather, 'It was about the figures'. She then 'realised' that academies were 'more like a business, rather than a school'. Significantly, this realisation suggests that the transition has been insidious. The effects on her professional identity are stark:

*Considering I said that I liked my school because it wasn't data-driven, because you were known as students and individuals, I always look at my classes as pieces of data first, in terms of I look at what they have achieved and what they need to achieve. In September they're always numbers to me. The kids are numbers. They're numbers first and then students (Amy, 3G).*

The shift in teaching culture led to a situation where she primarily saw the students in terms of data and managerial accountability, and this diverted her from her moral purpose, as inspired by her positive youthful experiences. When asked how this made her feel, she replied, 'horrible, horrible, horrible that I spent my first few hours looking at their picture and looking at a number', before making judgements based upon that data.

Matthew had negative views of the present education system. Having a Master's Degree in educational research and having left teaching to work in multi-national NGOs, he had an informed, critical attitude towards neoliberal educational policies. He was critical of a successful school he had worked within. He suspected it of being tipped-off of so that 'they could bus all the naughty kids over to another school when OFSTED were coming', concluding that the school was 'endemically corrupt'. He described the middle-managers there as 'gorgons', elaborating on their 'horrendous' behaviour as 'bullies'. He provided

examples of their mocking teachers who spoke English as an additional language for poor literacy in reports, swearing at and belittling teachers in front of colleagues, and having a 'white saviour' snobbish attitude to the community, derived from their private-school background. He described a school 'regime' where setting seemed significant:

*The headmaster was on over one-hundred-and-fifty-grand a year. His office was palatial. Not like private school palatial, but he had like a shower-room in his office. No books in there, which was indicative of the type he was. He taught for about a year and a half and then just flown up the leader scale. He was a big bully. He was a horrible bloke. He's a leader of education. He actually has – just for the record. Why not? I don't mind. I can't bear him. When SLT had meetings, and when his head of departments had meetings with him for the review, he has an office, because he's a leader in education, somewhere in central London, like, near Temple or something, in one of these big government buildings. Even though he's got literally an enormous office, he asked people to get the Tube into London, because he has his power trip for a couple of days, where he talks to his staff, not in his school, but in his office assigned to him by the Department of Education, because he's a leader for education (Matthew, 3G).*

This person was further described pejoratively as 'a Jabba of a man', citing a character from the film 'Return of the Jedi' (Dir. Marquand, 1983), an obese, slug-like alien who ran a criminal-empire whilst reposed on a stone divan in his palace, a popular culture icon symbolic of corruption. He denied Matthew leave to attend his grandfather's funeral. Matthew spoke of this head bullying women; the words 'bully', 'bullying' and 'bullied' proliferate the narrative. He indicated a dislike of the systems that empowered such individuals.

Becky was critical of the restrictions on her autonomy in the classroom. She said

*your learning objective had to be there, and success criteria, and this, that and the other, and I just thought it's too formulaic. It's not creative (Becky, 3G).*

She described unfeasible demands with the implicit (yet never explicitly stated) expectation that she would break the rules to complete her students' coursework:

*I was told that if students weren't at a particular number, like 44, or whatever it was, out of 50, get them there. And I sort of thought, well, if they're not capable of 44 out of 50, I'm not going to do it for them, but that kind of, I think, was the expectation (Becky, 3G).*

The 'expectation' referred to here is vague yet does indicate a working culture where teachers were expected to do things that were at least morally suspect. She described the difficulties of managing the difficult work-life and the impact on her personal relationship as 'a strange period of time'.

#### **7.2.3.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue was critical of a senior person within the academy chain where she trained on a SCITT programme, describing this person's office. This person had received press attention, along with people in similar positions, for having a large salary, and Sue criticised this person not addressing these concerns publically, calling this 'all very odd'. Sue's narrative is partial and she would not have a full understanding of the role and work of this person; however, this research does not verify factual accuracy, yet asks how and why the research participants relate their experiences. Sue was concerned with what she perceived of as a lack of leadership in someone senior:

*walking past her desk, or her office, there was just nothing in it. Normally desks are covered in paper and, you know, they're either messy or they're not, or they're*

*organised, but there's always stuff because we work. It's where we work. We have things on the desk, whether it's neat or not. And there was just nothing. There was a computer and a keyboard and a phone, but there was nothing... I mean, even in the absence of anything personal, like photos or anything, there was just nothing on the table. There were no bits of paper, no sticky notes stuck anywhere, and I found that a bit odd, that we had to be so wary of what we said in case she walked in, and it didn't even feel like she was there at all. I don't think I ever saw her again after that first day, not even, like, in the corridor (Sue, 4G).*

Whilst this working space is described as being suggestive of an absence of work, the CEO could be overseeing operational matters elsewhere (in a marked contrast to desk-bound, pedant-type leaders in other accounts). The office could reflect tidiness. Still, the description of this office rhetorically makes a point about her perception of this person. The person is conspicuous by their absence, and was described with the adjective 'odd' at four points in the interview. She further described this leader as being both 'an enigma' and a 'ghost'.

Jules did not make any specific reference to any particular leader or manager within his school, and he only made brief mention of the frustrations of having to attend meetings and deal with 'all the shitty marking'. The description of the mentor (see 6.4.4.iv) who had advised him to deal with behaviour issues in a way that prioritised numerical success of the group above the needs of an individual student with possible barriers to learning could be significant (see 6.4.4.iv).

## **7.2.4 The Moral Compromise and Gaming the System**

### **7.2.4.i First Generational Cohort**

Neither Fred nor Louise discussed any moral compromise. In contrast, Mike and Jack both described what they felt were ethical failures, obligated by the systems they were working within, specifying that the majority of teachers were culpable. Mike described how

*we used to cheat. You've got to cheat. You actually forge... teachers now... I've done it. I actually forged the marks, because if you don't, the repercussions are so horrendous... Every teacher I know, you know, privately talking to them, they say, "Yeah, we just cheat. I go into our system and change the results, so the kids get the results." Actually physically change them. That's the other thing: It's all built on a complete and utter lie (Mike, 1G).*

Mike described the effects of such cheating on him, as well as his own reaction he felt in relation to pressurising his own Year 6 students for the Key Stage 2 examinations

*We're damaging our children. I must admit, the last year I was starting to have real moral doubts about my job, because I'm really good, you know, like I said, but then I was using that, and what I was doing was making these children ill. I thought I'm using my skills, my 30 years of skills and art and creativity, I'm actually damaging. I'm no longer doing the whole point of becoming a teacher. I'm doing the exact opposite. So every day I went into school, I was damaging those children, and damaging me (Mike, 1G).*

Jack, similarly, discussed the collective moral culpability of the profession, like Mike using the plural first person, to identify himself with other teachers, when describing the shift in the 'buzz' in teaching from 'passion' and creativity' to management, resulting in a situation whereby teachers had taken the 'responsibility' from young people, evaluating that 'We've robbed them of that, and I think that's wrong'.

Both accounts make use of the plural first person for identifying a collective fault, yet they shift to the singular to mark an individualistic moral stance. There is a sense that the moral compromise is something that has been externally inflicted upon the profession, and over time it has worsened.

#### **7.2.4.ii Second Generational Cohort**

Lucy discussed cheating in coursework and controlled assessment (a form of coursework completed in exam conditions), and her experiences of reporting a student whom she strongly suspected of cheating. The result had been allowed to stand by the school. She noted similar practises in teachers providing inappropriate support for other coursework elements, before reflecting that:

*But I just thought that shows... we'll let her cheat. We'll let her cheat, because it keeps the parents happy, and that's what I mean. But again, don't you think this is comparable to business? Cheating, it happens (Lucy, 2G).*

Again, there is a significant use of repetition. Here, the final coda, returning the interview to the present, and the plural first person, suggests cheating is systemic, which Lucy has accepted.

Although Kevin spoke negatively of the managerial school culture, he made no reference to moral compromise. Mary, similarly, made no reference to any moral compromises.

#### **7.2.4.iii Third Generational Cohort**

Becky felt that her ability as a teacher was compromised by the fact that her students 'only got their grades because they basically learnt it by rote' in her class, suggesting passivity on their part; furthermore, when asked if coursework reflected student abilities, she said it 'Depends whether you've got it off your own bat or not, or whether you've been engineered in such a way', providing an example of a teacher having students complete 'fifty drafts of coursework'. She disapproved of this; when asked how this had affected her, she replied:

*I left (laughs). No, I didn't want to continue to do something that I didn't agree with, so I didn't do it anymore (Becky, 3G).*

She reflected further that the students, although successful in grades, had been supported 'so much' that the work, especially coursework 'probably isn't theirs'. Eventually, she hesitatingly provided a specific example of cheating:

*they would give you an idea, or they would give you a sentence, and you thought, "That's really not what I want you to say," and the temptation was to be like, "Do you mean this?" and just sort of type it for them. I'm sure I probably did it a couple of times, which does make me feel guilty, because it's not right (Becky, 3G).*

Particularly troubling here is Becky's becoming morally compromised as a result of a managerial culture inflicted upon her, leading her to take a hiatus from teaching. She thought that this was wrong, yet she felt compelled to do it.

Amy had already described feeling like a 'hypocrite; for seeing her students primarily as 'numbers' and 'data', and, like Becky, she described moral compromises made to lift coursework grades she was an NQT, explaining that although coursework was supposed to be independent and teachers weren't 'supposed to help them that much', she was frustrated by her students inability to work independently. Under perceived pressure from her school's leadership, she described how

*It's hard because you don't want to put too much of yourself into their work, but at the same time, if they don't understand the criteria and they don't understand how they have to get there, you feel like you have to do everything you can to get them there. What you don't realise is that actually you end up having thirty pieces of work that all have a different part of you involved (Amy, 3G).*

The reference to 'a different part of you' hints at similar practises described previously by Becky above, that pieces of work do not fully reflect the independent agency of the students. Her switching to the second person to depersonalise the anecdote to make it general rather than specific acknowledges broader professional failings, and perhaps

individual discomfort. When explaining her use of the metaphor, she explicitly described her motivations, whilst remaining opaque about processes:

*the students who worked really hard and who really wanted to achieve would have a little bit more of me involved. I think it goes back to not wanting them to fail, and so ... almost because I don't want to be seen as failing as a teacher, and so I would invest a lot more of me in them, so they didn't fail. Thinking about it now, I didn't want to fail in my PGCE course. Yeah. It's just that I didn't want them to fail (Amy, 3G).*

The repetition of her fear of failing seems to emphasise the justification for morally dubious actions, which are still somewhat vague. The systems and culture of accountability seem to have led her to an internal conflict.

Matthew (3G) made no reference to acting in ways that he regarded as being morally dubious; however, in the description of his departure (see below), he did describe feeling guilt about leaving the profession.

#### **7.2.4.iv Fourth Generational Cohort**

Neither Jules nor Sue made any mention of any personal moral compromise. They would not have been required to teach coursework elements following changes to the GCSE. They had not yet taken classes to final examinations or been part of full appraisal cycles beyond course requirements.

#### **7.2.5 Summary**

This subchapter explored the narrative constructions of significant experiences of the participants in their post-training careers. For ease of comparison, relevant subject areas of the fourth generational cohort were included.

All of the teachers spoke positively of interactions with students, such encounters often forming thematic highpoints that addressed their sense of moral and social purpose, frequently stemming from difficulties they had experienced in their pre-careers or early career stages, which was consistent with findings regarding their altruistic and intrinsic motivations (6.2.2 and 6.2.3), and is reflective of research literature (see 2.9.2; Kell, 2018; Chionga et al., 2017).. Four of the male research participants made references to success in exam grades and accountability. For Jack (1G) this was ambivalently. Kevin (2G) and Matthew (3G) spoke positively of results in relation to their sense of professional self-worth. Only Jules (1G) did so as a thematic highpoint. All of the research participants referred to aspects of their own teaching that could be conceived of as being child-centred.

Subchapter 7.2.3 presented interactions with leadership and school systems, revealing that teachers often struggled in systems when they felt subject to a large degree of prescription, and leaders and managers who were seen to exemplify such managerialism were viewed negatively. This was especially so when they were seen as putting institutional goals above the human concerns of their teachers and students. The rare examples of leaders who were supportive were viewed positively. This was consistent with research literature (2.9.6; Gunter, 2011; Sahlberg, 2012; Forrester, 2000) that highlighted the prevalence of such tensions. Leaders were frequently described in relation to their physical working environment.

Some teachers in the first, second and third generations (none of the fourth) described moments of moral compromise as a result of securing positive outcomes in coursework elements or student examinations though cheating or teaching to the test. Teachers from the first two generations were explicit when discussing their own culpability, whilst teachers from the third generation were euphemistic. The most recent generation were less troubled than their more experienced colleagues. Participants from the first three generations demonstrated anger and frustration, which was consistent with research literature (1.4; Farouk, 2010; Ofsted, 2019).

## 7.3 Moments of Crisis, Departure and Resolution

### 7.3.1 Introduction

All of the narratives in this research were shared in the context of the complete stories of the formations of the professional identities of the participants. It is relevant to include details of the subsequent transitions, conclusions and resolutions of their careers. In the course of the narrative interviews, research participants concluded their accounts by returning to the present, revealing details of choices they made or dilemmas that they continued to face.

For the sake of organisational clarity and ease of comparison, the findings in this chapter have been set out by generation.

### 7.3.2 First Generational Cohort

Of the four research participants from this generational cohort, three moved into middle-management, some returning to such posts after a period away from such responsibility. Conversely, Mike said remaining in teaching without resisting negative machinations of the government was tantamount to damaging students. Following his speech at his union's conference, he described being bullied, leading to his taking early retirement:

*I was viciously victimised, so eventually I had to ... well, I retired at 60. I didn't want to. My pension is crap, because I was a building worker, so I can't live on it, but that's going to be with me for the rest of my life (Mike, 1G).*

At the time of our interview, he was on benefits, and described being 'poor'. He faced legal difficulties with his previous employer. He was doing 'a bit of volunteering teaching adults to learn to read' and was writing a book about behaviour management for class teachers. It has since been published.

Fred was a head of department and was undertaking a course to develop middle-leadership skills. Following the experiences of bullying and a lack of support at a time of

personal crisis, Louise (7.3.2.i) moved to a school where she was more supported by the SLT, and where values aligned more with her own. She was able to use the negative experiences to inspire her to be a better head of department and NQT mentor, which parallels the concessional structure (Szybist, 2007).

Jack had moved away from leading the English department. He was frustrated with a managerial culture where teachers were not trusted, and creative autonomy was compromised. He experienced doubts about teaching:

*At the moment, if I'm going to be honest, I'm in a slightly cynical place with teaching, which I find upsetting, I think, on a day-to-day basis. Part of the thing I'm trying to unpick is how much of that is me and how much of that is the situation that we're in (Jack, 1G).*

He partially felt teaching for twenty-one years had left him feeling jaded, and he expressed doubts over the purposes of education. In the time since the initial interview, he and his school colleagues underwent a period of disruption at the academy. Following collective action (having been elected to a representative role), things had improved. He has moved back into middle-leadership, become a professional mentor, and is a staff-Governor.

### **7.3.3 Second Generational Cohort**

Mary described leaving the profession for primarily financial reasons. Not having the PGCE limited teaching jobs, and although she briefly looked at the private sector, there was little being advertised. She stressed that her story was 'not a tragedy'; she moved into leadership in adult social care, where she would influence the lives of those, she managed, and supported customers with diverse needs. She had loved teaching, and she drew upon her experiences in her subsequent career:

*So, you know, it's still there, you know, all of the stuff and the teaching. You carry it with you, don't you,*

*really, and try and disseminate those things within the work you're doing (Mary, 2G).*

She provided an example of drawing upon progressive educational theorists and ideas relating to power in her work in disseminating information for those requiring social support.

Kevin left teaching to maintain a healthy work-life balance, as having two young children, he thought that 'it's not really that compatible, maybe, with family life', and he admitted that he never felt like he 'was ever one of those teachers who was going to sacrifice his life for the job'. Despite successes achieved in meeting the requirements of hostile support procedures, and as a lay union activist who had successfully challenged a head teacher and built a strong union presence in the workplace, a move to a different school led to dissatisfaction, with him feeling that he was 'back to square one', and this 'pushed' him to think 'Actually, I'm going to get serious about getting out and getting a union job.' This was for an education union, and provided a work-life balance, professional respect, and autonomy:

*I think freedom is like the most important thing to human beings. I think that's when I work well, is when I'm given a level of freedom. That's a nice feeling, isn't it, to feel like, you know, you're free. I feel like in my current job I've got a lot more freedom, you know, and respected much more, really, as a professional, and free to get on and trusted to do what I do. I think I thrive in that environment (Kevin, 2G).*

This description of the new job marks an apotheosis and is the antithesis of the negative experiences as a teacher in school, where he felt bullied and controlled. The repetition of the abstract noun 'freedom' and adjective 'free' are particularly significant.

Lucy left the school where she had been experiencing difficulties when working as a Head of Department following a sudden promotion. She was moving to a free school post without a TLR.

### 7.3.4 Third Generational Cohort

Matthew left teaching and used the experiences and contacts from a Master's Degree in Educational Research to work for international, educational NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), explaining that

*I could recognise the oppressive structures that I'd have to work under. It's as simple as that. I have no problem with kids, or students. They're great. I still get a kick out of telling, or proving to young people that they're smarter than they think they are, and they're not the reprobates they're constantly called. But I just couldn't see, and I've still yet to see, any example of a school structure that I'd be comfortable working under (Matthew, 3G).*

This comment highlights the disparity between the satisfactions derived from his interactions with students who, like himself, did not come from privileged, middle-class backgrounds, and his oppositions to oppressive, managerial cultures in school. Although he felt 'guilty for leaving teaching', this was because he was 'not prepared' to 'hold' his 'tongue'; furthermore, were he promoted, he would 'have to display the types of behaviour' that he regarded as 'abhorrent'. Managerial cultures create conditions in which teachers are required to behave in objectionable ways, compromising those who favour a student-centred, less oppressive approach.

He spoke cynically about his move into running international, educational research projects, remarking that whilst teaching was 'depressing', making him 'genuinely, genuinely, quite depressed', the move 'into the altogether more enlightening world of humanitarian development' was 'beyond depressing'. Whilst critical of what he perceived as a flawed, corporate model, the 'white saviour' approach of staff from more economically developed countries working with communities in developing countries looking for immediate solutions, he still made positive reference to research projects for a prominent global children's charity:

*I know I can be useful. I feel really guilty for moving – and I work for (name of prominent charity), for God’s sake. It’s not like I’ve gone and decided to go and work for KPMG, is it? (Matthew, 3G)*

He recognises that he finds his own self-worth working in education, yet dislikes and disapproves of many aspects of it.

Amy had described her dissatisfaction with working for an academy chain, and expressed doubts about remaining within the profession forever:

*I’d like to stay in teaching until I’m fifty, sixty, but realistically, if changes keep happening, and more pressure and more stress, and, you know, when all schools are eventually academies... I don’t know (Amy, 3G).*

She repeated the phrase ‘I don’t know’ five times within a minute, as she listed various issues that would prevent her teaching until she was ‘an old lady’, which had been her original intention. She moved to work in an LEA school in a more affluent area, taking a sideward step into middle-management; however, she found her new department lacking in comradery, so she moved to another LEA school with a higher proportion of disadvantaged students; subsequently, she was promoted to become second in department.

Becky left teaching only a term out of her NQT year. She felt morally compromised and emotionally stressed by the pressures described previously and because of the effects of the workload on her work/life balance, citing this as contributing to the breakup of a relationship:

*I was angry, actually, that my work, my career, profession, had interrupted something that I really did care about (Becky, 3G).*

She felt she had left the profession prematurely. She worked in two more schools within an LEA in a supporting role and described seeing ways in which workload could be better managed. Subsequently, she returned to work as a teacher, and in follow up communications revealed that she was very happy, indicating that finding the right school, which aligned with her personal values, had been an apotheosis for her.

### **7.3.5 Fourth Generational Cohort**

Sue and Jules left the MAT where they had worked in separate academy secondary schools to work for schools within LEAs. Sue cited the lack of opportunity for advancement following a proposed restructure being launched at her school, though she had wanted to stay, and she admired teachers who remained within a school for a substantial period of time to build relationships:

*I've never, ever considered leaving, but with the recent restructure, or the proposed restructure, there was nothing for me here, because the idea was to get rid of TLRs (Sue, 4G).*

A year after her interview, she reported being happy in her new school, having been recently promoted.

Jules described how moving to a Local Education Authority school would put him in an environment different from the type of school he attended himself as a schoolboy. Having taken a pay cut in leaving the pharmaceutical industry to work as a teacher (providing a range of 30-40%), he hoped to, in a few years, 'get a chance to take on additional responsibility and climb the ladder and move up and up and up'. He did make it clear that at the point of the interview, at the conclusion of his NQT year, it was more important for him to be able to work creatively, to fulfil an altruistic purpose, and to be valued and respected.

### **7.3.6 Summary**

Subchapter 7.3 has demonstrated that when teachers faced such difficulties as described in the previous subchapter, they would either change career or school to find a role more consistent with their original motivations, or they would experience significant emotional and philosophical anguish and cognitive dissonance, which is consistent with research literature regarding the effects of neoliberal educational policies on teachers (2.3; 2.4; Nias, 1989; Ball, 2003; Farouk, 2010; Hutchings, 2016; et al.). More broadly, these effects bare significant resemblance to the societal condition of 'anomie' (Merton, 1968; Star, Bowker and Neumann, 1997).

### **7.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the analysis of the post-training career experiences of the research participants. In the following chapter I present the further analysis, discussion and interpretations of the narrative data, informed by the use of literary criticism.

# Chapter 8: Investigating turning points in TPI through Critical Literary Analysis

## 8.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I presented the thematic analysis of the concerning the experiences that had contributed to the participants' development of their TPIs. In this chapter, I have presented the outcomes of the analysis that employed the tools of literary criticism, with a specific focus on how narrative accounts are structured around turning points. This conceptual approach was discussed in Chapter 4. My research was guided by the following questions:

1. What experiences are significant in the formation of teachers' professional identities, and do any patterns exist between generational cohorts in relation to changes in the educational system of England over the last thirty years?
2. How, and to what extent, can the methods of critical literary analysis specifically focused on the variations in which turning points are structured, provide potentially richer understandings of narrative accounts?

Findings for the first question were established through an initial content and thematic analysis of each interview transcript (Appendix 4). These were summarised and compared in generational cohorts (Appendix 5; Chapters 6 and 7). The coding of the ways in which the embedded anecdotes in the narratives were structured allowed a further literary reading and the cautious application of structural models and archetypes (see 4.6 and Figure 4.1).

These literary readings follow same subject order as has been presented in the previous presentation and analysis of data chapters (See Chapters 6 and 7), as follows. In subchapter 8.2 I present the outcomes of the analysis of the pre-career experiences and motivations. In Subchapter 8.3 I present the outcomes of the analysis ITT and probationary periods. In subchapter 8.4, I present the outcomes of the analysis of experiences broadly after training and probationary periods, when teachers have become or were becoming more established. In subchapter 8.5 I present the outcomes of the analysis the various ways

in which the narrative interviews were drawn to a close, with the interviewer and interviewee returned to the then present.

This research investigates how episodes were related and offers tentative explanations, with reference to pertinent literature and research, about the intentions of the speakers.

## **8.2 Pre-Career Experiences and Motivations: Prodigies and Rebels**

### **8.2.1 Introduction**

In addressing the first research question, all participants described pre-career experiences as being significant in the formation of their TPIs, especially in regard to primarily altruistic and intrinsic motivations to join the profession. This is consistent with research literature (2.9.2; Heinz, 2015; Flores and Day, 2006). The research participants in this study fell into two broad categories. Section 8.2.2 presents participants who cited negative experiences and opinions of schooling as conversely motivating the choices to enter teaching. Section 8.2.3 addresses accounts that described pre-career academic successes and identification with positive role models as inspiring the choice to teach.

Whilst I was primarily investigating generational patterns, there appeared to be some interesting and emerging discreet potential variations that correlated to aspects of identity, such as identification with particular socio-economic, geographical and cultural backgrounds, or to gender. As discussed in 3.5.1, it would be unwise to assume that these emerging correlations equated to causation, given the limitations of the data set. The variations and patterns could correlate to the diversity of school and professional work experiences in relation to other biographical aspects, time period, geographical location, or type of school. These factors limited their applicability to broader teacher populations. Furthermore, in a research project with only twelve participants, these correlative patterns could exist because of chance. Whilst any interpretations arising from such correlations must be cautious and tentative, what is clear is that particular structural patterns did appear and were significant in the formations of TPIs. Various identify factors may have been significant, yet to give too much weight to any particular factor in isolation without a large enough data set cannot be justified.

## 8.2.2 Unlikely Beginnings and the Concessional Turn

Seven of the twelve participants highlighted their own dislike of aspects of school (5.3.3), either as students when at school (Mike and Fred, 1G; Mary, 2G; Matthew, 3G; Jules, 4G) or as adults visiting schools (Jack, 1G; Kevin, 2G) prior to ITT, to demonstrate how, conversely, such attitudes made them better or more capable teachers. This was often because they felt affinity with students who disliked school. Some experienced bullying from peers (Kevin, 2G; Jules, 4G) or teachers (Mike, 1G; Jules, 4G). Some experienced poor teaching or a lack of engagement with teachers when themselves at school (Mike and Fred, 1G; Mary, 2G; Matthew, 3G), or observed poor teaching from other teachers prior to their ITT (Jack, 1G; Kevin, 2G). Some described various personal barriers to learning and academic struggles, combined with a lack of support from teachers (Mike, 1G; Matthew, 3G; Jules, 4G).

A further issue described by some as a conversely-motivating factor in their joining the profession was their social and biographical backgrounds (5.3.2). This provided a further affinity with students in similar circumstances, with particular reference to social class (Mike and Fred, 1G; Matthew, 3G) and/or geographical location (Mike and Jack, 1G). Two females made specific reference to experiencing sexism and chauvinistic behaviour that influenced their attitudes to teaching, one in school and University (Mary, 2G), and one in a pre-teaching occupation (Louise, 1G). Consequently, these participants' motivations to become teachers were constructed to persuade the interviewer as being socially-altruistic. These teachers therefore presented themselves as addressing wrongs they had suffered themselves and/or which they perceived affecting students with whom they identified. These were often described as nadir (thematic low-point) experiences, which were antithetical to later apotheosis (thematic high point) episodes. They presented themselves as becoming heroic through writing wrongs they themselves had been subjected to. This perhaps reflects research literature (2.9.2), in particular the findings of Keane et al. (2018) regarding the altruistic motivations of teachers from a working-class background in Northern Ireland. The similarity in the narrative constructions tentatively reveals that authenticity for these teachers at least partially rests upon identifying with student groups who are marginalised because of a cultural, socio-economic or gender category that they too are a part of.

Recourse to literary criticism to explain this trajectory reveals literary parallels with 'The Concessional Structure' (Szybist, 2007), a rhetorical gambit that concedes something that is contrary to the position ultimately taken. Structurally 'concessions can gain an audience's attention and trust' (p.41) through 'surprise' (p.46). This tactic was employed consistently in the opening of the narrative accounts of Mike, Jack and Fred (1G); Kevin (2G); Matthew (3G); and Jules (4G), who responded to my opening question about how they got into teaching by describing their dislike of school (5.3.3) or aspects of it, or their having not initially wanted to teach. Whilst Szybist (2007, pp.52-53) describes that it is often used in rhetoric, its chief aims are to demonstrate authenticity through negating embellishment. Additionally, in the case of my research participants, the professed dislike of school and/or the admittance that they did not intend originally to enter the profession demonstrated a narrative trajectory of overcoming difficulties, as Szybist (2007, p.53) describes, 'the concessional structure can show us how to face real limitations without being defeated by them'. It aligned these teachers to a more student-centred, progressive approach to teaching. It was not learning or education they disliked, but teacher-led, autocratic instruction, manifested in the negatively described teachers they had encountered. Valuing students as people and developing rapport were frequent themes, as was serving the community that they had come from (or similar communities). This echoes 'The Ultimate Boon' (Campbell, 2008, p.148; see 4.8.3, 8.3.2 and 8.4.2) of the heroic mythos, where adventurers return from the magical realm with a benefit for their fellow human beings.

A further interesting observation is that these teachers who opened their accounts in ways reminiscent of the 'concessional structure' (Szybist, 2007) to describe negative experiences of school did not explicitly report the experience of the 'reality-shock' (see 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Kim and Cho, 2014; et al). Neither did they make use of the 'ironic structure' (Bakken, 2007) when describing ITT or early career experiences, in contrast to the patterns identified in 8.2.3 and 8.3.3. This may reflect an aspect of what Dworkin (2009, p.492) has described as a sociological phenomenon of 'burnout' in teachers when 'Social class or ethnic differences between teachers and student exacerbate that sense of isolation'. Furthermore, perhaps partly as a consequence of not having experienced the 'Martha effect' (see 2.9.4; Van Broekhuizen and Spaull, 2017, p.2), some of these male participants who had had negative experiences of schooling may have become teachers with initially lower, and therefore potentially more realistic, professional expectations.

### 8.2.3 Heroic Prodigies

Louise (1G), Mary (2G), Lucy, (2G), Amy (3G), Becky (3G) and Sue (4G) all cited pre-career academic successes and identification with inspiring teachers as motivating their entering the profession. The majority appreciated both school (6.2.3) and university (6.2.4). Louise differed in teaching being a secondary career choice following an unsatisfactory experience in the scientific industry, and her support in school when training seemed to have mitigated any experiences of 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.). Mary (2G) differed in describing only university as a mature student positively (6.2.4.ii). Whilst Matthew (3G) indicated both positive and negative teachers inspiring him, he made clear that his primary motivations were conversely because of the negative teacher encounters.

When describing teachers perceived positively from their school days, these teachers spoke with reverence or deep respect (5.3.3). Their tones of voice seemed odic, the ode being 'always serious and elevated in tone' (Baldick, p.238), used to praise and individuals. These descriptions were without cynicism, often with heightened language. Lucy (2G, 5.3.3.ii), Becky (3G, 5.3.3.iii) and Sue (4G, 5.3.3.iv) made either explicit or implicit reference to having an infatuation with the female teachers who inspired them, and both Amy and Matthew's (3G, 5.3.3.iii) lengthy descriptions of their inspirational teachers indicated that they regarded them with reverence, with Amy citing this teacher as her chief reason for becoming a teacher. Mary (2G, 5.3.3.ii) spoke with admiration for a particular female lecturer at University who was inspirational in her espousal of feminist interrogation of text and world view. Both Louise (1G, 5.3.3.i) and Becky (3G, 5.3.3.iii), (and, to a lesser extent, Kevin (5.2.2)) discussed the positive influence of female family members who had been teachers. In places, this praise became elegiac, in that the descriptions seemed to serve the purpose within the narrative accounts, to 'bring the beloved back from obscurity' (Powell, 2007, p.83), and in such a manner to critique aspects of the present. Powell (2007, pp.83-98) refers to this as 'The Elegy's Structures', which describe mythical adventures undertaken by heroes to 'revisit loved ones while they are immersed in the obscure chambers of hell' (Powell, 2007, p.83). Louise (1G), Lucy (2G), Amy (3G) and Becky (3G) seemed to contrast the halcyon past, when they had thrived in the care of inspirational teachers, with the then present, as a critique of the managerial, neoliberal teaching cultures.

The teachers following this pattern conformed to descriptions in research of interactions with teachers as inspiring teaching as a primary career choice (Book and Freeman, 1986; Lortie, 1975; Richardson and Watt, 2005; Watt, Richardson and Devos, 2012). This seemed to indicate broadly primarily intrinsic motivations, based around an idealised perception of themselves as capable, inspiring and autonomous professionals. There were indications of altruistic motivations. Often the structural thematic high points of their narratives, the apotheoses, occurred early in their career chronologies, during school or university (see 5.3.3.). It may be that this indicates the rising stage of the 'ironic structure' (Bakken, 2007, p.9), marking the formation of naïve and idealistic pre-career expectations that would later be disrupted by the 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) of working as a teacher when in ITT (see 8.3.3) and their early careers (see 8.4.3). Sometimes they won recognition from people whom they had cited as inspiring them.

Whilst there was some variation in the external value of the achievement (helping a younger brother to overcome a speech impediment; achieving the highest GCSE grade in the county; passing an exam that other students in a small A-Level class had failed; proving to be academically able at University; being the first in her family to attend university), all were cited as significant personal events. This has some parallels with the early stages of the heroic mythos described by Leeming (1998) concerning the 'miraculous conception' (pp.13-39) and 'childhood, initiation and divine signs' (pp.43-65) of the divine hero. This seems to contrast the more humble origins of teachers who used the 'Concessional Structure' (Szybist, 2007; see 8.2.2).

Whilst acknowledging the limitations of the sample size in relation to biographical factors, there are potentially some resonances with what has been described as 'The Martha Effect' (Van Broekhuizen and Spaul (2017, p.2), where 'education is more suited to females' or that females have more traits and behaviors that are favourable for schooling'. There were correlations of females citing schooling positively and males negatively, which may indicate a further interesting area of research. However, whilst this might be one contributing factor, the participants who fell within these two broad patterns were further differentiated by school experience, sense of belonging to particular socio-economic groups and cultures.

## 8.2.4 Summary and Conclusion: Authenticity and Exceptionalism

Whether teachers used the ‘concessional structure’ (Szybist, 2007) to demonstrate their initial dislike of education, or the early apotheoses and the initial rise of what shall transpire to be the first stage in an ironic structure (Bakken, 2007) to indicate favourable opinions of education, both seem to establish a personal authenticity for choosing to teach. These were from their pre-career experiences. This is consistent with the findings of Flores and Day (2006; 2.9.2). For those using a ‘concessional structure’ (Szybist, 2007), authenticity rested chiefly on their being different to teachers they regarded negatively (with some citing positive examples also). Others cited their authenticity and appropriacy through their similarity to positively regarded teachers and own considerable early success. It is important to recognise that for Louise (First Generation) and Mary (Second Generation), negative experiences had provided a socially altruistic motivation. Their narrative accounts addressed thematic concerns around gender, which was not present in the other, earlier accounts. Whether using either of these turns, what is emphasised is the exceptionalism and altruistic and intrinsic motivations of these heroic individuals.

A more troubling alternative interpretation of the parallels with the heroic monomyth (see 4.8.3) may potentially reflect a ‘white saviour narrative’ (Pickower, 2009; Ayers, 1996), recognisable in contemporary culture (Ayers, 1996 and 2011), that perpetuates neoliberal hegemonic cultures and authoritarianism (Giroux, 2004; Guggenheim, 2010; Ravitch, 2011). This attitude has been reported and criticised in privileged white female teachers entering teaching in charter schools in the USA (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Brown, 2013). As described in Chapter 5, the female participants in this research were white and middle-class with positive educational experiences. DePouw (2016) has observed that teachers who are in danger of having a white saviour mentality would be unlikely or emotionally unwilling to recognise or be critical of it. This could therefore potentially perpetuate social inequalities where predominantly middleclass teachers regard students as being ‘culturally deficit’ (DePouw, 2016, p.2).

Matthew (3G), despite criticising such an attitude explicitly in female teachers he had worked with (7.3.2.iii), eventually moved to working for NGOs in educational research in developing countries (7.5.2.iii). Mike (1G) and Fred (1G), when discussing their motivations to give something back to their working-class communities (6.2.2.i), potentially

invite criticisms of 'deficit thinking' (Valencia, 2010), marginalising and stereotyping groups of students from their own communities. When students are described as a recognisable trope of the disadvantaged in need of saving, this could perpetuate stereotypes that have been used to politically justify the neoliberal agenda in education (Guggenheim, 2010; Ayers, 2011; Ravitch, 2011). However, it needs to be remembered that participants who strongly identified themselves as heroic individuals also identified themselves as being opposed to neoliberal managerialism in schools and advocated more progressive educational models and student-centred approaches (7.2 and 7.3: Mike, 1G; Jack, 1G; Fred, 1G; Matthew, 3G; Amy, 3G). As with the issues around culpability and complicity in descriptions of ethically-problematic professional practises by the participants, there are a plethora of complexities and contradictions at play.

## **8.3 Initial Teacher Training**

### **8.3.1 Introduction**

This section presents the literary interpretations of the ways in which the participants described significant turning points during ITT. Section 6.3.2 discusses courses and providers, such as the PGCE or SCITT programmes. This includes teacher attitudes and perceptions of the balances between theoretical and practical elements of ITT. Section 6.3.3 covers descriptions relating to the phenomena of 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.). Section 6.3.4 covers descriptions of the relationships with the individual mentors and colleagues who supported the participants.

### **8.3.2 ITT Courses, Course Conveners and Providers**

In addressing the first research question, experiences and perceptions of ITT programmes featured significantly in the majority of participants' interviews regarding formations of their TPIs. The attitudes that the participants demonstrated towards their course providers and the theoretical elements of their training (see 6.4.2) varied broadly according to their generational cohorts. Generally, over time, attitudes towards theory and university became increasingly negative, perhaps as a consequence of teachers being required to provide

instrumental solutions to organisational goals in a market environment. This is consistent with research literature (e.g. Cochran-Smith, et al., 2020; Ellis, et al., 2019; Ellis & Childs, 2019; see 2.9.3). In addressing the second research question, often the structural patterns employed reflected the different attitudes, with examples of nadir episodes from those who had negative experiences, to apotheosis in the highly positive.

When discussing theory and theoretical provision, it is important to acknowledge that the research participants, with the exception of Mary (2G) (6.4.2.ii) did not cite any particular theoretical approach, theorist or researcher. The references to theory were to training undertaken outside of the immediate working context, and in all instances referred to the provision from universities and the research community. The vagueness in itself may reflect the absence from theoretical provision and any meaningful involvement in academic research in their professional working lives.

Of the first generation (see 6.4.2.i), only Jack was ambivalent about his course provision, expressing doubts about the practical knowledge and commitment of university tutors who were no longer in the classroom. Fred and Louise described their PGCE courses broadly positively, highlighting the pragmatic, school-based approaches. Mike's description of teacher training marked a particularly transformative highpoint. He explained that 'It weren't my world, but education liberated my mind'. He spoke of the potential benefits to other members of the working-class community from which he came. He enthused about the respect he was given by his university tutors. The language seems so extreme that it seems to be a 'The Mid-course Turn' (Harp, 2007), a shift so 'radical' that it signifies a change in genre, a drastic transformation in the person. The life course, philosophical outlook, even moral purpose, profoundly alters. This further becomes an Apotheosis, a thematic climax, where the positive experience leads to enlightenment. Mike is able to use his education as an 'ultimate boon' (Campbell, 2008, p.148) to people from his socio-economic and cultural background. It thematically addresses the nadir experiences of his school days. This concludes the 'concessional turn' (Szybist, 2007) described previously (6.2.2.i).

Of the second generation (see 5.4.2.ii), Mary, like Mike (1G), found university (6.2.4.ii) and ITT (6.4.2.ii) to be intellectually challenging and 'transformative'. In addressing the inadequacies and mundanities of her own sexist schooling, described in the initial phase of the 'concessional turn' (Szybist, 2007) (see 6.2.2.ii), she too can be considered to have

experienced a 'Midcourse turn' (Harp, 2007), and an apotheosis. Both Kevin (2G) and Lucy (2G), speaking of their GTP and PGCE courses respectively (6.4.2.ii), were broadly positive, providing course details they thought appropriate. However, Lucy (2G) introduced a limited 'dialectical argument structure' (Beer, 2007) in which she vaguely recognised the importance of theory, before concluding that teachers had to prioritise instrumental solutions to address immediate organisational concerns.

Of the third generation, Amy (6.4.2.iii) described her tutoring and mentoring through her PGCE course as enabling her to overcome difficulties. She described experiencing significantly profound intellectual and professional growth, in a structure reminiscent of the 'Retrospective-Prospective Structure' (Yakich, 2007). This is a reflection on the past and how it may influence the present or future, indicated by the use of words linked to time. She used words like 'epiphany' and 'self-consciousness', making several references to how interventions from those running the course influenced her to become and remain a teacher, where she might otherwise have failed. These past experiences are ever present in the conception of herself as a professional. Experiences and lessons from in her ITT continued to resonate with her. Matthew (6.4.2.iii), despite his own 'apology' (Baldick, 2008) of the importance of theoretical provision, described his experiences of the PGCE course as a nadir episode, marked by 'nihilism' from tutors. He described the course as a 'sham'. Becky (6.4.2.iii) was dismissive of her provision, describing a poorly-administered course that she and colleagues ceased attending. A structural device used by her was that of an *aporia*, which is a rhetorical figure of speech 'in which a speaker deliberates or purports to be in doubt about a question' (Baldick, 2008, p.21). Although she acknowledged at various points the scarcity of her theoretical knowledge, the arguments in favour of theoretical training were not worthy of the 'dialectical argument structure' (Beer, 2007).

By the time of the fourth generation (6.4.2.iv), the two SCITT trainees who had trained through a programme delivered by a MAT demonstrated negative attitudes towards theory and university. Jules in particular reflected elements of the literary 'polemic' (Baldick, 2008, p.263), in that his arguments were one-sided with no recognition of any possible benefit of alternative theoretical approaches. His descriptions of expectations of sitting in classrooms and essay writing were particularly dismissive, suggesting his conceptions of those who would welcome such provision of having a passivity and neediness.

In summary, for some, experiences of theoretical provision had been of immense personal value, marking significant transitions and growth in their professional identities as teachers. These were marked with language that paralleled elevated literary structures. For others, university experiences were described as nadir episodes, or were dismissed as insignificant or unimportant in relation to the practical and instrumental skills of functional classroom teaching. These were inclined to negative literary styles. It is important to acknowledge why reports detailing the lack of significance of theoretical aspects of ITT toward TPI have been included here. As a comparative study of the generations, the difference between those who cited its importance is significant. Furthermore, this was an aspect that arose in the interviews as being a structural approach of negation (Nahajec, 2009), where such teachers strongly implied the importance of a primarily school-based approach to ITT. Overall, these fit broadly within the trend in England for teachers and trainee teachers to be working within a culture of an instrumental approach to ITT and teaching (see 2.9.3).

### **8.3.3 Reality Shock and Classroom Difficulties**

Addressing the first research question, encountering challenges and difficulties in the classroom often formed significant episodes in the formation of TPI. The aspect of teaching that was most shocking to those teachers on their ITTs when first entering the classroom (see 6.3.3) in all but the first generational cohort, related to workload and to work/life balance as teachers were required to meet organisational demands, issues that have been highlighted as being significant in the working lives of teachers in the time that this research covers (e.g. Ball, 2003; Dworkin, 2009; Hughes and Hitchcock, 1995; see 2.3). Further realisations related to the levels of professional autonomy afforded, the level of support provided, or of other realities of the job that challenged their initial expectations. In addressing the second research question, this was often manifested in the use of 'The Ironic Structure' (Bakken, 2007, p.11), which starts

with positive assertions and assumptions of truth but end by undercutting such assertions and certainties, sometimes rather abruptly and surprisingly.

This is a mechanism of ‘inflating and deflating, or dreaming and waking’ (p.9), used to create ‘great intellectual and dramatic energy’ (p.9) to describe the great conceptual changes. This was particularly evident in the positive experiences in education inspiring the choice to teach in the accounts from the female participants in the second and third generations (see 6.2.3.ii and 6.2.3.iii, and 8.2.3 and 8.2.4) contrasted with the unpleasant realisations about the actualities of teaching and working in education (see 6.4.3.ii and 6.4.3.iii). This structure is consistent with the phenomenon of ‘reality shock’ (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.).

Interestingly, Lucy’s (2G) account suggests that further professional reality shocks (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) may occur at other changes within careers, such as with sudden promotions or changes in school circumstances, especially where there is insufficient support provided. This is reflected in research by Towers and Maguire (2017, p.1) who discussed how long-serving teachers (those with more than ten years’ service) can leave the profession because ‘a crisis in professional identity can contribute towards teacher attrition’.

Furthermore, moving from a positive, subjective initial perception of reality that is dramatically revealed to be false parallels the structure of classical dramatic tragedy, which culminates in a Peripeteia, or downfall. This is accompanied by an anagnorisis, the ‘turning point in a drama’ (Baldick, 2008, p.12) whereby the central character ‘recognizes the true state of affairs, having previously been in error or ignorance’. It is important to remember that these teachers’ perceptions of their inspirational teachers would have been partial, and they would have been unlikely to have seen the more mundane or stressful aspects of their jobs, with Lucy (Second Generation), for example, describing at length how her own positive role model had never seemed troubled, in fact appearing to ‘live the life of Riley’. Perhaps reminiscent of Clarke’s (1968, p.255) law that ‘Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic’, the female participants, when young, experienced being taught by their role models without ever becoming aware of the more troublesome aspects of teaching. Furthermore, their own initial successes (apotheosis) may have inflated their perceptions of their own abilities. This reflects the ‘hamartia’ (Baldick, 2008, p.149) of classical tragedy, a false step and an error of judgement. This error stems from ‘hubris’ (Baldick, 2008, p.158), which is the ‘arrogance or pride’ of the protagonist.

The anagnorisis, the profound realisation of the true nature of reality, seems to have been explicitly reported. Amy (3G) described how ‘the idea of being a teacher and the reality of being a teacher were two very different things’ (6.4.3.iii), indicating an intellectual and philosophical transition to maturity. Lucy (2G) (7.2.3.ii) made use of adverbs ‘essentially, really’ to emphatically signpost a recognition of the true nature of the world, that she was still ‘one of the kids, and you can be summoned to the head master’s office’, recognising that she had been deceived by some of the ‘lovely things’ that she was given to make her think, erroneously, that she was being ‘treated as an adult’. Sue (4G, 6.3.3.iv) of the fourth generation, similarly bemoaned what the training provider had ‘sold’ to her as her NQT year, and the marked difference of the reality of her working life after qualification, indicated with the adverb ‘literally’, signifying a shift in the understanding of the nature of reality, as she found herself ‘fighting fires’.

The fact that the ironic structure mirrors, mimics and/or replicates the plot of tragedy serves perhaps to underline how significant this anagnorisis and realisation was for the teachers concerned, and how powerful was the initial, illusory perceptions of the profession that they aspired to, and how difficult was the adjusting to working realities. We further have the sense that the cause of these teachers’ tragedies are perhaps not only due to their overconfidence and ambition (their hubris and hamartia). In tragedy, the anagnorisis, or recognition of reality, often included seeing through the machinations of deceiving antagonists or antagonistic forces. Specifically, there are similarities with the equivocation that Shakespeare used in the tragedies ‘Othello’ (1603) and ‘Macbeth’ (1606, 1623), both written in a time of significant social, cultural and religious upheaval. Christofides (2020, p.1) describes this as a rhetorical device that

exploits the ambiguity of meaning, inviting misconstruction or uncertainty by an utterance that lends itself to more than one reading .

Christofides (2020, p.1) further highlights the ‘seductive capabilities of equivocation’ when used by antagonistic forces and persons when leading the eponymous heroes to their Peripeteia. Such an understanding may lead us to consider the disparity between the stated altruistic aims and values around education espoused by neoliberal forces in contrast to their working practises, discussed by Ravitch (2011, p.252; see 2.3.2), perhaps, as villainous.

There are further parallels with the ‘profound ironical perspective on the harsh reality of battle in the works of the poets’ (Wade, 2003, p.19; Puissant, 2009) where the managed perceptions of the war were vastly different to the experiences of the soldiers.

### **8.3.4 Supporting Mentors, Course Conveners and Colleagues**

Addressing the first research question, the input from mentors was frequently cited as significant in the formation of TPI, which is consistent with research literature (see 2.9.5). In addressing the second research question, there was a tendency amongst the research participants to use heightened language, in ways remarkably similar to the descriptions of inspirational teachers from school (see 5.3.3) when describing supportive individuals on their ITT (see 6.3.4). Earlier, I provided an example of Clarke’s third law to highlight the perceived, magical nature of those proficient in teaching. Sue (4G) actually repeated how an inspirational mentor (see 6.3.4.iv) who supported her whilst she worked as an unqualified teacher prior to training was ‘magic’, indicating, figuratively, supernatural ability. Similarly, Amy (3G) was impressed by her university course leader’s interventions and credited him with ensuring that she lasted beyond the first term. She used an extended description with conditional clauses to demonstrate her lack of understanding of these abilities. Both mentors seemed to be able to balance seemingly contradictory qualities. If the positive teachers encountered in childhood are reminiscent of figures able to command a mythological, supernatural force, then the mentors and guides encountered later are suggestive of being what both Campbell (2008) and Cousineau (1990) referred to as a ‘Master of both worlds’. They combine the competency, charm and seemingly supernatural qualities of excellent classroom teaching with the capacity to manage the realities of the institutional demands and mundanities of workload, and they are able to often inspire reflection and emotional and intellectual growth in their mentees, which is consistent with some of the benefits of positive mentoring relationships described in research literature (e.g. Bullough, 2005; Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson, 2005; Lindgren, 2005; Marable and Raimondi, 2007; see 2.9.5.iii).

As with the inspirational teachers from their own childhood, sometimes teachers used ‘The Elegy’s Structures’ (Powell, 2007) and heightened language. Amy’s (3G) lengthy appraisal of her mentor fits this pattern. Others described their mentors variously as

‘inspirational’ (Fred, 6.3.4.i; Mary, 6.3.4.ii) and ‘a good guy’ (Jack, 6.3.4.i) and a ‘very good sort of storyteller’ (Kevin, 6.3.4.ii). These mentors demonstrated high degrees of professional autonomy and skill. This was evidenced in eccentric and unconventional teaching behaviours (Mike, 6.3.4.i; Fred, 6.3.4.i; Kevin, 6.3.4.ii). Some bridged different roles and responsibilities, moving between classroom and university and visiting different schools (Jack, 6.3.4.i; Amy, 6.3.4.iii). Some were supportive, some challenging, with participants able to recite specific guidance in particular detail (Jack, 6.3.4.i; Fred, 6.3.4.i; Mary, 6.3.4.ii; Amy, 6.3.4.iii; Jules, 6.3.4.iv). There are examples of mentors, and colleagues, in predominantly school-based ITT who are regarded positively for providing immediate instrumental solutions (Becky, 6.3.4.iii; Sue, 6.3.4.iv; Jules, 6.3.4.iv), which may have limited opportunities for reflection, reflecting concerns raised by researchers (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Franke and Dahlgren, 1996; Lee and Feng, 2007; Sundli, 2007; Wright and Bottery, 1997; see 2.9.5.v).

It is interesting to contrast positive experiences mentoring with negative descriptions from the third and fourth generations. Becky (3G) was supported by her departmental colleagues yet bemoaned not having someone who could tell her how to prioritise workload. Matthew’s descriptions of training and mentorship were exceptionally negative, with his use of repetition and metaphor (6.3.4.iii) reflective of a villanelle structure. His concerns arose from the institutions supporting him did not have the means or capacity to provide support, which reflects concerns raised by some researchers (e.g. Bullough, 2005; Kell, 2018; see 2.9.5.iv). Sue (6.3.4.iv) spoke negatively of having her executive head as her NQT mentor, which has resonance with ‘Judgementoring’ (Hobson and Malderez, 2013, see 2.9.5.iv). She used a form of ‘The Elegy’s Structures’ (Powell, 2007) to compare this mentor to her ITT school-based mentor who had more time for her.

References were made by the participants to supportive departmental and whole school cultures, highlighting the importance of collegiality for these teachers. This was particularly evident in Louise and Steve’s (6.3.4.i), Mary’s (6.3.4.ii), Becky’s (6.3.4.iii) and Sue’s (6.3.4.iv) accounts, with Louise’s in particular having a halcyon or utopian quality.

### **8.3.5 Summary**

The structural patterns and turns used in the narrative accounts of the teachers demonstrated that over time there had increasingly been a more dismissive approach towards theoretical provision. There was an emerging preference for instrumental approaches engaged in their ITTs. Such patterns are congruent with research (e.g. Flores and Day, 2006; Payne and Zeichner, 2017; Cochran-Smith et al., 2020; Ellis, et al., 2019; Ellis & Childs, 2019; see 2.9.3). The recognised phenomenon of ‘reality shock’ (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) was manifested in the use of both the ‘ironic structure’ (Bakken, 2007) and the anagnorisis, highlighting both the disparity between the idealistic perception of teaching and its neoliberal, managerial realities, and the dramatic significance in the transition of perception of reality. The descriptions of positively regarded supportive mentors and colleagues using elevated, sometimes elegiac, language seemed to echo figures from mythology and the heroic monomyth (Campbell, 1949) at the threshold or transformational stage. This reflected a tendency for skilful and autonomous professionals to be regarded in awe by those they support.

## **8.4 Post Training and Probation – Fully fledged teacher**

### **8.4.1 Introduction**

In this section I present the critical literary analysis and interpretation of the significant turning points within the narratives that describe the post-training periods, when the research participants had become teachers. Please note that for the most recent generational cohort, who had only just completed their probationary periods, comparable subjects, such as interactions with students, are included for ease of comparison. This subchapter is divided into the following sections: In 8.2 I address the ways in which the research participants described interactions with students. In 8.3 I analyse research participants’ descriptions and perceptions of the systems and cultures they worked within, including encounters with figures of authority. In subchapter 8.4 I investigate descriptions of internal conflict arising from the teachers’ need to address organisational goals.

#### **8.4.2 Interactions with Students: Altruistic Purpose**

In addressing the first research question, the aspect of the job that teachers reported having the most satisfaction with, and which was highly significant in terms of their TPI, was their interactions with, and effects on, the students (see 7.2.2). In relation to the second research question, these interactions were the most frequent occurrences of the apotheoses (thematic highpoints and resolutions). Structurally, these often-addressed thematic concerns (often represented by nadir thematic low points) from the teachers' pre-career experiences (see 8.2.2) or teaching careers (see 8.4.3 and 8.4.4.).

It is unsurprising that these positive episodes occurred in relation to student interactions, as it has been evidenced (see Literature Review 2.4.1) that the primary motivations for teachers entering and remaining within the profession have overwhelmingly been found to be intrinsic and altruistic, rather than extrinsic (Heinz, 2015; Kell, 2018; Chionga et al., 2017), with teachers motivated by: their subject specialism and teaching itself; a desire to work with young people; and of serving society, rather than for pay or holiday entitlement.

This research demonstrated that teachers who cited altruistic motivations tended to report apotheosis episodes with students with whom they identified, culminating the 'concessional turn' made by teachers who had reported disliking aspects of their own schooling (7.2.2). Teachers who had not identified concerns or nadir episodes in relation to demographics to which they belonged tended to cite intrinsic rather than altruistic episodes. There were, however, some teachers who had a variety of apotheosis episodes reflecting both intrinsic and altruistic motivations. For example, all of the teachers in the first generational cohort made explicit reference to altruistic motivations reflecting nadir episodes of schooling (see 6.2.3 and 7.2.2): Mike (1G, 7.2.2.i) discussed being 'liberated' from his 'inverted snobbism' to recognise the value of education for working class students. Jack (1G, 6.2.3.i) was motivated to teach students from the same geographical location, which he had heard teachers mock. Fred (1G, 7.2.2.i) overcame his own loss of engagement with his community to develop rapport with the same students. Louise (1G, 6.2.4.i) highlighted how being a teacher allowed her to encourage capable female students to study the sciences, addressing the nadir episode of experiencing chauvinistic attitudes in the scientific industry. In terms of a heroic mythos, this return to the community marks where

‘the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man’ (Campbell, 1949, p.21). This seems particularly relevant to the narrative accounts of Mary (2G), Matthew (3G) and Sue (4G), who made explicit reference to assisting students who bore similarities to themselves (8.2.2.).

Amy’s nadir episode (see 7.2.4.iii and 8.4.4) had involved the compromises she had made as a teacher when she had seen the students as numbers and data, and the apotheosis that addressed this was a single ‘great’ lesson (7.2.2.iii). She described this through a structure of ‘negation’ (Nahajec, 2009), whereby the lesson was defined by all the things that it did not include (such as learning objectives and success criterion, things recognisable in a prescribed lesson format). This structure indicated that she achieved apotheosis through a rebellious act against what she perceived as the conventional managerial culture of the academy chain. Matthew (3G) used a similar structure (7.2.2.iii) when he described his contempt for the centralised planning system. He introduced a turn with ‘but when the door was closed’ to celebrate his individualistic and creative approach to teaching, by implication, in a more humanistic way. He made explicit reference to this being a ‘rebellious act’.

Whilst four of the male teachers indicated achieving positive results for students in terms of progress measures, only one of these research participants (Jules, 4G) spoke of this in a way in which such success was marked as being an apotheosis (7.2.2.iv). He described the seemingly incredible results of a non-exam group as being ‘pretty fucking special’. He provided an apotheosis of supporting an individual student who had autism (7.2.2.iv), which he marked as being similar to a well-known television documentary in England (Dir. Brindley, 2013).

### **8.4.3 Working Cultures and Leaders**

In answering the first research question, the literature review established that TPI is formed in the interactions between the teacher and the social world that they occupy (Archer, 2000; Olsen, 2008; 2.4). In schools, the direct manifestation of the working culture of neoliberal managerialism (2.3; 2.4) takes form in the various leaders, managers and systems of accountability (e.g. Gunter, 2011; Gewirtz and Ball, 2010; Forrester, 2000; see 2.9.6). In

addressing the second question, the participants structured their narrative accounts frequently in ways in which these aspects were oppositional. Two teachers made positive references to head teachers or leaders. Mike (1G) described one from his childhood who had banned corporal punishment. Louise (1G) contrasted her present compassionate head teacher with a previous SLT team who were not sympathetic when she was supporting her terminally-ill husband (7.2.3.i). These were the exceptions to the generally negative examples provided. Largely, leaders were described as autocratic and managerial, occasionally bullying, and teachers frequently made specific reference to this being as a result of the broader macro and meso cultures.

#### **8.4.3.i Leaders as Villains and Antagonists**

Some leaders and institutions are presented as being antagonistic in that they have been presented as having manipulated teachers' perceptions and then been exposed, as in the accounts of Lucy (8.3.3; 7.2.3.ii), Amy (8.3.3; 7.2.3.iii) and Sue (8.3.3; 7.2.3.iv), in their nadir (thematic low point) and accompanying anagnorisis episodes. These reflected the disparities between ideological constructs of the individual teacher's role against managerial, business-like practises (7.2.3.ii; 8.3.3). Mike (7.2.3.i), Kevin (7.2.3.ii) and Matthew (7.2.3.iii) all described explicit examples of extreme bullying behaviour by individuals, and of the stance taken against them. Matthew (7.2.3.iii) further compared the antagonistic leaders in the oppressive school to various fictional monsters, making their roles as villains unambiguous. This implicitly emphasised his own heroic status in his 'refusal' to accept bullying, and of his 'rebellious act' of ignoring the prescribed lesson formats when alone with classes. Matthew (7.2.3.iii) and Louise (7.2.3.i) discussed times when they had experienced bereavements and personal difficulties, and their disgust as not being supported by leaders. In all these cases, these leaders and institutions are perceived by the teachers as fulfilling the roles of the antagonists.

#### **8.4.3.ii Significance of Location and the Emblem Structure**

Within literary criticism, Howe (2010, pp.89-90) observes that not only is it that 'setting... lends context to events and characters', it can be both '**realistic** or **symbolic**, or sometimes

both simultaneously'. The ways in which the offices and desks of leaders were described in four of the accounts (one from each of the generational cohorts) has yielded further interpretive insight. Theune (2007, p.27) describes the 'emblem' structure being one in which there starts with 'an organized description of an object and culminates with a reflection on that object' and which reveals a world-view or paradigm of 'a universe that can be both observed and "read," its meanings deciphered'. The descriptions seemed to reflect recognisable patriarchal power structures that the research participants disapproved of.

Mike (1G), in describing a teacher from his childhood, referred to a desk that he had to move toward to be hit (6.2.3.i), observing that teachers in that time did not move from their desks. Lucy (2G) referred to having to physically move to a powerful figure when 'summoned', (7.2.3.ii) to the 'Headmaster's office' that contained a 'mahogany desk', something she described as being recognisable from 'film', indicating a shared set of cultural norms and connotations associated with patriarchal status with me, the interviewer. This incident marked the anagnorisis, the realisation that underpins her narrative, that becoming a teacher did not allow her to grow up, but rather kept her (figuratively) a child. Similarly, Matthew (3G) described (7.2.3.iii) a 'bullying' head teacher's office as 'palatial', 'without books', this being 'indicative of the type he was'. These descriptions invite negative connotations of royalty and class, combined with an implied lack of learning. He further described a second 'enormous office' used in 'one of these big government buildings' as this head had a national role. This stressed his contempt for the perceived emphasis placed on the size by those in power. There were parallels with Mike (1G) and Lucy's (2G) anecdotes, in that the teachers are required to travel to these places. Sue (4G) provided a lengthy critique of a person in power (the CEO of the MAT where she trained and taught) through a description (7.2.3.iv) of an office and desk that used the structure of 'negation' (Nahajec, 2009). She implied that this person was remiss in her duties by listing all of the things that were not in the workspace, such as documents and post-it notes.

It is worth considering whether a retrospective description of a superior's working environment would constitute a pivotal episode in the formation of TPI. Recourse to literary criticism expands what could be considered significant turning points within narratives. A turn can occur within the narrative construction itself, as retrospective sense-making. Research literature has established that TPI is formed in the dynamic interplay between the self and wider society (Archer, 2000; Olsen, 2008; 2.4). In these four descriptions, teachers

are interplaying with their conception of a leader, making use of a particular aspect to relay more general thematic concerns. All four of the accounts of the workspace of superiors describe repeated or general observations rather than unique incidents. The structural turn that the research participants have undergone in using 'the emblem structure' (Theune, 2007, p.27) is both conceptual and rhetorical, used in an 'argument' (p.28), moving 'from sight to insight, from perception to reflection' (p.27). The selective emphasis through the use of these descriptions provides insights that may have been formed over a range of experiences over a length of time.

### **8.4.3.iii The Villanelle and Anomie**

Addressing the first research question, the satisfactory formation of TPI as conceived of by the participants was often frustrated by the systems that they were within, forcing altruistic and intrinsic compromise. This reflected research literature (e.g. Farouk, 2010; Ravitch, 2011, Ball 2003; see 2.3). In addressing the second research question, the participants made use of similar stylistic features, such as they use of frustrated repetition of both phrases and individual words. Sometimes they included extreme metaphor. These features, as well as their sense of alienation and isolation, and heightened emotional state, bore striking similarity to aspects of the poetic form of the villanelle.

Mike (7.2.4.i) had described education as being 'broken' three times, and of the managerial and corrupt culture of schooling 'breaking' various people (teachers, students and parents) three times also. In discussing his being coerced into morally dubious practises and he repeated the verb 'damaging'. He was emotive in his discussions of cheating, using aposiopesis when breaking off mid-sentence, struggling to articulate his frustration, and he further made significant use of repetition of the words 'cheat', 'change' and 'forge', indicating a manipulation of reality, extending the literary conceit of gaming as something constructed to deceive. He further opined that such behaviour was 'built on a complete and utter lie'. His language metaphorically indicated that such lies, in his perception, were tangible, physically real things. His sense of being an outsider is particularly evident, and his anger and frustration is palpable. This alienation and despair could mark anomie (Merton, 1968; Star, Bowker and Neumann, 1997; 2.3).

Similarly, Lucy (7.2.4.ii) repeated variations of the word 'cheat', and she repeated 'we'll let her cheat', to express her frustrations with coursework and how management teams in schools became morally compromised in their handling of it. This similarly echoes aspects of the villanelle. Her closing remark on this point seems to indicate anomie (Merton, 1968; Star, Bowker and Neumann, 1997; 2.3), an acceptance of the irreconcilable differences of maintaining her own moral standards in the face of cultures that require gaming or cheating leading to a cynical and detached apathy, when she said 'Cheating, it happens'.

Matthew (3G) repeated how his mentor, who departed from stress, had been 'broken' (6.3.4.iii), and in his description of the villainous head (7.2.3.iii) made repeated reference to various forms of the word 'bully', and of his own refusal to put up with bullies and bullying. A further example is that of Amy (3G), who had emphasised her love of words and language as being central to her professional identity, had then used the frustrated *passim* (repetition of a singular word) 'numbers' (7.2.3.iii) in a way that restricted her eloquence, mirroring how data has restricted her in her moral purpose as a teacher. This seems a significant manifestation of what has been described as the 'transmogrification of students into data' (Thomson, Hall and Jones, 2010, p.653) under the auspices of the neoliberal agenda in English schools. The use of epizeuxis (the repetition of word with no other words in between) to repeat the word 'Horrible' three times in describing how it felt to view the pictures of her students at the start of year and to judge them in terms of data signified a deep revulsion at the change within her. The pictures of the students held next to the data folder or spreadsheets perhaps signify elements of 'The Emblem Structure' (Theune, 2007, p.27), this tableaux symbolising Amy struggling to reconcile two contradictory ways of ordering the universe and her own position as a teacher within it. This, accompanied by her evaluation of herself as a 'hypocrite' (7.2.4.iii), could indicate an anomie. This notion of hypocrisy potentially forms a further ironic and tragic turn as she becomes alienated from her altruistically and intrinsically motivated sense of TPI.

In considering what the similarities to the modern villanelle in these narratives may suggest, it would seem that the teachers have come to perceive the system as inevitably and unalterable powerful. Despite this, they still feel a sense of rage, defining themselves within their narratives as individuals ideologically opposed to the managerial cultures they are teaching within. They attempt to retain a perception of themselves as intrinsically and

altruistically motivated professionals who desire autonomy. These narratives, in seeking to understand how they turn, are significant in what may happen to people, and their narrative selves, when they cannot turn or change. When the antagonistic forces are too powerful to allow their own identities to form, they become alienated to maintain their own sense of self. This is congruent with the research presented on teacher burnout (see 2.3) and the 'crisis of existence' when teachers are operating in 'dysfunctional' systems (Dworkin, 2009, p.492).

#### **8.4.3.iv The Model of the Female Heroine Seeking Normalcy, Equality and Sanity**

Whilst recognising the limitations of the sample size and the corresponding difficulties in drawing conclusions from correlations around gender, instances of language used in a particular way did invite potential interpretations that may indicate interesting areas of further research. Some teachers working in state-funded secondary schools from the second and third generational cohorts used language in a similar way to Louise's (1G) negative description of a sexist working culture as being 'bizarre' (6.2.4.i; 8.2.3) when describing aspects of working in hegemonic systems. Lucy described 'a very odd feeling' when standing at the 'mahogany desk' in the headmaster's office at the private school (7.2.3.ii). Similarly, Sue (7.2.3.iv) used the word 'odd' four times when reflecting on the significance of the office space of CEO of her academy chain. Kevin (7.2.3.ii) likewise described the antagonistic female head teacher of his narrative as being 'very odd'. Becky (7.2.3.iii) used the adjective 'strange' to summarise the stressful time at work leading to her initially leaving her school and the profession. Amy (7.2.3.iii), similarly, described the assessment and monitoring systems of students as being both 'crazy' and 'confusing'. Matthew (7.2.3.iii) described his working situation as 'ridiculous' and provided an assemblage of strange and monstrous beings to represent the antagonist leaders in the school he disliked working within. Each seems to parallel the model of the monomyth of the heroine suggested by Li (2014), where the lone, sane female protagonist journeys through an insane world, seeking to return to normalcy, sanity and equality. The madness of the worlds they each describe seems to stem from their reactions to aspects of patriarchal institutional hegemony and managerialism. Similarities to Li's (2014) conception of the heroine's monomyth may tentatively suggest that the sanity and normalcy that these

teachers wish to return to perhaps comes from their own earlier positive experiences of education (see 8.2.3), in all but potentially Kevin and Matthew's cases, where they felt valued, empowered and successful, perhaps as a consequence of the 'Martha Effect' (Van Broekhuizen and Spaul, 2017; 2.9.4). Potentially other identity factors, such as expectations stemming from class or other educative experiences, played a role.

This interpretation of words relating to strangeness is perhaps supported by Murdock's (2013, p.1) research into the heroine monomyth and its relevance for contemporary western women, including the female teachers in this research: she argued that women who have achieved economic and professional success in traditionally masculine cultures have often experienced 'dissatisfaction' and 'a sense of sterility, emptiness, and dismemberment, even a sense of betrayal' (ibid). Furthermore, they feel surprised by the reality they face when they encounter difficulties and successes on their journeys, leaving them in a state of exhaustion and emotional anguish as they question how this has affected them.

#### **8.4.4 The Moral Compromise**

In addressing the first research question, many of the teachers described troubling periods in their career, when their altruistically and intrinsically-motivated sense of TPI (Heinz (2015; Kell, 2018; 2.9.2) was compromised when they engaged in morally dubious behaviour to satisfy organisational goals. This is recognisable in research as a consequence of a neoliberal policy agenda in education (e.g. Sahlberg, 2012; Farouk, 2010; Lasky, 2005; Ball, 2003; see 2.3). In addressing the second research question, in describing such episodes, the research participants used structural turns that seemed to indicate inner conflict and frustration. This was similar to descriptions in the previous subsection in the ways in which teacher voices echoed the villanelle (see 8.4.3.iii). These structures may indicate the futility of the ability to challenge the system yet reflect the individual compulsion to resist anyway.

Interestingly, some teachers who described feelings of guilt over their interactions with the students did so when describing things that would be regarded as extrinsically-defined success, such as achieving high coursework marks or exam grades. This was particularly evident in the accounts of Mike and Steve (7.2.4.i), Lucy (7.2.4.ii), and Amy, Becky and Matthew (7.2.3.iii and 7.2.4.iii). Working in ways that achieved positive results

were often regarded as being conducted selfishly and in ways in which damaged or hurt the students holistically. It is interesting to note that neither of the teachers in the fourth generation expressed such guilt. Jules (4G) took immense pride in a statistically improbable rate of success in his Year 8 students' interim grades (7.2.2.iv) yet did not recognise potential concerns with removing a student who inhibited institutional goals (6.3.4.iv). This disparity can perhaps be explained by a naivety on Jules's part, and it is important to remember that neither of the participants in the fourth generational cohort had taken exam groups through their final qualifications.

Jack and Mike (1G) and Lucy (2G) had highlighted their own exceptionalism early in their interviews when describing their initial motivations to enter the classroom. They later spoke in the plural first person (7.2.4.i and 7.2.4.ii) to demonstrate a collective guilt as a morally compromised profession. Jack described how he and the teaching profession had collectively 'robbed' students of their autonomy. He did, however, distinguish himself from this corrupted profession by switching to the singular to explain that he personally regarded that as 'wrong'. Lucy (7.2.4.ii) used the first-person plural in teachers collectively accepting 'cheating' as standard practice. Given the significance of their own exceptionalism to their TPIs, it can be seen as an ironic downturn to be in a position where they are part of a number of teachers that exemplify negative practice.

The two female teachers from the third generational cohort described their being significantly upset when teaching coursework elements as part of the IGCSE. Against a backdrop of high teacher accountability, they had felt implicitly pressured, by leaders who seemed to have used equivocation, to provide students with more help than may have been appropriate. They described such episodes vaguely, metaphorically and euphemistically, (see 7.2.4.iii), indicating a deep discomfort. They had mirrored the equivocation of their leaders. Amy (3G), for example, described being left with 'thirty pieces of work that all have a different part of you involved'. Becky (3G) provided an unintentionally humorous description of a convoluted process of asking for a student's input, suggesting an amendment, and 'just sort of typing it for them'. Caught between being perceived a failure, or engaging in morally questionable practices as a teacher, this situation created an inner conflict that manifested in awkwardness and opacity in language. This could reflect blurred boundaries of culpability and complicity in systems of individual teacher accountability. The contrast with the frankness and honesty of the descriptions of moral compromise of

teachers from the first and second generational cohorts is worth considering. Perhaps the older teachers were more cynical. Maybe the younger and less experienced teachers felt more professionally vulnerable.

It may also be significant that feelings of guilt and moral compromise were more acute, and without happy resolution, in the accounts of teachers whose sector and subject specialisms had teacher-assessed elements contributing directly to public-accountability. As discussed in the methodology (see 3.5.1), limitations in the sample size make interpretations necessarily tentative. Mike (1G) described his experiences of altering Year 6 teacher assessment figures for English and Maths for a year 6 primary class to meet performance management goals and school targets. Jack (1G), Lucy (2G), Amy (3G) and Becky (3G), all English subject specialists, described morally-compromised behaviour in denying their students agency in the completion of teacher-assessed coursework for examinations. Such guilt was absent from the accounts of those in other subject specialisms (Fred, 1G; Louise, 1G; Kevin, 2G; Jules, 4G) and sectors (Mary, 2G).

Where such behaviours were in extreme contrast to the altruistically and intrinsically-motivated TPIs, it invited parallels with 'The Mid-Course Turn' (Harp, 2007, pp.147-166). In poetry, this would be a turn that would be so extreme that it is a change in genre. Whilst the 'concessional structures' (Szybist, 2007) and 'Ironic Structures' (Bakken, 2007) marked extreme shifts in teaching careers, they still had a broader unity, identifying the teachers positively. In 'The Mid-Course Turn' (Harp, 2007), they turn away from being such, and in a sense, become anti-teachers, betraying their core purpose. Amy (3G) had described herself a 'hypocrite' (7.2.4.iii). Fred (1G) had become like one of the negative teachers who had conversely inspired him (6.3.3.i). In Mike's (1G) discussion of his moral compromise (see 7.2.4.i), he explicitly acknowledged that 'I'm no longer doing the whole point of becoming a teacher. I'm doing the exact opposite.'

All of the turns discussed here appear to have elements of the 'Dialectical Argument Structure' (Beer, 2007, pp.99-121), which is where someone seeks to resolve 'two or more partial and unsatisfying positions' by 'finding a resolution that transcends their limitations' (Beer, 2007, p.99). The 'transcendence' that Amy achieved seemed more an unfortunately necessary compromise of her ideals. True transcendence would be perhaps what has been observed in the inspirational mentors, where individual teachers are able to balance the managerial demands whilst maintaining professional autonomy.

It is possible that the inability for teachers to find a resolution through the dialectical argument structure has resonance with the concept of 'negative dialectics' (Adorno, 1973), a position which rejects the possibility of higher resolutions irreconcilably contradictory positions through dialogue, perhaps because of the social conditions within which such conflicts occur. Beer (2007, p.108) describes the 'lack of confidence in the resolvability of essential conflicts' as being a 'striking feature of modern poems'. In the case of the teachers in this research, the contradictions between the idealistic, humanistic, and intrinsically and altruistically motivated perceptions of teaching, against the managerial, morally dubious realities, seemed to have created 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957). This is a state of psychological distress occurring when a person holds contradictory beliefs and values, and/or acts in ways contrary to their belief system. Festinger (1957) argued that human beings inherently seek psychological consistency, and would attempt to ameliorate the effects of 'cognitive dissonance' by either avoiding the circumstances in which it would occur (such as leaving teaching), or by internally amending the psychological processes when carrying out actions that caused distress. This may have occurred through the use of euphemistic metaphor by teachers who had 'put too much' of themselves into their students' coursework (7.2.4.iii). This could be regarded as anomie.

#### **8.4.5 Summary**

As I highlighted in the literature review (2.3), Farouk (2010, p.353) identified the chief emotions experienced by teachers who were denied agency and autonomy under the auspices of 'the directive of imposed educational reforms' as leaving them 'feeling frustrated, angry and/or guilty'. They entered the profession altruistically motivated, desirous of being heroic and autonomous individuals, and found themselves becoming controlled and managed participants who were complicit in institutions that they found to be morally dubious or actually evil and corrupt. This frustration and anger was manifested in the narrative accounts through narrative turns that seemed to indicate a difficulty in resolving cognitive dissonance, suggesting anomie.

Recourse to literary criticism, particularly in reference to dramatic conceptions of the tragic hero, may yield further interpretive insight. The hamartia of the tragic hero leads them to err in judgement, leading to their downfall. Tragedy is marked by its inevitability,

manifested in fate and the supernatural forces that are beyond the hero's knowledge or control. Manipulated by antagonistic force or persons who purport to act in their interests, blinded by their own misconceptions, the tragic hero only becomes aware of the true nature of reality at the end of the play. Whilst an outsider or audience could recognise certain practises as unambiguously wrong, being situated as a teacher in that context is more complex. Expectations were implicitly conveyed and none of the teachers were explicitly told to cheat. In the following section, I present my interpretations of how teachers have attempted to resolve such ethical and moral dilemmas.

## **8.5 Departures, Resolutions and Reflections**

### **8.5.1 Introduction**

In this subchapter I present the literary analysis and interpretation of the ways in which teachers resolved or concluded their descriptions of the formations of their TPIs, in three broad areas. In section 8.5.2 I analyse narrative accounts of those who chose to leave teaching to pursue other careers. In section 8.5.3 I investigate those who remained within teaching, yet who moved to another school. Finally, in section 6.5.4 I examine narratives from those who remained in the schools that they were working within at the times when they were interviewed.

### **8.5.2 Departures from the Profession**

Mike's (1G) description of early retirement (7.3.2) because of a bullying head teacher seemed to be a further nadir episode, yet he spoke positively of writing a book on teaching that has since been published, and of volunteering work with adult literacy. As such, he was still, in spite of the difficulties faced, still contributing towards his community and sharing his knowledge with other professionals, indicating a circular structure.

Kevin's (2G) description of changing career to work as a trade union organiser (see 7.3.3) marked the climax and apotheosis of his narrative. It enabled him to 'thrive'. His repetition of variations of the word 'freedom' indicate that his professional identity centred on being afforded autonomy, something that he felt he did not have as a teacher.

Mary (2G) used a retrospective-prospective structure (Yakich, 2007) to describe how her leaving teaching (see 7.3.3) was 'not a tragedy', and that the theorists she encountered in her training continued to inspire her in her role as a manager disseminating information about adult social care in her present day work. Teaching was an important part of her life, and she continued to use the learning from her earlier career.

Matthew (3G) (7.3.4) left full time teaching as he did not want to work under such oppressive systems that he had already encountered. At the time of the interview he had briefly taken on a succession of supply posts between contracts in his usual role. His frustrations in his job as an international educational researcher are discussed in the following section.

These participants remained broadly within education and continued to work in ways which fulfilled their intrinsic and altruistic sense of purpose.

### **8.5.3 Moves within the Profession**

Fred (1G) and Louise (1G) had each described moving until they found schools that they were happier and more fulfilled in, although for Fred this had required a struggle to return to a community from which he had become alienated. Becky (3G), who left her academy (see 7.2.4.iii) because of difficulties with managing a work-life balance, and for the moral compromises she was forced to make with supporting students with coursework, had gone on to work in a pastoral support role in another school. She described in follow up communications that she had returned to teaching English, and was happy and fulfilled in her role, where she felt she was able to meet her original goal of supporting students. This suggests an apotheosis, especially in that by moving to another school more in line with her views and being able to resolve issues around achieving a work-life balance.

Lucy (2G), at the time of our interview, was leaving her TLR post, and was looking forward to starting teaching in a free school as a classroom teacher. Amy (3G) was similarly to move away from an academy school to a stand-alone academy. This move was not a happy one, she would move on again to a promotion to an LEA school that was more reflective of her own school where she attended as a student, where she reported being happier. Both Lucy (2G) and Amy's (3G) frustrations and concerns about remaining in teaching are discussed in the following section.

Sue (4G) had left following her NQT year when her academy had faced significant upheaval as part of a restructuring process in which many TLR posts were abolished. In follow up communications she described her first promotion to a role supporting applicants to university where they would be the first in their family to attend. This is an apotheosis in that she was supported in the same when she had been at school (6.2.3.iv). This has similarities to teachers who made use of the 'concessional structure' (Szybist, 2007). Jules (4G) was leaving his school as his probationary period was coming to an end. He reflected positively on his experiences and was looking forward to developing his career. The pride and satisfaction in his successes in teaching were apotheosis experiences (7.2.2.iv) as they addressed the nadir episodes of his work in the pharmaceutical industry (see 6.2.4.iv) and of his experiences as a school student (6.2.3.iv).

Kell (2019) has highlighted the benefits of teachers finding the school that matches their approach and shares their values. For some of these teachers, the moves seem to have been a way of positively addressing the cognitive dissonance they encountered when teaching in schools that did not align with their altruistic and intrinsically motivated sense of TPI.

#### **8.5.4 Aporia and Anomie in those remaining**

For participants who felt that their TPI was conflicted by managerial cultures, and who had remained in schools, teaching and education, and whose moves had not brought happy resolutions, such as Jack (G1), Lucy (2G) and Amy (3G) and Matthew (3G), this conflict and inability to find resolution was manifested structurally through the use of the villanelle (8.4.3.iii) where teachers engaged in extended rants against some aspect of their job. There were instances in the narrative accounts when the participants began to debate with themselves without being able to reach resolution, which parallels with 'The Dialectical Argument Structure' (Beer, 2007, p.99), which 'often powerfully expresses the situation of the divided mind'. Beer (2007) argues that compromise does not fall under this structure, as the contradictory positions (often between the individual and a larger force impeding its self-realisation, such as nature, or the state) do not allow it. Furthermore, as is this case in tragedy, the resolution is often unhappy.

When teachers were unable to resolve the dilemmas already described, they sometimes reported weariness or cynicism, echoing the literary and philosophical stance of anomie (Durkheim, 1893). In Jack's (1G) case, much of his narrative is a successful 'dialectical argument structure' (Beer (2007) between managing, as a teacher and middle-leader, the balance between autonomy and accountability, something he felt he had achieved in an apotheosis where his job had been to 'bring order out of chaos' (7.2.2.i). Over time, accountability had compromised creativity, and the balance had been eroded, leaving him in a position of doubt and uncertainty. He described (7.2.4.i) being upset by his own cynicism and was trying to decipher the extent to which that was because of his own views or the general state of education. This was evidenced further in the use of aporia, which is 'a figure of speech in which a speaker deliberates or purports to be in doubt about a question' (Baldick, 2008, p.21), and is associated with situations whereby there is an impasse where 'self-contradictory meanings can no longer be resolved' (ibid, p.22). He concluded his interview by telling me that 'in parts of education, I'm not sure what it is anymore' (Jack, 1G), indicating an inability to resolve the agon, or conflicts, that he had debated throughout the duration of the interview, leaving him in a stance of moral and intellectual uncertainty and doubt.

Amy (3G), when reflecting on the future of her career (7.2.4.iii), described her position as being 'quite a cynical thing, really'. She repeated the phrase 'I don't know' five times when considering whether she could remain in teaching for the duration of her working life. She used aposiopesis, (Baldick, 2008, p.22), where the speaker 'suddenly breaks off in the middle of a sentence', indicating a strength of 'emotion that makes the speaker unwilling or unable to continue'. She contrasted this with her earlier desire to make teaching a lifelong vocation.

Given the early career desire for moral certainty and the investment in a career seen as altruistic and affording professional autonomy, this questioning and uncertainty from Steve and Amy could indicate the emergence of anomie (2.3). The apathetic references to not knowing bear resemblance to the opening of Camus's 1942 novel 'The Stranger' (2012, p.3): 'Today mother died. Or maybe yesterday, I don't know'. Similarly, Matthews (3G) repeated references to feelings of guilt and depression (7.2.4.iii) about the cultures of international development and education, and Lucy's (2G) weary acceptance of cheating (7.2.4.ii), seem to indicate anomie.

### **8.5.5 Summary**

All of the resolutions to the narratives described in this chapter indicate that positive resolutions existed where the research participants were able to work in institutions where they felt a moral congruity and where they had professional autonomy. Happy resolutions were achieved when they could be intrinsically and altruistically fulfilled and where they felt supported by leaders and the school community. In terms of how this was manifested in the ways in which significant turning points in the formations of the professional identities were structured, there were significant trends: There were examples of the participants achieving apotheosis in leaving teaching to find jobs that afforded them more professional satisfaction. Some left schools where they were unhappy to achieve apotheosis in schools that aligned with their altruistically and intrinsically motivated sense of TPI. Where teachers remained in schools where they felt a mismatch with the values or working conditions of the school, they used structural forms that indicated an inability to overcome the inherent dilemmas and contradictions, from the impotent anger of the villanelle to the weary cynicism and detachment of aporia and anomie.

## **Chapter 9: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **9.1 Introduction**

I have researched the ways in which primary, secondary and further education teachers across four generational cohorts have described the significant turning points at various career stages in the formation of their TPIs.

In this chapter I first provide an overview of key findings and interpretations (9.2), addressing each of the two research questions (9.2.1 and 9.2.2). Second, I discuss the strengths and limitations of the research (9.3). Third, I present tentative implications and recommendations for policy makers (9.4). Fourth, I consider implications for my own professional practice (9.5). Fifth, I discuss implications and recommendations for future research (9.6), including both critical incidents in the formations of TPIs, and the original approach of using critical literary theory to analyse how turning points are classified and can be understood. Finally, I conclude this dissertation with personal reflections on the research journey (9.7).

### **9.2 Overview of Key Findings and Interpretations**

The original contribution of this research is the application of literary models from the culture from which the participants were drawn to provide richer qualitative understandings of the various ways in which their narratives are structured. This facilitates a progression from the tendency in qualitative research to over generalise the phenomena of 'turning points' (e.g. Rutter, 1990; Bruner, 1994; et al.; see 2.6). The many and nuanced categories of structure identified and used in this research facilitate a more detailed and specific analysis of the culturally-situated ways in which the narratives of these teachers turned when describing the formations of their TPIs. This further allows for the investigation of variations within the sample, such as generational, social group and gender comparisons. Therefore, the use of recent developments in literary critical analysis concerning structure is a further development in 'creating an interdisciplinary field of cultural critique' (Thompson, 2001, p.63). This enriches ethnographic understanding.

Being a narrative inquiry into the lives of teachers in England, I identified different types of turning points in the formations of TPI in a cross-generational investigation of primary,

secondary and further education teachers in publicly-funded schools in England in the thirty years following the introduction of the 1988 Education Act. Therefore, I have provided richer cultural understandings in more 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) of such episodes.

This study was guided by the following questions:

1. What experiences are significant in the formation of teachers' professional identities, and do any patterns exist between generational cohorts in relation to changes in the educational system of England over the last thirty years?
2. How, and to what extent, can the methods of critical literary analysis specifically focused on the variations in which significant turning points are structured, provide potentially richer understandings of narrative accounts?

The first research question investigated what factors, events, persons and career episodes played out on the formations of TPIs and examined links and variations across four generational cohorts. The second research question investigated the manner in which teachers relayed their perceptions of such events, through looking at how their narrative accounts were structured around significant turning points.

### **9.2.1 Research Question 1**

In relation to the first research question, seven broad experiential areas appeared across the narrative accounts as being significant in the formations of the participants' TPIs. They were:

1. Pre-career experiences and motivations, with some more likely to cite their own positive experiences of education, and others more likely to conversely cite negative experiences of school and schooling, as inspiring their altruistic and intrinsic motivations to enter teaching, with no significant variations across generational cohorts.
2. ITT courses and the contested interplay between theoretical and practice-based training, with a trend for teachers to perceive theoretical and alternative pedagogical approaches more negatively with each succeeding generation.

3. The phenomena of 'reality shock' (Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.; see 2.9.4) in those participants of all but the first generational cohort who had cited positive experiences of schooling as motivating their choices to teach.
4. The significance of the support or lack of support from mentors and other professionals. A generational pattern emerged, with earlier generations or those in more traditional university partnerships being more positive and more likely to record instances of being reflexively challenged, compared to more negative examples, or positive accounts of mentors who had provided instrumental solutions to meet organisational goals, in later, school-centred routes.
5. The significance of interactions with the students as fulfilling teachers' personal altruistic and intrinsic motivations in all accounts, with no significant generational differences.
6. The dynamic, often problematic, interplay between the participants' conceptions of their TPIs and their working environments and cultures, manifested in their interactions with their bosses and leaders, with no significant generational variation.
7. Internal conflicts arising from compromises made to their altruistically and intrinsically motivated sense of TPI, with a generational variation in this being absent from the most recent generational cohort. A further variation by sector and subject specialism emerged in that these conflicts only occurred in accounts of teachers who had responsibility for students sitting external qualifications and/or accountability measures where teacher assessments contributed to final grades.

I briefly discuss each of these significant experiential areas, in turn.

### **9.2.1.i Pre-career Motivations**

Consistent with research literature (e.g. Flores and Day, 2006; et al; see 2.9.2) the earliest experiences cited in regard to the formations of TPIs were the pre-career educative experiences. Two significant variations existed in how the accounts were structured, yet these did not seem to correlate to generational cohort. Some (see 8.2.2) were more likely to describe negative school experiences inspiring their choice to teach and to make a difference, and this seemed to more broadly align to identity factors potentially linked to a

sense of belonging to a particular socio-economic group, which has resonance by research by Keane et al. (2018; see 2.9.29). In this research, these seemed to have a broad, perhaps circumstantial, correlation to the male gender; four male participants happened to have identified clearly as coming from a marginalised socio-economic and geographical background. Other teachers (see 8.2.3) cited positive educational experiences as inspiring their choice to teach, which was consistent with research literature (e.g. Book and Freeman, 1986; Richardson and Watt, 2005; Watt, Richardson and Devos, 2012, p.191; see 2.9.2) and this seemed to have some correlations with educational experiences, alignment to middle-class cultures, and a lack of identification with socio-economic groups who were perceived as marginalised, and potentially, gender. It is important to recognise that gender correlations reflect limitations in the research sample (see 3.5.1). All of the females from the first two generational cohorts, and none from the third or fourth, described wanting to support female students, and wished to address specific concerns with negatively perceived patriarchal cultural hegemony. It is possible that identity correlations to the factor of gender was one of a number at play, and so there may have been some potential resonances with the 'Martha effect' (Van Broekhuizen and Spaul (2017), which is the explanation of the tendency for females to achieve more highly in education in the west because of school being more suited for females than for males and/or for females, broadly, being more suited for schooling.

### **9.2.1.ii ITT and Conceptions of Theoretical Provision**

Findings indicated that over time the participants in this study have increasingly become suspicious or dismissive of pedagogical theory and research. This is in both the theoretical provision during ITT and in CPD more broadly (8.3). This reflects research literature (e.g. Edmond, 2015; Ellis, 2010; Flores and Day, 2006; Payne and Zeichner, 2017; see 2.9.3) that suggests that the neoliberal instrumental and technical approaches have discouraged teachers and student teachers from engaging with research and alternative pedagogies. Although school-centred routes to teaching provided more experiential learning, participants from the third and fourth generations, who reported being on the Schools Direct or SCITT programmes, held negative views of theory and of University. It was evident

in that this had seemed to limit opportunities for critical reflexivity, which is consistent with research literature (e.g. Livingston and Flores, 2017).

### **9.2.1.iii Reality Shock**

Significantly, only female teachers from the second, third and fourth generations made specific reference to ‘reality shock’ (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.), that is, to reporting being significantly surprised by the realities of teaching. Their descriptions were consistent with research literature (2.9.4) that attributed the phenomenon to disparities between pre-training idealistic conceptions and the more difficult realities (Flores and Day, 2006; Hagger, Mutton and Burn, 2011). It is important to point out that such episodes occurred at different career transitions, and often reflected realisations formed after accumulative experiences. Possibly, the absence of the same phenomenon from the accounts of male participants, who reported disliking school, might partially be explained by the ‘Martha effect’ (Van Broekhuizen and Spaul, 2017; see 9.2.1.i), whereby schools and schooling are seen as being broadly more suited to female students. Male teachers did report similar negative experiences, yet what was different was the lack of explicit reference to being surprised.

### **9.2.1.iv Mentors and Mentoring**

The narratives of the participants demonstrated that some teachers had benefited from mentoring relationships with persons who exercised skill and experienced autonomy within their working environments. These mentors had the ability to encourage reflexivity from an outsider perspective (5.3.3, 6.3.4 and 8.3.4). This was consistent with research literature, particularly in regard to providing emotional and psychological support and in encouraging reflexivity (e.g. Hobson et al., 2009; Bullough, 2005; Johnson et al., 2005; see 2.9.5.iii). Teachers who had taken school-led ITT routes to QTS seemed to have had fewer opportunities for reflective practice, where their narratives indicated potential benefits for more critical reflection. Becky (3G; 6.3.4.iii), Jules (4G; 6.3.4.iv) and Sue (4G; 6.3.4.iv), for example, all reported positively of school-based mentors and colleagues who had provided

instrumental solutions, yet Becky and Sue reported struggling with prioritising and balancing workloads when struggling to meet organisational goals. Jules missed an opportunity to reflect on diverse ways to approach a behaviourally-challenging student.

The accounts of negative mentoring are consistent with descriptions in research literature (2.9.5.iv), in particular where mentors have been within the same accountability structure as the teachers. They have not been able to encourage reflexivity, raising issues of 'Judgementoring' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013). Additionally, teachers who positively reported instances of mentors providing instrumental quick wins did not seem aware of potential difficulties and ethical concerns arising from a lack of reflexivity or engagement with critical approaches to pedagogy (e.g. Edwards, 1997; Franke and Dahlgren, 1996; Wang and Odell, 2002; see 2.9.5.v). This could lead to them perpetuating instrumental, conventional and conformist attitudes, potentially to the detriment of the students.

#### **9.2.1.v Students and Apotheosis**

The apotheoses and highpoints of teacher narratives frequently involved positive interactions with students (8.4.2). This is consistent with research literature regarding teacher motivations as being primarily intrinsic and altruistic (2.4.1). The majority of teachers felt most fulfilled when able to engage in what they perceived as being human-centred pedagogical practises.

#### **9.2.1.vi Bosses and Systems**

As evidenced in the literature review (2.4), TPI is formed in the dynamic interplay between the individual subjective self and the social world within which the teacher is immersed (Archer, 2000; Olsen, 2008). The few examples of positive leadership discussed by the participants emphasised caring for staff and students' welfare. Many teachers reported negative perceptions of leaders whom they regarded as putting organisational goals above the more holistic needs of students and staff. The prevalence of negative descriptions of such leaders in the accounts in this research could be because of a shift towards accountability driving managerialism in schools (see 2.9.6; Hatcher, 2005; Gewirtz and Ball, 2010). Research literature provides examples of teachers feeling conflict with leaders who

hold them to account in ways in which they feel denies them agency (Nias, 1989; MacLure, 1993; Coldron and Smith, 1999). At the same time, it is important to recognise the partial viewpoints of the participants, and the nature of the interview process. These factors may have inhibited descriptions of more positive examples that might have existed.

### **9.2.1.vii Inner Conflict and Moral Compromise**

The frustrations reported by teachers in the first three generational cohorts reflect research literature that highlights the negative emotional and psychological consequences on professionals (Ball, 2003), as they are denied 'professional capital' (8.4.4; Farouk (2010, p.353; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). When they described situations where they felt that they had compromised their heroic and intrinsically and altruistically motivated perception of their TPIs to meet organisational goals, it placed them in a contradictory, seemingly irreconcilable situation. Faced with such situations, teachers had sometimes left to pursue other careers that allowed them to maintain their altruistically and intrinsically motivated professional identities. Others had moved to find schools that aligned with their values. Where teachers who faced such compromise remained within those institutions, they reported feeling cynicism, professional dissatisfaction and uncertainty, and alienation, which is consistent with research literature (e.g. Dworkin, 2009; Farouk, 2010; see 2.3).

### **9.2.2 Research Question 2**

In addressing the second research question, critical literary analysis revealed the following structural turns across the seven broad experiential areas described previously (9.2.1):

1. Some reported early apotheosis experiences of education, mirroring aspects of the heroic mythos (Campbell, 1949, 2008), sometimes including elegiac (Powell, 2007) and heightened language to identify with inspirational teachers. Others, conversely, used the 'concessional turn' (Szybist, 2007) when describing negative and nadir school experiences that inspired their decision to teach.
2. The diversity of experiences on ITT courses and changing attitudes towards the theory of teaching are represented through a divergent range of structures. These

include apotheoses and positive examples of 'the midcourse turn (Harp, 2007) in the first and second generational cohorts. There are examples of nadir episodes, negative dialectical argument structures (Beer, 2007), aporia and polemic in the third and fourth cohorts, as teachers seem to increasingly dismiss the value of alternative pedagogical approaches and theoretical training.

3. The experiences of 'reality shock' (Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) in participants who had reported being inspired by their own positive experiences of schooling paralleled the poetic 'ironic turn' (Bakken, 2007) and had further similarities with the hamartia, peripeteia and anagnorisis of tragic theatre.
4. Positive examples of mentors and other supporting professionals drew parallels with mystical figures from the heroic monomyth (Campbell, 1949, 2008). Dysfunctional examples were also provided.
5. Positive experiences with students were often marked as apotheoses episodes, a thematic structural highpoint cementing teachers' heroic statuses (Campbell, 1949, 2008) inviting potential critical readings of deficit mind-sets.
6. Interactions with bosses and leaders in systems that they felt compromised their ideals were often manifested through villainous figures (Campbell, 1949, 2008) including nadir episodes and negative use of the 'emblem' structure (Theune, 2007).
7. Those who had made either career or institutional moves reported apotheoses experiences when they fulfilled their professional goals. Those who faced seemingly irreconcilable professional compromises spoke in ways reminiscent of more modern forms of the 'dialectical argument structure' (Beer, 2007) where transcendence was impossible. They provided examples of the villanelle, aporia and anomie to signify a sense of professional alienation.

I briefly discuss the various structural turns found in each of these significant experiential areas, in turn.

### **9.2.2.i Pre-career motivations**

As discussed in 9.2.1.i, there were two broad structural forms. Some described thematic highpoints, apotheoses, when they themselves were at school, sometimes using elevated

elegiac language. All can be considered to have come from relatively privileged white backgrounds. Their being inspired by positive role models further invite parallels with heroic mythos (Campbell, 1949, 2008). Other teachers, regardless of levels of academic success, cited a dislike of school using the concessional turn (Szybist, 2007), therefore being more likely to conform to an accidental hero or underdog. Furthermore, some manifestations of the heroic mythos, of gifted and exceptional individuals, potentially invite critical readings (8.2.4) of white saviour narratives (e.g. Ayers, 1996; DePouw, 2016; Pickower, 2009) and cultures of 'deficit thinking' (e.g. Valencia, 2010; DePouw, 2016).

### **9.2.2.ii ITT**

As detailed in 8.3.2 and 9.2.1.ii, the variation in patterns in how narrative accounts of experiences, perceptions and attitudes towards ITT and pedagogical theory varied significantly. For some in the first generation, experiences had been apotheoses highpoints, representing significant personal philosophical and intellectual growth. Where there had been instances of inadequate ITT provision, these were sometimes marked as nadir episodes. Some participants used 'dialectical argument' (Beer, 2007), aporia or polemic structures to rhetorically dismiss the relevance of ITT to the practical matter of teaching.

### **9.2.2.iii Reality Shock**

The narrative constructions by participants in the second, third and fourth generational cohorts (9.2.1.iii) who explicitly described significant alternations to their perceptions of reality are consistent with research evidence regarding the phenomenon of 'reality shock' (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.). They were manifested in ways which clearly parallel the 'ironic turn' (Bakken, 2007) in literature, and the peripeteia and anagnorisis of drama. As such, these relatively privileged white teachers (who happened to have been female) who were successful in and enjoyed aspects of their education (9.2.2.i) can be understood to have experienced hamartia and hubris. Additionally, there is a sense that these teachers felt that they had been manipulated into having a false sense of reality by antagonistic forces. An alternative feminist reading of the monomyth suggests that some

teachers who experienced this phenomenon and who described their situations to be odd or strange, may have been frustrated in their search normalcy, sanity and equality (Li, 2014).

#### **9.2.2.iv Mentors and Mentoring**

Those mentors who were held in the highest regard (9.2.1) bore striking similarities to mentor figures from heroic monomyths (8.3.4), in that they were able to move autonomously between the workspaces and areas where engagement with critical thinking was possible, reflecting the mastery of both real and magical worlds. There are instances from the third and fourth generation of negative or absent mentors. Participants from the third (Becky) and fourth (Sue and Jules) generations positively described mentors who had provided instrumental fixes, yet these descriptions are not as detailed, elevated or fabulous.

#### **9.2.2.v Encounters with Students**

Whilst this research acknowledges that narrative constructions represent subjective interpretations and rhetorical attempts to persuade the listener (9.3), the frequent occurrence of interactions with students as apotheosis experiences and thematic highpoints (8.4.2), which addressed themes from earlier experiences (8.2.2) support research literature that evidences primarily altruistic and intrinsic motivations for teachers in publicly-funded English schools (e.g. Heinz, 2015; Kell, 2018; Chionga at al., 2017; see 2.9.2). Extrinsic and exam success was, with the exception of one participant from the fourth generation, viewed negatively or ambivalently.

#### **9.2.2.vi Bosses and Systems**

Whilst some positive examples were provided, as discussed in 9.2.1.vi, 8.4.3, 8.4.4 and 8.4.5, the emotional and psychological anguish experienced by the participants when their TPIs were compromised by negative experiences with leaders, found expression in extreme structural patterns. These included parallels with the extreme form of the villanelle and the 'emblem structure' (Theune, 2007), which indicated that accountability systems and school leadership were often viewed negatively and fatalistically.

### **9.2.2.vii Inner Conflict and Moral Compromise**

Those teachers who had moved either to an alternative profession (still broadly within education), or to a school that more closely aligned to their sense of TPI, reported experiencing apotheosis. The use of anomie, aporia and negative examples of the 'midcourse turn' (Harp, 2000) powerfully indicated an inability to reconcile the dichotomous positions of their personal beliefs with those of neoliberal working cultures.

## **9.3 Addressing Limitations and Strengths of the Research**

I contend that the use of literary criticism within narrative inquiry provides a robust analytical lens that encourages reflexivity whilst remaining culturally sensitive in its data generation and appreciation. In this section I acknowledge some of the limitations of this research and bring attention to those aspects that have strengthened its processes, findings and interpretations. Cypress (2017, p.253) observed that there persists concerns and debates around 'achieving rigour in qualitative research'. Lincoln and Guba (1985) advanced trustworthiness through introducing concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Because they are long-established, largely-accepted and widely-used (Nowell, Norris, White and Moules, 2017, p.3), these concepts have been used to assess the trustworthiness of this research.

Credibility refers to the research being recognisable to research participants and readers (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Tobin and Begley, 2004). There was a risk to credibility in that my literary analysis and restorying of the narrative accounts could depart from the views of the participants. A further potential risk to credibility is faced by my being a lone researcher, limiting reflexivity, in that other researchers using the different or the same methods of data collection and analysis could have generated alternative interpretations, as happens in literary criticism. For example, Maxwell (2010, p.281), Brookfield (1995) and Delamont and Atkinson (1995) have argued for researchers to tackle familiarity. The challenges and insights brought by other researchers drawing upon the divergent field of literary criticism could have strengthened this research. A further risk arising from my position as a fellow teacher was that of becoming subject to cognitive bias.

To mitigate the first risk to credibility, I used strategies suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), such as extended engagement with the research participants and member-checking through the sharing of analysis and findings, with relevant updates, clarifications and a minor adjustment implemented (see 3.6.4). I remained aware of the implications of the 'halo effect' (Thorndike, 1920; Nisbett and Wilson, 1977; McCornack and Oritz, 2016) and the risks of becoming subject to cognitive bias. Credibility was further enhanced by my 'having a comprehensive grasp, or understanding, of topics related to the phenomenon' by my being a fellow teacher (Collier-Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009 p.7), in that more detailed information came to me than may have been forthcoming to an outsider. Booth (1992) argued that a research methodology's credibility 'lies in the match between the goals of the study and its design and execution' (p.66). I maintain that the use of the models from literary criticism enabled the more detailed investigations into the patterns in which narratives variously structurally turned. The interdisciplinary approach of the application of models from literary criticism brought a new, relevant and as yet unexploited lens to narrative inquiry, encouraging reflexivity.

Transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) is the extent to which findings and interpretations are potentially applicable or transportable to alternative contexts. A limitation to transferability exists in that this was a small-scale generational comparison study of twelve teachers in England, the vast majority of whom had served in secondary schools, potentially limiting the relevance to researchers investigating wider social or educative contexts. Furthermore, as recognised in 3.5.1, being such a small sample means that the participants are not representative of the wider profession and population, and particular demographics, representatives of particular professional, geographical social and other contexts are not represented. Furthermore, some groups were disproportionately represented, such as males who were actively engaged in trade union activity, or white, middle-class females who had had positive educative experiences. Transferability was strengthened through what Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended as sufficiently detailed descriptions to allow other researchers to judge the relevance to their own situations. Geertz (1973) argued that ethnographic research was strengthened by 'thick description', detailed investigations into the specific cultural contexts and symbols to find meaning in human action, rather than through routine observations and the identification of generalised patterns. As outlined previously (9.1), the original contribution of this research

significantly strengthened this aspect. These more detailed and nuanced categorisations potentially make the methodological approach and the findings applicable in a diversity of specific settings where similar structures might be applied, therefore enhancing transferability.

Dependability requires the research processes to be easily checked and held to account (Tobin and Begley, 2004; Nowell et al, 2017), through clear descriptions of the processes (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Caelli, Ray and Mill (2003) highlight issues in generic qualitative research that stem from a lack of alignment to a specific and established qualitative methodological approach. These risks were especially relevant to this research, as I was attempting to bring a new analytical lens to the data that may not have been familiar to other social sciences researchers. Further risks arose because of the sympathetic nature of data collection and literary appreciation. Atkinson and Delamont (2006, p.165) warn that narrative inquiry 'should be analytic, not celebratory' (p.165) when dealing with the richness of the subjective data. Berger (2015) warned that researcher beliefs and circumstances can affect researcher reflexivity. Atkinson (1997) described the risks of making assumptions about authenticity when investigating emotive episodes and marginalised groups.

Dependability was enhanced by taking an approach similar to Plummer's (1995), who described how deeply personal and traumatic accounts occurring within societal contexts have corresponding forms and genres. Ashworth and Lucas (2000) put forward that bracketing further enables researchers to set aside their own assumptions to better understand the views of those that they are researching. The literary reading allowed this. Furthermore, I provided detailed and transparent descriptions of the research processes around the methods of data collection, literary readings, and the applications of models. Because of the original nature of the structural coding and the conceptual approach to analysis, an entire chapter detailed this approach. Additionally, a table provided descriptions of the various terms from literary analysis. Furthermore, at several points I recoded the data. Koch's (1994) recommendations for an auditing process were achieved through working with supervisors on the doctoral programme.

Confirmability is the extent to which the research is confirmable by events and persons external to the researcher, and that the analysis, findings and interpretations can be shown to be more than 'figments of the imagination' of the researcher (Guba and

Lincoln, 1989, p.243). I mitigated by making the links between the data and interpretations explicit through direct reference (Nowell et al., 2017). Furthermore, I have clearly signposted my methodological, theoretical and analytical approaches (Koch, 1994) so that they are clear to others. The processes described above that address limitations around credibility and dependability further enhance the confirmability of this research.

## **9.4 Implications for Policy Makers**

This research presents evidence supporting concerns in the research community regarding narrowly instrumental approaches to teaching and ineffective mentoring within schools (Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Franke and Dahlgren, 1996; Lee and Feng, 2007; Sundli, 2007; see 2.9.5.v) and further education settings (Manning and Hobson, 2017). This is a significant concern, given the increase of school routes to QTS in ITT (2.9.3; Edmond, 2015; Raiker and Rautiainen, 2012), which is reflected internationally (e.g. Cochran-Smith et al., 2020; Ellis, et al., 2019; Ellis & Childs, 2019; see 2.9.3). Finally, in addition to the widely recognised phenomena of ‘reality shock’ (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.), this research has highlighted other turning points and critical junctures in the formations of TPI across entire careers, such as changing roles, moving schools, promotion or as a result of externally imposed changes to working practises. I therefore recommend the following areas for policy review: professional autonomy within systems of accountability; management and leadership; and ways to engage trainee teachers or those requiring CPD at other career points in reflexive, research-informed practice, including through school-based mentoring.

In addressing the managerial cultures of schools, the findings of this research indicate that those teachers who are motivated by intrinsic factors, who desire professional autonomy, can experience dissatisfaction when too many limitations and restrictions are placed on their work. Furthermore, teachers can become discontented when meeting organisational goals comes at what teachers perceive as a human cost to the students, frustrating their sense of altruistic purpose. This research supports evidence presented by England’s school inspectorate, Ofsted (2019; 1.4), that although teachers enjoy teaching, work-life balance and mental health is negatively affected by workload and organisational priorities. The anomie and aporia evident in the narrative accounts seem to indicate a professional burnout that exists primarily because of ‘sociological’ rather than

'psychological' factors (Dworkin, 2009, p.492). When participants experienced such situations, they have sometimes been motivated to move schools or seek other employment, as they seek alignment to their values and purposes. It is the contention of this research that should policy makers or school leaders wish to recruit and retain intrinsically and altruistically motivated teachers, they should endeavour to ensure that working cultures and management approaches align with the values and motivations of their desired workforce. As such, it supports approaches put forward by Ball (2003), Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) and Ravitch (2011), which advocate encouraging professional autonomy. This has implications for school and teacher leadership.

Being mythic, the heroic narrative is a fallacy. It may be that policy makers and others with public voices have exploited teachers' internalising of the hero narrative (see 4.8.3), by drawing upon cultural stereotypes, to encourage adherence to neoliberal practises. In pursuit of noble ideals, some teachers may have adopted attitudes that perpetuated deficit ways of viewing students. Yalom (2013, p.154) argues that holding onto comforting falsehoods 'ultimately and invariably weakens and constricts the spirit' and that to 'war against magic' is a worthwhile endeavour. He cautions, however, that 'timing and judgement' are not only crucial in supporting people in adjusting to reality, but that the falsehoods that have driven and maintained them cannot be taken away 'if you have nothing better to offer'. I recommend that policy makers temper heroic rhetoric with realistic expectations, to maintain teachers' sense of altruistic purpose, when their human capacities are challenged.

Issues described in 6.4.2 and 8.3.2 demonstrates an increasing reluctance for teachers to engage with pedagogical theory and educational research, often because of a perceived irrelevance to their working lives and workload priorities. Wrenn and Wrenn (2009) have argued for an integration of theory and practice. I suggest that increasing the time and resources for engagement with theory and research would be beneficial. Given the constraints arising because of organisational goals, finding ways to make research relevant to the working contexts could be helpful (see 2.9.3; 9.5; Kember, 2000; Hornyak et al., 2007; Wrenn and Wrenn, 2009; et al.). Action research is a possible avenue for engaging teachers in active reflection (Kember, 2000). Given the proliferation of school-centred routes to teaching, it is recommended that time and resources are made to allow for critical reflection. Key to this may be the provision afforded to adequately develop school-based

mentorship, especially if significant numbers of teachers obtain QTS through school-centred ITT.

Given the findings regarding supportive and unsupportive forms of mentoring (see 8.3.2, 8.3.4 and 9.2.1), this research lends support to mentoring approaches that prioritise the holistic learning needs of the mentee above short-term organisational goals, which encourage reflexivity. Such approaches have been termed 'ONSIDE' (Hobson, 2016, 2020), whereby mentors are 'on the side' of their mentees in the development of their TPIs. This is facilitated by mentoring that is Off-line (separated from line management), Non-evaluative, Supportive, Individualised, Developmental and Empowering. I recommended that appropriate mentoring is provisioned and facilitated at critical junctures throughout careers.

## **9.5 Implications for my own Professional Practice**

As a teacher of fifteen years and a Head of Department with aspirations for senior leadership, this thesis presents a number of professional and personal realisations, opportunities and challenges. My research showed that the central conflict driving most of the significant turning points in TPI focused on the frustrations that teachers felt when they were compromised in meeting their altruistic and intrinsic professional goals. As a Head of department, I have been inspired to invite the members of my team to be actively engaged in decision making and planning. I have encouraged them to redesign and diversify the curriculum, partly in response to the recent Black Lives Matter protests, to make it more inclusive.

Furthermore, the constraints of working within an organisation as a middle-leader can lead to instances where I am expected to hold others to account to meet organisational goals. I have been able to reflect on how I translate such goals to my team, so that I am honest and do not equivocate.

Additionally, the teachers who now train in my school do so through school-based paths to QTS, and because of the present staffing crisis in schools, promotions to positions of responsibility are sometimes sudden. I have prioritised the training needs of those who act as mentors within my department.

The work that I do as a leader of a department requires me to sometimes view students as data. This research has led me to reflect uncomfortably on behaviours and

decisions that I have made that I would regard as being ethically questionable. This research highlights the need for me to set an example to see students, and their teachers, not only in the ways as encouraged by the various systems of accountability, but as people who have a deeper and richer value as human beings with lives and stories of their own.

## **9.6 Implications and Recommendations for Future Research**

As described previously (9.2), for researchers in the broad field of narrative inquiry who are investigating the widely-recognised phenomena of turning points (see 2.6 and 2.7), this research has highlighted that 'thick description' (Geertz, 1993) can be enhanced by looking more specifically at the many variations of such turns. This can be enabled through recourse to literary criticism, as this offers a further means of researcher reflexivity or alternative interpretations, encouraging 'an interdisciplinary field of cultural critique' (Thompson, 2001, p.63).

Plummer (1995; see 9.2) identified that people in similar contexts related significant, disturbing and emotive experiences in recognisable patterns and genres. Recourse to literary criticism not only provides more nuanced ways of categorising and understanding the turning points in the professional lives of teachers already identified; it expands what researchers may understand the turning points in the lives of teachers to be. Examples include the use of the 'emblem structure' (Theune, 2007) by four participants to reveal perceptions of leadership and management, and the similar use of words related to strangeness by participants drawing interesting parallels with critical interpretations of feminine monomyths. Therefore, I argue that drawing upon academic research regarding the culture, literature and arts that come from the community from which the research participants were drawn can provide a critical framework that has direct relevance to their narrative accounts. Another example arose from a critical interpretive reading of parallels with the heroic mythos in the participants' narratives, potentially revealing instances of cultural deficit thinking or saviour identities. I contend that recourse to literary criticism in regard to how significant episodes turn could potentially reveal more nuanced and challenging qualitative interpretations of existing research.

Having recommended the use of literary analysis to categorise the ways in which narrative accounts are structured around turns to reveal richer interpretive insights

generally in the field of narrative inquiry, I now recommend specific areas for further research into TPI.

This study adds to research that demonstrates the significance of the holistic biography of the teacher in relation to the formations of their TPI (see 2.9.2; Goodson, 2003; Watt and Richardson, 2008). More specifically, it evidences the significance of the pre-career experiences of teachers on their altruistic and intrinsic motivations. This is consistent with research literature (see 2.9.2; Heinz, 2015), specifically teachers' own school and educational experiences (Flores and Day, 2006).

Richardson et al. (2012) and Topkaya and Uztosun (2012) drew attention to the lack of research data and findings regarding gender differences in motivations to enter teaching. The emergent correlation by gender and other identity factors, such as socio-economic and geographical identity, in the narrative descriptions suggest potentially rich areas of further research. Comparative investigations of how different genders (including non-binary, transgender or other) and other identity factors contribute to how individuals interpret and make sense of various incidents and experiences in the formation of TPIs could be informative.

Furthermore, the findings of this research that those who reported an early apotheosis in their own pre-career education were more likely to report reality shock (See 2.9.4; Veenman, 1984; Vonk, 1993; et al.) suggests that such findings may support more specific interventions to ameliorate its negative effects in trainee and early-career professionals. Additionally, for those engaged in ITT or mentoring relationships, critical readings potentially providing a means for encouraging reflexivity. This research tentatively suggests that approaches advocated by DePauw (2016) for challenging saviour or deficit narratives in cultural texts with which some trainee teachers may identify may be illuminative and useful.

The absence of guilt and critical reflexivity from the accounts of the fourth-generation cohort could be attributed to their career stage. They had not yet had responsibility or accountability for students sitting accredited examinations, meaning that they were not subject to the same pressures. It may be, however, that further research into generational differences or programme experiences in relation to willingness to engage in reflexivity in teaching professionals may be of value. Both participants described positively

mentors who had provided instrumental solutions. In one case, this had raised ethical concerns that the participant was not aware of.

This research contributes to literature (e.g. Ball, 2003; Goodson, 2013; Sahlberg, 2012; et al.; see 2.3) highlighting high levels of teacher disillusionment as a result of the lack of moral and professional value alignment caused by neoliberal policies enacted in schools. Similarities with a range of researched literary structures highlight the enormous emotional, philosophical and intellectual turmoil on teachers. As such, this approach provides thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) allowing more nuanced understandings than the synonymous terms used in TPI research (e.g. Kelchtermans, 2009; Rolls and Plauborg, 2009; et al; see 2.7). I therefore recommend that cross-disciplinary, organised approaches to investigate variations of accounts when teachers encounter threats to their TPIs would be a rich area for further research.

## **9.7 Closing Personal Reflections on the Research Journey**

The central conflict that underlines the modern tragedy (Miller, 1949) for the majority of these participants is the struggle to attain TPIs driven by altruistic and intrinsic motivations in a system that is obdurately managerialist. The parallels in their narratives with structures from the richest cultural artefacts from their 'interpretive communities' (Fish, 1980) are testament to the commitment that these participants bring to this struggle, whether they have found a happy professional resolution or not. Having become somewhat disillusioned with my own subject specialism as a result of teaching under such a system myself, to use the tools of critical literary analysis in a new way, to find deeper meanings in the narratives of these teachers, has reinvigorated my enthusiasm for, and interest in, literature.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Research Participant Information

**Title: A cross generational study of how English subject teachers use narrative to make sense of and describe significant moments of their teaching careers, and how externally imposed changes to the teaching landscape have played out on the formation of their professional identities.**

Thank you for your interest in taking part in my research. My project is an investigation into the ways in which teachers describe important moments in their professional development. I would interview and then record, transcribe and analyse your stories. I will send you a copy of the typed transcript for you to check that your words and views were transcribed accurately. Towards the conclusion of the research, I will contact you again to give you the opportunity to clarify or challenge any aspect.

The purpose of my study is twofold: firstly, I am interested in finding out about the important events and factors that influence the development of teachers throughout their lives and careers; secondly, I am interested in the different ways that teachers relate such episodes through storytelling, and I shall use of the tools of literary analysis. You would be one of approximately sixteen research participants divided into four generations based upon governments then in power.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Any data shared up to that point can be used in my thesis. If you choose not to take part, you will not suffer any negative consequences. To mitigate any potential harm to yourself, you shall be assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying details related to place, person or institution shall be similarly anonymised. It is important to recognise that as this research is concerned with important episodes in your life as a teacher, it may be that you become distressed or upset, in which case you are encouraged to stop the interview if you so wish.

The interview would occur in a time and place of your choosing, and I would reimburse any travel or sustenance expenses incurred. If you would prefer to carry out the interview over a social media platform or phone, I am happy to work around you. The recordings and transcript would be saved in a password protected computer, and would be deleted ten years after the awarding of the qualification. The data and subsequent analysis from the interview shall be used in my doctoral thesis, and may be used in a publication such as a journal article, display in an exhibition, or made available online.

If you have any concerns or complaints about any aspect of your participation in this research that you do not feel comfortable or confident in bringing to me, you are encouraged to contact my project supervisors; their details are listed below:

Professor Andrew Hobson (A.hobson@brighton.ac.uk)  
Doctor Keith Turvey (Kt6@brighton.ac.uk)  
Doctor Michael Hayler (Mh101@brighton.ac.uk)

This research project has been reviewed and given a favourable ethical opinion by Brighton University.

Sincerely,  
Alexander Ramiz (ar231@uni.brighton.ac.uk)

## **Appendix 2: Letter of consent given to the teacher research participants**

**UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON**

**Participant Consent Form**

### **Significant Turning Points the Formation of the Professional Identities of teachers, a Narrative Inquiry**

- ◆ I agree to take part in this research, the aims of which are to investigate the different ways in which teachers describe the formation of their professional identities throughout their lives and careers.
- ◆ The researcher has explained to my satisfaction the purpose, principles and procedures of the study and the possible risks involved.
- ◆ I have read the information sheet and I understand the principles, procedures and possible risks involved.
- ◆ I am aware that I will be required to take part in semi-structured interviews that will be recorded and then transcribed.
- ◆ I understand that my name, and any names of institutions, locations or people I may mention shall be randomly anonymised to protect my anonymity.
- ◆ I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will normally be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.
- ◆ I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without incurring consequences from doing so.
- ◆ I agree that should I withdraw from the study, the data collected up to that point may be used by the researcher for the purposes described in the information sheet.
- ◆ [for use where there is a possibility that data may be reused or shared] I agree that data collected may subsequently be archived and used by other bona fide researchers.

Name (please print) .....

Signed .....

Date .....

## Appendix 3 Follow up email

Re: Interview Follow Up

Salutation,

Thank you for taking part in my doctoral research. I do appreciate that our interview discussion was quite some time ago.

As part of my methodology and ethical approach, I am inviting feedback from my participants. It would be fantastic if you could respond and let me know whether you are satisfied that I have presented what you shared with me accurately in the chapters here provided, or whether I should make amendments. It would also be helpful to know any reflections you may have on my interpretations. If you would like me to arrange a time for a phone conversation to discuss, I would be happy to do so. I do appreciate that you may be busy, so I would not be disappointed with comments via email.

The first document is very short, and presents brief pen portraits of the research participants. It should only be the work of moments to read and check that I have the basic information correct, and for you to add any pertinent information that you think is missing. If you would be happy for me to do so, I would also be grateful for an update on how things have been going since the interview.

The second document is the summary of findings, and is quite lengthy. By searching under the pseudonym assigned to you, you would be able to look at information only pertinent to yourself, and suggest amendments.

The third presents my interpretations of the findings, and is 8000 words. In this section, I provide a literary analysis of the different ways in which the turning points of teachers' lives have been structured, and make some comparisons. You may agree or disagree or have some thoughts on these that you wish to share.

Thank you again for taking part in my research. It has been a long journey, and a very exciting one. I do look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Alex

## Appendix 4: Examples of Literary Reading of Transcript (Amy, 3G)

<b>Name</b>	Amy Rudgewick
<b>Date of interview</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2016
<b>Cohort</b>	Coalition Government

Teacher Context
Amy trained to be a teacher through the PGCE route into teaching under the early days of the coalition government. Under the Secretary of State for Education, many colleges and schools were being encouraged to become academies, building on a system that had been introduced under the Labour Governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Despite still being an early career teacher, Amy has progressed rapidly and is already a Second in Department within a secondary school under the control of an LEA, having previously worked in a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).

Subject of Anecdote Content List	
Anecdote 1	'I think it's the idea of helping people'
Anecdote 2	'I kind of took it on myself to mother him a bit and be the teacher'
Anecdote 3	'The Dream that I had Didn't Work'
Anecdote 4	'The idea of being a teacher and the reality of being a teacher are two very different things'
Anecdote 5	'Maybe on some weird, subconscious level, I didn't feel I was being judged as much by him.'
Anecdote 6	'She just didn't know me.'
Anecdote 7	Coursework: 'You're not supposed to help them that much'
Anecdote 8	It was easier to offload and to talk about that fear with him, because he's almost a little bit detached.
Anecdote 9	Academies: 'They're a bit more like a business, rather than a school'
Anecdote 10	Childhood experiences of school: 'You weren't just data to them'
Anecdote 11	'I feel I'm a complete hypocrite'

### Anecdote 1

I'll change your name later on.

1. Yeah, yeah.

I do this for my records. So it's Amy Rudgewick and it is the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2016. I suppose, just to start going, why did you want to become a teacher in the first place?

1. I think it's the idea of helping people. (Abstract)
2. I don't like blood, (Evaluation)
3. so I couldn't work for, (Evaluation – introduces list and negation)
4. you know, (Coda)

5. the ambulance service, (Evaluation)
6. or be a nurse, (Evaluation)
7. something like that. (Evaluation)
8. The idea of being a policewoman, (Evaluation)
9. going out on the streets ... (Evaluation)
10. terrifying. (Evaluation)
11. So, (Turning Point)
12. oh,
13. the only other option would be to be a teacher. (Resolution – concessional turn)

<b>Anecdote 1 – ‘I think it’s the idea of helping people.’</b>	
<b>Conflict Statement</b>	Amy wanted to have a profession in which she would help other people; however, other forms of public service, such as working within policing or medicine were ‘terrifying’. The conflict is resolved by Amy resolving to be a teacher.
<b>Context</b>	According to the Office for National Statistics, over 5.4 million people work in the public sector in the United Kingdom, meaning that 17.1% of people in employment work within the public sector. It is interesting to note that the different professions that she has considered are all front line service jobs, rather than governmental or administrative. The public sector can be differentiated from the private sector in that in the private sector privately owned businesses and enterprises seek to gain profit for the owners of the businesses, whereas the public sector from the period after the Second World War until the late 1970s was, under the Post-war consensus, a part of society that was funded by heavy taxation, and part of a broader social approach of regulation, nationalisation and a generous welfare state ( <b>too much not relevant</b> ). Whilst the policies of the Conservative Governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major, and then the Labour Governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, and then the coalition and Conservative Governments led by David Cameron represented a significant paradigm shift towards the neoliberal socio-economic policies of deregulation of the markets, fiscal austerity and an increasingly reduced role for the state, and the increased role of the private sector within public institutions. The view expressed by Amy, of wanting to join some form of the public sector with a vague idea of somehow helping people can be seen as being part of a traditional view of the public sector. Already, this raises the possibility that Amy, as her career develops, may struggle to reconcile her own perceptions of teaching with actual practice within schools.
<b>Setting</b>	Amy makes only one specific reference to an actual setting, where she described her fear at the thought of going ‘out on the streets’ as a police woman terrifying. We can imply, by her stated aversion to blood, that she sees her potential careers as being on the front line service, as someone in direct contact with the public in a capacity where she is providing direct assistance. By implication, she suggests that her most appropriate setting when she is an adult is in a classroom, working

	directly with students as a teacher.
<b>Dramatic Personae</b>	No other characters or people.
<b>Poetic Turn</b>	<p>There are two significant turning points, both marked with connectives. Although Amy desires a career in public service, she lists various options and then dismisses them, using the stylistic listing turn. Overall, the poetic structural form here is a concessional structure, a classical rhetorical technique, and it is significant that this features at the start of the narrative. Amy appears to balance her highly moral core purpose with conceding her own lack of particular personal qualities and abilities that would enable her to work in other forms of public service, such as the police force or in medicine. Whilst conceding, Amy is making use of a rhetorical technique to modestly suggest her own appropriateness for her chosen career, thereby strengthening her claim as a natural teacher. Szybist (2007, P.41) describes how the poetic concessional structures are ‘common gambits’ used to persuade and present the speaker or writer in a particular way:</p> <p>‘Concessions can gain an audience’s attention and trust. Most importantly, they can strengthen the force of an argument and its overall persuasiveness’.</p> <p>That Amy opens the interview discussion with this technique is interesting, and in doing so, the risk she concedes in admitting her lack of promise or particular personal qualities is more than made up for by the trust her apparent modesty inspires in me as listener; furthermore, the concession also serves to highlight her own suitability as a teacher. When the major turning point comes, it serves as evaluation and resolution. She has dismissed a series of other careers, finally arriving at the conclusion that the only suitable career must be a teacher. The use of this technique therefore reveals that Amy is a skilful and capable narrator of her life, able to manipulate her audience. This marks her as someone who is intelligent and educated. She also portrays herself as, at the same time, both someone who is infused with moral purpose, driven by altruism, and yet who is also seemingly modest. We might also infer from the way she has moved through the list of alternative careers that she is a logical and thoughtful person. It is also significant that this concession occurs at a very early stage of her biography, and stands in contrast to those who employed it to emphasise their disliking of school and schooling. This structural gambit has been used in a different way.</p>
<b>Heroic Lens</b>	‘The idea of helping people’ has clear links with the ‘Boon to mankind’ (Campbell, 1949), an essential part of the heroic mythos. Indeed, what makes the hero actually be heroic is the benefits brought to her or his fellow human beings as a result of their journey. Without this element, the hero is not a hero. By starting her account with this particular statement, Amy is establishing herself as a moral person who is concerned with the welfare of her fellow human beings. This forms the

	<p>central core of the persona that she is establishing at the outset of the narrative, the primary reason for her wanting to become a teacher. As already discussed, the artful use of the concessional structure allows her to make such a claim whilst maintaining a modest persona.</p>
<b>Professional Lens</b>	<p>In this, the first element of the narrative, where Amy was invited to share why she chose a career in teaching, she chose to share information that highlighted one specific professional quality, which can be clearly linked to:</p> <p>Public service and altruism: Services provided are for the public good and altruistic in nature. (Macbeath, 2012, P.15)</p> <p>In the light of later anecdotes within this narrative, where Amy does express difficulties with practices within schools and the schooling system that involve a sense of moral compromise, and of the academy system in which she had, by that point, spent the majority of her career, as being compromised by being ‘a business’, what Ravitch (2011, P.252) has pointed out, that whilst the goals of the reform movement appear to represent ‘liberal, enlightened political views’ (2011, P.252), they are ‘in fact deeply reliant on free-market principles’ (ibid).</p>

**Anecdote 2: ‘I kind of took it upon myself to mother him a little bit and be the teacher’**

1. I think when I was younger, (Orientation)
2. I remember I was about seven, (Orientation)
3. and my brother was five, (Orientation)
4. and he had a really severe speech impediment. (Complicating Action)
5. He couldn’t really talk properly until he was about eight, (Complicating Action)
6. so he would babble, (Complicating Action)
7. and to everyone else it was alien (Complicating Action)
8. and they didn’t understand it, (Complicating Action)
9. but he had certain grunts and noises, which ... (Complicating Action) (Turning Point)
10. it was like his own language, (Complicating Action)
11. and so we understood it. (Complicating Action)
12. Being his older sister (Complicating Action)
13. I kind of took it upon myself to mother him a little bit (Complicating Action)
14. and be the teacher, (Complicating Action)
15. and try and teach him things. (Complicating Action)
16. He couldn’t read, (Complicating Action – negation and list introduced)
17. he couldn’t speak, (Complicating Action)
18. he couldn’t do anything, (Complicating Action)
19. **but**, “Cat, this is this,” (Complicating Action) (Turning Point) (Physical gesture on video implying that particular non-verbal communications by her bother indicated particular meanings that were understood by Amy and her family – early )

20. and try and get him involved in the books I was reading. (Resolution and early apotheosis)
21. I think because I helped him, (Evaluation)
22. I then became interested in it. (Evaluation)
23. I'd do at school with my friends, (Complicating Action and Orientation)
24. and became a little bit of a teacher's pet, (Complicating Action)
25. and helped her out with stuff, (Complicating Action)
26. and then just as I got older (Orientation)
27. decided actually, (Resolution)
28. yeah, (Resolution)
29. I became very fixated upon becoming a teacher. (Resolution)
30. That was the **only** thing I wanted to do, (Evaluation)
31. the **only** thing. (Evaluation)
32. I had **no backup** option. (Resolution)
33. It was GCSEs, (Complicating Action – again, uses list for emphasis – strengthens resolve)
34. do English lit A-level, (Complicating Action)
35. go to uni, (Complicating Action)
36. be a teacher. (Resolution)
37. That's it. (Coda)

Anecdote 2 – 'I kind of took it upon myself to mother him a little bit and be the teacher'	
<b>Conflict Statement</b>	Amy had a younger brother who developed a severe speech impediment when very young, leading to a significant delay in communication; however, Amy, along with her family, takes it upon herself to help him learn how to communicate, and from this formative experience is inspired to become a teacher whilst still a young child, setting in sequence a chain of events that follow upon each other, leading her to follow a clear path towards qualification.
<b>Context</b>	See previous notes. Over one million children in the UK have some kind of speech language and communication need or needs. This is referred to as SLCN for short. The DFE report into 'The preferred outcomes of children with speech, language and communication needs and their parents' (Roulstone, Coad, Ayre, Hambly and Lindsay, 2012) highlights the difficulties faced by young people with SLCN. This same report also discusses the views of children with these difficulties, their concerns of being bullied by peers, and their concerns about teachers who might shout at them. They were shown to have valued their own learning and independence, and their pride in their achievements, as well as their enjoyment of school and home life. That the report, published a number of years after the events described in Amy's narrative identifies substantial areas of suggested improvements are evidence of how significant were the difficulties that Amy and her family helped her brother to overcome. Also, her early appreciation of school and of

	becoming a teacher's pet also suggestive of the 'Martha effect', of schooling often suiting young females more than males, perhaps.
<b>Setting</b>	This anecdote starts in Amy's childhood home, with her brother and family. From this domestic scene there is a shift to school, where Amy plays the teacher, now determined to one day take on that role, and then University to begin her training. Each place marks a physical place on the journey, a progression, leading from childhood to adulthood. The childhood event in the home sets up a lifelong sequence of events, each marked by a new location.
<b>Dramatic Personae</b>	Amy, her family, her brother, a nameless school teacher and various friends.
<b>Poetic Turn</b>	<p>By describing an anecdote from her childhood, and citing this as a formative experience that led to an early decision to become a teacher, an experience that has great significance in the subsequent formation of her professional identity, this conforms to the 'Retrospective-Prospective structure' (2007, P.61) described by Yakich:</p> <p>A two part structure that begins with a retrospective consideration of the past and then concludes with a prospective look at the present</p> <p>What is significant about this type of turn in this particular episode is that the events described are clearly 'very close to the speaker's heart' (ibid). The poetic 'Retrospective-Prospective Turn' (ibid) furthermore 'involves some kind of revision, realization or new action based on the past'. Amy seems to use this structure to highlight how important the early experience was. This, in conjunction with the first element of her interview, seems to be used to present Amy as someone who is undeniably a teacher, who has been set upon her career path in her childhood. Within the context of the interview, appearing this early, Amy roots her identity as a teacher as coming from a core experience, one of helping her younger brother to communicate. Given that she is to become an English teacher that the Significant Turn Within the Narrative concerns communication, of helping her sibling to learn how to speak, is particularly interesting. As an English teacher, someone whose job is to teach other children how to communicate, as she did with her brother, this shall prove especially poignant in the later irony where she expresses deep frustration with the numbers that are a major part of present day teaching. Significantly, this can also be seen to be an early apotheosis, a thematic structural highpoint, in that she (with her family) help her brother to overcome a significant difficulty; furthermore, she is successful at school. As such, this could be the initial rising stage of the Ironic structure (see below), as this success and enjoyment of school, provide her with an inflated sense of her own capabilities, and of the realities of teacher training and the classroom.</p>
<b>Heroic Lens</b>	In terms of this particular individual's heroic quest to become a grown human being and a teacher, the childhood incident may be particularly illuminating. There are echoes of Leeming's (1981) conception of the

	<p>'hero-child' in the monomyth. In Amy's helping her brother, she establishes herself as a proto-teacher, and there is an element of the prodigy about her. She demonstrates, at this early point in her story, a construction of her younger self as an exceptional child who is able to help another human being to overcome severe impediments, and this serves as a sort of 'origin story'. In terms of the heroic individual mythos, this is what might be termed the symbolic 'birth of the hero' (Leeming, 1981), and what is highly significant here is that the event in the hero's journey is special, and that this marks the individual as special. In the context of Amy's narrative, she is presenting herself as a heroic individual whose call to the profession came exceptionally early. It is important to note here that Amy's narrative bears remarkable similarity to a number of conventions of the heroic mythos as described by a number of different theorists. That this anecdote occurs in the setting of the domestic sphere, the home of her family, which represents 'the ordinary world' (Vogler, 2007), from which the hero departs to begin the heroic journey after experiencing 'the call to adventure' (Campbell, 1949; Cousineau, 1990; and Vogler, 2007). The culmination of this anecdote, with the journey mapped out and started marks the end of the first of the three acts of the hero's journey, that of 'Departure'. The structure of Amy's narrative appears to follow the conventions of the heroic mythos, with an optimistic start, and with the hero being an exceptional individual of promise. As discussed above, this can be seen as the first stage of the Ironic structure, and as such, this could also serve to be the rising stage in the tragedy, establishing her hamartia, or excessive pride, that leads to a later peripetia (downfall) and accompanying realisation, when she finds encounters difficulties on the ITT.</p>
<p><b>Professional Lens</b></p>	<p>Having already established in the first part of her narrative her primary professional quality of 'Public Service and Altruism' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15), the childhood anecdote that she now shares as a primary event that inspired the formation of her professional identity as a teacher reveals certain pre-existing personal qualities. In sharing an anecdote where as a child she has already had a significant achievement of helping her brother to overcome major communication difficulties, Amy is highlighting particular professional qualities that pre-exist. By establishing these qualities as existing before completing her training, and before becoming subject to the externally imposed training or scrutiny, Amy seems to be tacitly suggesting that she already has, in a sense, 'work autonomy' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15) in that this anecdote demonstrates the control that she has over her own capabilities. This anecdote also seems to give her a form of 'legitimacy' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15), much in the same way as a miraculous birth or symbolic event can mark a hero in the heroic mythos. That Amy's teaching of her brother is presented in a way that is exceptional, seems to further suggest that she somehow has access, even at this stage of her pre-career, to an 'Inaccessible and indeterminacy body of knowledge' that is 'inaccessible</p>

to the uninitiated' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15), and furthermore, by stressing that this event was in her childhood, there is a suggestion of a 'mobility' of skills (ibid), in that Amy's talents belong to her as a professional rather than for whichever organisation is paying her salary. It is interesting to note that these professional qualities mirror those of other female teachers who have taken part in this study from more recent generational cohorts, for example Jenni and Abi, who each made specific reference to exceptional abilities demonstrated as school students, making them exceptional amongst their peers, and in contrast to male participants of older generational cohorts, who had drawn particular emphasis to their own lack of exceptionalism as students, adopting a more accidental and unlikely hero persona. To achieve her goal of becoming a teacher, Amy describes the processes that she must undergo to achieve this desire, and these refer to what Macbeath (2012, P.15) has described as the 'High quality pre-service academic and professional preparation' and 'a period of induction' to achieve the 'Professional association' that will make her a proper teacher, and a recognised professional. By doing this, she is showing a willingness and enthusiasm to engage with the 'carefully controlled entrance requirements' necessary, and this shall be a major theme of the following anecdote that describes her initial teacher training. At this stage, it is important to note that in mirroring the departure stage of the hero's journey, there is no conception of this stage of the difficulties and challenges that lie ahead. Again, this mirrors the naivety of other teachers at this career stage.

### **Anecdote 3: The dream that I always had didn't work**

**So did you actually do your PGCE at university? Did you do that? What was your ...?**

1. Yeah, (Orientation)
2. I did that at Mercia University. (Orientation)
3. It didn't quite go to plan, (Abstract)
4. because the whole get your A-levels, (Evaluation)
5. go to uni (Evaluation)
6. and then go straight into teaching, (Evaluation)
7. the dream that I always had, (Evaluation) (Introduction of the downward phase of the ironic turn – perception – waking from dream state)
8. didn't work. (Evaluation) (Turn – Introduction of anagnorisis and realisation of true nature of reality)
9. I took a year out (Complicating Action)
10. and worked in various places, (Complicating Action and Orientation)
11. and then went on to Mercia. (Orientation)

**Okay. I see. When you said you took a year, what was the ...?**

12. I slowly realised, (Complicating Action) ('Realised' – Anagnorisis) ('Slowly' – this means that the surprise is structurally a higher form of irony, and the surprise is gradually brought out)
13. when I was about 21, (Orientation)
14. that actually I couldn't go into the classroom, (Evaluation) ('Actually' signifies difference between perception and reality)
15. being twenty-one. (Evaluation)
16. I wasn't mature enough, (Evaluation)
17. didn't know enough about life, (Evaluation)
18. and it took a very interesting woman from Mercia Uni (Orientation and Complicating action) (Could be a reference to either 'The Meeting with the Goddess' (Campbell, 1949) and/or 'Meeting with the Mentor' (Vogler 2007)).
19. to sit me down and say, (Complicating Action)
20. "Go away and go and do ..." (Complicating Action) (Accompanying gesture that I read as a reference to the different jobs already referred to) (Introduction of 'Withdrawal' (Leeming, 1981)
21. and at the time (Orientation)
22. I thought, (Complicating Action)
23. "I don't know why you're telling me to do this," (Complicating Action) ('Refusal of the call' (Campbell, 1949; and Vogler, 2007))
24. and actually she was so right. (Evaluation)
25. I went and worked (Complicating Action) (This can be a reference to 'The Road of Trials' (Campbell, 1949 and Cousineau, 1990) and 'tests' (Leeming, 1981) and 'Trials and Quests' (Vogler, 2007), mark introduction to Act 2, 'Initiation'.
26. in a supermarket, (Orientation)
27. went and worked as a learning support assistant, (Complicating Action)
28. did some volunteering on the side. (Complicating Action)
29. Loads of different jobs, (Complicating Action)
30. different types of jobs to interact with different types of people, (Complicating Action and Evaluation)
31. and after that I applied again (Resolution)
32. and then obviously got onto the course, (Resolution)
33. and I think it was the best thing I ever did. (Evaluation and Coda – note superlative)

**Really?**

34. Yeah. (Evaluation)

**How come? What was so good about the course? Tell me some things about why it was so ...**

35. In terms of taking the year out, the best thing, or ...?

**About both, actually.**

36. Taking the year out to work kind of got me used to getting up early every day  
(Abstract)

37. and being in a routine, (Complicating Action and Orientation)

38. and all that sort of stuff. (Complicating Action)

39. I don't think you realise when you go straight to uni, (Evaluation)

40. and then go on to ... (Complicating Action)

41. you don't. (Evaluation)

42. It's not the same. (Evaluation)

43. So having that routine, (Orientation and Complicating Action)

44. and coming into a school (Orientation)

45. and observing things from a learning support assistant's, (Orientation and complicating action)

46. kind of ... (Evaluation)

47. having that view, (Evaluation)

48. that has been amazing, (Evaluation) ('Amazing' – 'Withdrawal... for meditation and preparation' (Leeming, 1981) and 'The Vision Quest' (Cousineau, 1990).

49. stuff you pick up on as a member of support staff that you wouldn't pick up.  
(Evaluation)

50. So that really prepared me for teacher training. (Evaluation and Resolution)

51. I think if I hadn't done that (Evaluation and Coda)

52. I probably would have struggled. (Evaluation and Coda)

53. I would have been a trainee who perhaps dropped out at Christmas. (Evaluation)

54. I wouldn't have been able to cope, (Evaluation)

55. wouldn't have been able to deal with the reality of the training course. (Evaluation)  
(Note – The word 'reality' suggests an anagnorisis, a recognition of the true state of things – and this turn seems comedic, in that the resolution promises to be a positive one after enduring difficulties and struggles).

**Okay. Makes sense.**

<b>Anecdote 3 – The Dream that I had Didn't Work</b>	
<b>Conflict Statement</b>	Amy had early identified a career path as a teacher, and had dismissed all other options. Difficulties arose when she applied and was advised that she did not have enough life experience to be a teacher, and Amy embarks on a series of jobs and voluntary positions to further prepare her for her teacher training, and she is eventually accepted onto a course. She reflects that these experiences were the most important aspects within the formation of her professional identity.

<b>Context</b>	Amy entered training at a point where there was not a recruitment and retention crisis in teaching. (Is there anything anywhere on recommendations for gaining life experience / voluntary work as a prerequisite for teacher training? Look up!). Role of the mentor explored in the next anecdote.
<b>Setting</b>	The various settings that this anecdote covers are particularly interesting. The University is supposed to be a stepping stone on the path to Amy becoming a teacher, and this was referred to in the first section of the narrative, and there was an assumption that this was a natural part of the progression; however, at the recommendation of a lecturer, professor or course provider at the University where Amy applied to complete her PGCE immediately after graduation at age twenty one has her going out to work in a variety of seemingly mundane places, such as work in the voluntary sector and supermarkets. In terms of the heroic quest, explored later, these settings have links in the cultural consciousness, with religious figures such as Christ or Buddha heading out into the wilderness, or to meet with common people, to understand the reality of the real world. These settings serve as a deliberate contrast to the University, for which Amy is not yet sufficiently prepared.
<b>Dramatic Personae</b>	The 'very interesting woman from Mercia Uni' is a significant character in the narrative account, even though there is little further description. This person is very active though, and actively sits Amy down and has a profound influence on the course of her life. See discussion of mentors in following section, and of Mentors and Goddesses in discussion of the heroic mythos.
<b>Poetic Turn</b>	<p>The turn here is more dramatic than poetic, but does fall within the very broad category of the 'ironic structure' (Bakken, 2007, pp.9-26), which is concerned with a double structure, in which previous false understandings are undercut and replaced with realisations about the true nature of reality. This structure is very simple, and the most common, perhaps reflecting the most universal of all plots (finding out what is really happening – Someone actually said this – find ref!). Bakken (2007, P.9) writes that such structures</p> <p>begin with positive assertions and assumptions of truth but end by undercutting such assertions and certainties.</p> <p>This particular turn is significant not only within this anecdote, but within the narrative as a whole, and is a moment of great importance in the formation of Amy's professional identity. The assertions and certainties were made stark in the opening sections of the narrative account. Assuming as I have, that the concessional structure employed in the opening of the narrative account served as a rhetorical ploy to win trust, and to assert Amy's belief in her own suitability and ability as a teacher, every point made and event described to this point has been a clear assertion, without true contradiction. Some key words within</p>

this particular anecdote signify clearly that this is indeed an ironic turn within the narrative as a whole. When Amy told me that ‘the dream that I always had didn’t work’, which serves in the term of Labov (1972 and 2013) as an abstract, this describes the rise and fall of the ironic structure, and is the same structure in tragedy (or inverted in comedy), in which anagnorisis, an awakening perception of reality in response to a change in material circumstance (peripetia) is achieved. Bakken (2007, P.9) describes how

This decidedly simple poetic mechanism – which might be thought of as the process of rising and falling, or inflating and deflating, or dreaming and waking – is capable of producing great intellectual and dramatic energy.

In terms of this narrative, this event is one that I would class as a significant turn within the narrative as a formative experience in the formation of Amy’s professional identity as a teacher. This is the first time that she has been challenged and has undergone a paradigm shift, the first time where her perception of reality and herself has been challenged. Her choice of the word ‘dream’ to summarise all of the hopes and expectations that have existed within her since the formative experiences of her childhood, which formed the foundation upon which she has hoped to build her career, from which all the major decisions in her life have then been made, are now merely a ‘dream’. In this context, the ‘dream’ becomes something insubstantial and childish, a fantasy and a delusion, something unreal, no matter how noble or moral. It is worth at this point exploring in more detail what form of irony is specifically being employed. This is not the mere semantic form of verbal irony calling obvious attention to some discrepancy between what is said and what is implied (the lowest or most obvious form of this being sarcasm), but rather this is ‘structural irony’ (Bakken, 2017, P.10), which is distinguished from verbal irony by the fact that ‘structural irony will typically surprise us more gradually’ and is more ‘thought-provoking’. Whilst those engaged in teacher training would have anticipated the difficult realisations bound to occur when typically enthusiastic yet naïve professionals begin teacher training, it is important to read Amy’s narrative structure as she has intended it. There has been no previous indication within her narrative that she was unlikely to succeed. Indeed, she has presented herself from the outset as a highly confident person who was bound to be a teacher. The ironic structure employed here has brought about a gradual surprise that is gradual because it has occurred at a turning point within the narrative as a whole, in the formation of the professional identity and the life as a whole. What marks the ironic structure here as a higher form of irony is the fact that it does not just point to a situational or verbal incongruity, but rather that it conveys a realisation of human folly and misunderstanding. It is this superior form of irony that forms anagnorisis in the theatre. This structure does exist in Amy’s narrative, and would appear to attest to the fact that this event was of enormous importance

	<p>to Amy, in that it changed how she thought. That it occurs at the start of the second act of the heroic mythos, the initiation, that may be seen to mark the transition from childhood into the initial stages of adulthood, seems significant.</p>
<p><b>Heroic Lens</b></p>	<p>There are continuing parallels in Amy's description of her own individual heroic mythos with the initial stages of the hero's journey as described by Leeming (1981), most notably the 'childhood trial' (P,?) that is the stage that follows the symbolic 'birth of the hero', and in which the child becomes aware of the forces that are larger and more complex than themselves, and which they are not yet prepared to face or enter into conflict with. It is also at this stage that there is an outside assistance. Whilst in mythology this would be in the form of a supernatural and/or divine figure, in this narrative account the outside assistance comes from 'an interesting woman from Mercia University'. Clearly, the forces that are against Amy, the greater challenges and complexities that she faces are the actualities of life and teaching. As with the hero described by Leeming (1981), she can conceive of her own limitations, and yet is not yet capable of taking on these forces. The intervention of the presumably lecturer from Mercia University has the effect of instigating a further stage in the heroic journey as outlined by Leeming (1981), which is that of the 'rite of passage' or the 'withdrawal and initiation' stage, where the hero in myth undergoes a separation from the world. Like Christ going into the desert, or Siddhārtha Gautama leaving the gilded palace of his father to go out into the real world to live the ascetic life of a mendicant, begging and encountering suffering in order to learn, so Amy took time out from trying to follow her 'dream' of becoming a teacher to work in a supermarket and take up various other forms of employment. Within the narrative, there is an ascetic, philosophical aspect to this part of the journey, and Amy clearly says, in what Labov (1972, 2013) would categorise as the abstract to the unfolding action of the anecdote, that she 'didn't know enough about life'. The working in 'different types of jobs' to 'interact with different types of people', 'volunteering on the side' and working as 'a learning support assistant', all because the 'dream' of teaching 'did not work' certainly has parallels with religious and mythological heroes. This is the losing of the self to find the self. If we accept the premise that the heroic mythos comes from universal human experiences, than this narrative structure may represent a stage in life where individuals have to reconcile their dreams and hopes with the reality of the world when they begin to enter it as adults who have to be a part of that real world.</p>
<p><b>Professional Lens</b></p>	<p>Whilst Amy had demonstrated particular personality traits and qualities that seemed to set her out to be a would be teacher in her first stories, the professional qualities that are alluded to here, the ones that she has not yet acquired, yet which she clearly values, may possibly be the 'Inaccessible and indeterminacy body of knowledge' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15). Although Amy shall through her training acquire a 'body of knowledge' (ibid), 'induction of knowledge' and 'professional</p>

preparation', these by themselves were not held to be enough at the stage of her career that she is describing. At the same time, there are some difficulties here. (Personal Observation: A friend of mine who passed out of Sandhurst complained to me about having to spend a lot of time polishing boots and sweeping up leaves because it was supposed to provide him with insight about the people he would command, and give him an appreciation of their circumstances, a lesson he did not appreciate – is there something here about a deeper and broader understanding of seeing aspects of professionalism from an outsider point of view? This is not captured in Macbeath or Hargreaves and Fullan – perhaps links to something more philosophical, an idea concerning criticality regarding one's own profession? Could this fall within 'Theoretical knowledge' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15) or should it be distinct from it? **Dig deeper.** What does seem clear in terms of the formation of professional identity is the stage where teachers, or any professionals, have to come up against the realities of what their profession or course may entail, and how this may markedly differ from their preconceptions. (**Look up specific teacher ed theory.**) This level of criticality, of philosophical, emotional and/or intellectual preparedness could be linked to something that is perhaps often assumed in professional development, that of an appropriate level of intellectual/physical maturity? Could this be tied to emotional intelligences...etc.? Investigate. Some professions, such as police work, teaching, medicine...etc. have high levels of stress and high levels of attrition, suggesting some further human capacities and qualities.

#### **Anecdote 4 The idea of being a teacher and the reality of being a teacher are two very different things**

**Then what about actually, kind of, the course itself? You sound quite enthusiastic about**

...

1. So enthusiastic, (Evaluation)
2. disgustingly enthusiastic, (Evaluation) (Note, the oxymoronic 'Disgustingly enthusiastic', undermining her previous perception of herself)
3. doing everything over the top. (Complicating action)
4. Every deadline they gave us, (Complicating action)
5. I'd work on every ... (Complicating action)
6. I'd focus on every piece of work for weeks. (Complicating action)
7. I was so obsessed with CS1, (Evaluation)
8. the first assignment, (Complicating action)
9. CS2, the second assignment, (Complicating action)
10. the subject knowledge audit. (Complicating action)
11. I would perfect it. (Complicating action)

12. And actually, (Complicating action)
13. as I went through the course, (Orientation)
14. I remember it was week 11, (Orientation)
15. and I just thought this whole idea of perfection is not real, (Abstract) (Ironic turn)
16. and you can't perfect everything. (Evaluation)
17. You don't have time. (Evaluation)
18. There's not enough hours in the day to perfect everything, (Evaluation)
19. and that's when it hit me (Orientation) (Preparation for the turn – Metaphor and aphorism)
20. that the idea of being a teacher (Evaluation) (Note parallel sentence clausal structure)
21. and the reality of being a teacher (Evaluation) (Note parallel sentence clausal structure)
22. were two very different things. (Evaluation) (Ironic Turn – More specifically, what Bakken (2007, P.11) has referred to as 'the ironic comparison of... two viewpoints')

**Okay. Yes, okay. That was when you then took the time out, or is that afterwards? So you've had the year out. You've come back and started the course.**

23. Yeah, yeah.

**So that realisation, what got you there? Are you in schools at that moment, or is this the theoretical part, when you had that realisation?**

24. I hadn't gone on my first placement yet. (Orientation)

**Okay.**

25. Hang on. (Orientation)
26. No, I had. (Orientation)
27. I'd been on my first placement for about five weeks. (Orientation)
28. It was week 11 of the whole overall course. (Orientation)

**So what was it that gave you that realisation? Was there something that happened that led you to thinking that?**

29. I think ...
30. I don't know.
31. It was a combination of all of the deadlines, (Complicating Action)
32. plus actually the reality of being in the classroom (Complicating action)
33. and having to plan stuff and deliver stuff, (Complicating action)
34. and not really knowing how, (Complicating action)

- 35. and you're still learning. (Evaluation)
- 36. It's a massive learning curve and journey. (Evaluation)
- 37. Time management. (Evaluation)
- 38. Part of it, (Evaluation)
- 39. a little bit of the fear of not wanting to ask for loads of help. (Evaluation)
- 40. Didn't want to be seen as weak, (Evaluation)
- 41. so I'd kind of struggle on (Resolution)
- 42. until I had to ask for help. (Resolution)

**Have you got a specific example? I remember with some teachers ... I don't want to sound sexist, but I think that sometimes ... I'm not saying all female teachers are like this, but is there something with that, of not wanting to seem to kind of fail, to have to push on?**

- 43. I think in my first placement (Orientation)
- 44. I took over a class that was the head of department's, (Complicating action)
- 45. and she was an amazing teacher, (Evaluation)
- 46. brilliant, (Evaluation)
- 47. had a really good reputation. (Evaluation)
- 48. The kids trusted her, (Evaluation)
- 49. loved her, (Evaluation)
- 50. and, you know, (Coda)
- 51. her lessons were amazing. (Evaluation)
- 52. I was really hesitant to take over her class, (Complicating action and evaluation)
- 53. because I thought, "I'm a trainee. (Evaluation)
- 54. I'm not even an NQT. (Evaluation)
- 55. I don't have the knowledge and the skills. (Evaluation)
- 56. I can't do it in the same way that you would do it. (Evaluation)
- 57. I can't teach to a really high standard yet." (Evaluation)
- 58. I didn't want to fail in front of her (Abstract)
- 59. because I thought, "That's it. (Complicating action)
- 60. If I have one bad lesson (Evaluation)
- 61. she'll say I can't teach. (Evaluation)
- 62. They'll kick me off the course." (Evaluation) (See notes on Hobson and Malderez on 'Judgementoring, 2013)
- 63. I think it's a little bit ... (Evaluation)
- 64. I can't even think how to phrase it. (Evaluation)
- 65. You kind of get trapped in a bubble. (Evaluation)
- 66. I sometimes think now, (Coda)
- 67. four years on, (Coda)
- 68. you kind of get trapped in a bubble where you think, (Evaluation)

69. “If I don’t do this, (Evaluation)  
 70. this will happen.” (Evaluation)  
 71. I didn’t want to ask for help because I didn’t want the fear ... (Evaluation)  
 72. it was that fear of, (Evaluation)  
 73. “If I ask for help and she realises I’m struggling, (Evaluation)  
 74. they’ll start looking at me a little bit more closely, (Evaluation)  
 75. and then I might just get kicked off the course and fail overall.” (Evaluation)  
 76. I haven’t really explained that very well. (Coda)

**No, that makes sense.**

<b>Anecdote 4 - The PGCE – The idea of being a teacher and the reality of being a teacher are two very different things</b>	
<b>Conflict Statement</b>	Amy is determined to become a successful teacher and takes her theoretical training on the PGCE course very seriously and has the ambition of attaining high grades for her theoretical assignments, associating those with success; however, she comes to understand that the amount of work involved in the course, and then in terms of the practicalities of teaching, are more challenging than she initially thought.
<b>Context</b>	Amy trained to be a teacher on the PGCE programme in the early days of the coalition government. Ball (2017, pp.112-113) has drawn attention to the fact that the coalition government, expanding upon an approach of the Labour Government that preceded it, began to move towards moving teacher education away from ‘progressive’ institution such as university to school-based programs. The intentions behind this was to create a more restrictive and ‘authoritative specification of content and of the sequencing and pacing of knowledge’ (Ball, 2017, P.113), which would ultimately have the effect of weakening teacher autonomy. This anecdote is interesting as it has links with this shift, which can be directly be compared with the narratives of teachers who did take part in other ways into teaching. Here, Amy experiences difficulties in training because the nature of her relationship with a would be mentor who, although clearly presented as a skilful, highly competent and loved teacher and leader, is compromised in her ability to effectively mentor because of her position as a performance manager, as someone who is defined by her position within the school, and who is seemingly incapable of operating outside of that role in the way in which an external mentor would be capable of doing.
<b>Setting</b>	There are two settings here, though neither is physically described. Nonetheless, these two settings represent significant spaces for Amy. One is that of the University, where Amy undergoes her theoretical training and the other is the school where she has her first placement. As described in the context, these places have a far deeper social significance. The school is the location where Amy is training and where

	<p>she is being judged, and it is this judgement which prevents her from seeking the help and support that she needs, and the University, with the mentor who is separate from the school, offers something different.</p>
<p><b>Dramatic Personae</b></p>	<p>As well as Amy, this anecdote also includes a Head of Department who seems to exemplify the qualities that Amy wishes to have herself as a teacher, those professional attributes described below; however, within the narrative, this teacher has a somewhat ambiguous role. Whilst presented as a highly competent teacher who has a position of considerable responsibility and who is loved by her students, this teacher, as a result of her professional relationship with Amy as an inexperienced teacher, seems to serve as the antagonist of the piece, someone who prevents the protagonist from achieving her goal. This seems to stem from Amy's fear of being judged by this person who holds a position of authority. Amy describes her thoughts at the time in direct reportage: "If I have one bad lesson she'll say I can't teach. They'll kick me off the course." ' The difficulty in the relationship is that Amy identifies that she cannot approach this person for help, something that she, as a trainee teacher, feels that she needs, and this is because the person who should be in a position to mentor is instead in a position of authority, where judgements could be made. The considerable difficulty explored in this anecdote seems to exist because of the difficulty presented by this relationship. This is further explored by Amy in a later discussion, as part of a comparative dialectical structure.</p>
<p><b>Poetic Turn</b></p>	<p>There is a significant turn here, a transition that marks the transition point within the heroic journey from one major sphere of the journey to the other, and this is marked by a powerful, clichéd idiomatic expression, the 'and then it hit me', a metaphor that calls attention to the truth about to be shared, and which clearly signifies the import of the turn, that 'The idea of being a teacher and the reality of being a teacher are two very different things'. The transition point then is a moment of realisation, of coming to recognise reality in a way that was not appreciated or understood before. This is a moment of anagnorisis, a profound and dramatic shift in perception of the nature of the self and the social reality that it occupies within the context of the narrative, and which works in tandem with the previous narrative. It marks a growing philosophical and intellectual growth, a form of 'philosophical skepticism' (Bakken, 2007, P.12) that arises from the use of the ironic structure to 'disclaim any absolute, positive certainties about life'. Bakken (2007, P.11) has referred to as 'the ironic comparison of... two viewpoints, being concerned as it is with such a transition, from a previously incorrect and naive set of assumptions to a greater understanding. That this transition is marked by such a powerful turn, we can perhaps understand that this realisation was profound for Amy, as the extreme rhetorical devices employed are done so to share the power of that moment. The realisation is not a pleasant one. There is a stark contrast between the positive ideas expressed about teaching in the pre-career stage to the perception of it whilst on the PGCE course</p>

	<p>and placement, with words such as ‘trapped’, ‘fear’, ‘struggling’, ‘kicked’ and ‘fail’, all arising from a concern about the scrutiny that she would come under. Cumulatively, these words suggest a considerable deal of emotional upset. Much of the realisation is focused on a lack of confidence in her competency. This is demonstrated through the repeated use of the secondary conditional clause (also called ‘if statements’), which reveal a fear of consequences of her being unable to achieve particular tasks. This is also reinforced by the repeated use of the contracted auxiliary verbs ‘can’t’ and ‘don’t’ to demonstrate a lack of capacity and competency in her teaching.</p> <p>This could be classed as a nadir experience, because of the excessive negativity. Also, there is an opposite training story relating to the mentor.</p>
<b>Heroic Lens</b>	<p>So far, Amy’s narrative has followed the broad conventions of the monomyth, with the initial segments following the ‘Departure’ stage of the mythos of the hero (Campbell, 1948; Leeming, 1981; Cousineau, 1990; Vogler, 2007), with the features of the call to adventure and the resistance being typical features of that stage, and this now is leading on to the second of the third stages, that of ‘Initiation’, with the attendant trials and difficulties. This is the realm of challenge and quest, where the hero is faced with obstacles. Amy even describes this stage of her career as ‘a massive learning curve and journey’. Although Amy had experienced something of an early proto-initiation when she helped to teach her brother to communicate, Leeming (1981) identifies an initial initiation of the hero-child within the departure stage of the hero’s journey, and this is different from the true initiation stage. The difficulties encountered here seem to represent a possible manifestation of the ‘refusal of the call’ (Campbell, 1949 and Vogler, 2007), in which case, we would expect in the heroic mythos for there to be the intervention and support of an outsider, a mentor, to help prepare Amy. The person in this instance does not appear to be the mentor, as she is simply not supportive enough, and neither is she detached from the mundane world. She does not act as a mentor figure. At the same time, this Head of Department is not presented as a villain, though the role is somehow adversarial. It is possible at this stage that the Head of Department represents what Campbell (1949) referred to as the ‘father’, who appears initially monstrous, but with whom the hero must eventually seek atonement, that is, to become one with. This shall be further investigated in the discussion of a later anecdote.</p>
<b>Professional Lens</b>	<p>Amy highlights the difficulties involved in becoming a teacher, of not only the theoretical knowledge needed, the ‘idea’ realm of becoming a teacher, of both her fantasy and the theoretical ideas encountered in her work at university, but also in the ‘reality’ of completing assignments to a high enough standard and balancing this with her actual experiences of undertaking teaching in her initial placement to a Secondary English Department. As such, this clearly meets the first of the professional qualities outlined by Macbeath (2012, P.15). that of</p>

Theoretical knowledge and concomitant skills: Professionals are assumed to have extensive theoretical knowledge and, deriving from that, skills that are exercised in practice.

Furthermore, that this is encountered within her initiation into the profession, during her training, this also has links to the professional quality of

Induction: A period of induction and a trainee role is a prerequisite to being recognised as a full member of a professional body

A further professional quality, as is demonstrated through Amy's discomfort with taking on the class of the Head of Department in the school, is that of 'Authority and legitimacy' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15). Amy is aware of these ideas, and their importance, and she is concerned about not having these qualities, and this is in contrast to the perception that she had of herself in her pre-career. The concepts of 'Authority and Legitimacy' as not only teachers, but in relation to teaching and the role of teacher as things that occur in a hierarchal structure occur across the narrative accounts. Whilst there are those that question, subvert or somehow satirise those who occupy positions that have a particular power equated to them, such as those who have managerial or supervisory roles, these people are derided where they are seen to lack the legitimacy conferred if those people are, in the eyes of the narrators, capable teachers. Amy seems to respect and fear this Head of Department not only because they occupy a position of hierarchal authority over Amy, but also because they occupy that position as a result of a high degree of competency. What is key here, though, is that although this Head of Department has legitimacy as a teacher and as someone with a position in the school's hierarchy, Amy does not regard this person as having authority and legitimacy as a mentor, when compared to her course supervisor. This supervisor has the same hierarchal and competency legitimacy and authority as the Head of Department, but a key difference seems to be that her University Supervisor has more autonomy in relation to the system, and is able to operate outside of the hierarchy in which Amy would be judged.

**Anecdote 5 –Maybe on some weird, subconscious level, I didn't feel I was being judged as much by him.**

**You were saying that was like a realisation you then had when you were on this course.**

**Did that lead to a change in outlook, a change in behaviour? (Abstract)**

1. Yeah. (Abstract - confirmation)
2. I remember the course leader saying to me, (Orientation)
3. "Make a list of everything you need to do, (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)

4. everything that's worrying you: (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
5. deadlines, (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
6. lesson plans, (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
7. all this stuff." (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
8. He said, "Put it into two boxes: (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
9. things that have to be done (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
10. and things that don't have to be done." (Complicating Action) (Reported Speech)
11. I found that really hard, (Evaluation)
12. trying to think, (Evaluation)
13. "Well, this is really important and this isn't." (Complicating Action)
14. It made me think about time management. (Complicating Action)
15. It made me think about, (Complicating Action)
16. "What should I be doing? (Evaluation)
17. What do I have to do? (Complicating Action and Evaluation)
18. What am I just doing for the sake of it?" (Complicating Action and Evaluation)
19. It made me realise that you have to talk to people. (Evaluation and Resolution)
20. It was really weird, (Evaluation)
21. because I wouldn't ask for help from the school, (Evaluation)
22. but I would ask for help from my course leader at Uni (Evaluation)

**Okay.**

23. Maybe on some weird, subconscious level (Evaluation)
24. I didn't feel I was being judged as much by him. (Evaluation) ('Judgementoring'  
(Hobson and Malderez, 2013)

**Okay.**

25. I don't know. (Evaluation)
26. It made me ... (Complicating Action)
27. having lists and categorising things made me think, (Complicating Action and  
Evaluation)
28. "Okay, what needs to be done and what doesn't?" (Evaluation)
29. and then from there the stress went away a little bit, (Resolution)
30. because I wasn't thinking everything was a massive priority. (Resolution)

**That's quite interesting, actually. I suppose now, you know, the way that teachers are trained is changing. It's very different. There's a lot more school-based training now. You mentioned two, I suppose, quite critical things in the development of your early career, both of which involved people from a university actually telling you things which fundamentally changed your perception. What were those relationships like, if that makes sense?**

31. I don't know if I'm allowed to say his name.

**What you can do, if you do use names, I mean I change it anyway, so it's completely fine. You can be completely honest with it. Also, any transcripts you get to see. I change the names of the institutions. I change the names of the people. I change your name. You can pick one if you like. So all of it is completely changed, so I think for the sake of just telling it, you can do.**

32. So, Simon Burridge, (Orientation)

33. he was our course leader, (Orientation)

34. and nothing you ever said to him was stupid. (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

35. Nothing was wrong. (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

36. You could have the most ridiculous idea ever, (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

37. or thought in a lesson, (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

38. or anything, (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

39. and he was so supportive. (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

40. I think because he was in the classroom loads himself, (Evaluation) (Master of both worlds)

41. and then he was at Uni as well ... (Evaluation) (Master of both worlds)

42. I don't know. (Evaluation)

43. There was something really comforting about him. (Evaluation)

44. Not that I didn't trust the head of English, (Complicating Action and Evaluation)

45. but... (Introduction of 'dialectical structure' (Beer, 2007)

46. I really can't explain it. (Evaluation)

47. I don't know. (Evaluation)

48. If he wasn't the person leading the course, (Evaluation)

49. and if he wasn't the way that he was, (Evaluation)

50. if he wasn't caring and really supportive – (Evaluation)

51. he really took the time to think about what our needs were (Complicating Action)

52. and how to help us individually – (Complicating Action)

53. I don't know if I necessarily would have stayed past Christmas. (Evaluation)

54. I don't know. (Evaluation)

**Anecdote 5 –Maybe on some weird, subconscious level, I didn't feel I was being judged as much by him.**

**Conflict Statement**

Amy, as with many trainee teachers, required help and support on her placement, but her assigned mentor within school was her Head of Department, someone who had a position of authority and managerial accountability within the school. To resolve this, Amy was able to approach her University Course Leader for support, as this person existed outside of her own school's management and accountability systems, and was a strong mentor.

<b>Context</b>	<p>Hobson and Malderez (2013) on ‘Judgementoring’ – explore the contrast between the University based course mentor and the Head of Department in the placement school. Interesting to note that the idea of the model of mentoring suggested has a number of parallels with the archetype of the mentor from the heroic mythos. Even the separation from the Performance Management Process has parallels with the good witch or wizard being removed from the mundane world, serving as outsiders supporting the hero on their quest. As with other mentor or wizard figures who act as guides in stories, the outside status seems to enable the guide and mentor to focus on developing the awareness and capacities of the hero of the narratives. It is important to recognise here that the role of the mentor in a school should be to do this; this is the function performed by the mentor. In this particular section of the narrative, it is interesting to note the number of questions provoked by the mentor to Amy. The Head of Department, on the other hand, has a function that is defined purely by her function within the hierarchy of the school, and this may be at odds to that of the mentor. <b>This needs developing, More needed on the broader context on the shift towards school-based training. This has further implications for later generations.</b></p>
<b>Setting</b>	<p>This anecdote and the following have two distinct settings, though neither is described. The first is the University, and the second is the school where the placement occurs. The University, and the relationship with the mentor, seem to take place both physically and in a more abstract sense, externally to the school, in a place where doubt and questioning and mistakes are safe.</p>
<b>Dramatic Personae</b>	<p>This anecdote and the following concern two different people who are key figures in Amy’s early professional development during her initial placement. Whilst both are discussed here, the key focus is on her University based PGCE mentor and course leader, and the other is the Head of the English Department in the school which Amy joins on her first school-based placement, approximately two months into her PGCE course.</p>
<b>Poetic Turn</b>	<p>I would suggest that the two figures who appear at this stage of Amy’s professional judgement, in the different ways in which they are presented as diametrically opposed opposites, from Amy’s point of view, in the ways in which they are presented in relation to her as a trainee teacher, suggests ‘The Dialectical Argument Structure’ (Beer, pp.99-121), partially because Amy moves between these two characters, back and forth in comparison, and also because they seem to represent significantly different ways of preparing and guiding trainee teachers. These are paradigmatically different viewpoints; the one progressive and University centred, and the other authoritative, concerned with compliance and a narrow, pre-existing knowledge base. Whilst Amy does not make explicit reference to broader academic debates or discussions regarding implications to trainee teacher mentoring as a result of the shift towards more school-based teacher</p>

	<p>training programmes, or of the broader philosophical concerns, these concerns are manifest in her narrative account, in the structure of the turn. What is clear is that as a trainee teacher she made explicit reference to the more progressive form of mentorship being the likely factor in her choosing not to give up on teaching, and this is discussed by Hobson and Malderez (2013) discuss as a major factor in trainee teacher retention.</p> <p>It is interesting to note that whilst the previous anecdote, which described the realisation of the difficulties of the initial teacher training course and the attendant fears, made repeated use of the secondary conditional clause (statements that begin with the word 'if') to explore possible imagined consequences of failing, there is a parallel use of the device at the conclusion of this anecdote, where she uses a Tricolon and three if statement openers, along with parenthesis, to highlight how particular qualities of the course leader enabled her to remain and succeed on the course:</p> <p>If he wasn't the person leading the course, and if he wasn't the way that he was, if he wasn't caring and really supportive – he really took the time to think about what our needs were and how to help us individually – I don't know if I necessarily would have stayed past Christmas.</p> <p>This structure neatly parallels the structure employed at the conclusion of the last anecdote, so on a purely structural analysis, this mentor has acted as an anecdote to the difficulties faced. The complexity of the clausal structure within the sentence seems to suggest a particular confidence in her description of the course leader, even to the extent that the Secondary Conditional Clauses in the preceding anecdote were disjointed and rambling, there is a structural certainty here that is compelling. That the anecdote ends on a note of uncertainty regarding the possibly consequences of this particular mentor not being there to help further emphasises the certainty and reassurance provided. I would also suggest that this is retrospective-prospective in that the positive mentor figure, who is close to her heart, is held to be of such significance in helping her to become who she is.</p>
<p><b>Heroic Lens</b></p>	<p>The mentor is an archetype of literature in the mythic journey of the hero (Vogler, 2007, pp.39-49), a character who appears early in the story, and who serves to provide the hero with the tools and inspiration necessary for them to overcome their 'refusal of the call' (Campbell, 1949 and Vogler, 2007). This particular character is an aspect that, like other features of the monomyth, is 'retold endlessly in infinite variation'. This particular character appears in Amy's narrative, at the point where the mentor would be expected to appear, at the juncture between the real world and the world of adventure, between childhood and adulthood, at the stage where the hero is likely to break off from undertaking their journey, and it would seem to be because of the universality of the teacher and mentor in human society and culture that makes this character manifest so frequently across such a plurality</p>

	<p>of cultures. What is key about the mentor in the monomyth of the journey of the hero, as is the role of the mentor in real world settings, is that the mentor provides the hero with the tools necessary for the hero to undertake the journey, as well as bestowing the confidence and fear to face the unknown, yet it is always the hero who undertakes the journey. In this narrative account, the University-based mentor performs precisely this function for Amy. Certainly the semantic field of words used to describe this mentor and his actions, such as ‘help’, ‘supportive’, ‘leading’, ‘nurturing’ and ‘caring’ provide us with an idea of a person who has certain maternal or paternal qualities, someone whose role is to support the trainee teachers as does the mentor in the monomyth, but there is a further quality held by this person that a parental figure does not necessarily have, and a quality that is easily recognisable in the many wizards, good witches, supernatural aides, fairy godmothers and eccentric teachers that have proliferated across a diverse set of genres, formats and text types is a set of abilities and skills that appear mystical and beyond the mundane world which the hero is being encouraged to leave, and this is evident in the repeated instances of Amy struggling to describe the abilities of her mentor, such as when she repeats ‘I don’t know’ four times in quick succession when trying to describe how her mentor is able to help her, as well as ‘I can’t explain it’, as if in wonder. The awe and respect implicit here may perhaps arise from the naïve trainee being amazed by the capabilities of their teacher, capabilities that they have yet to acquire. It may be that the amazement and wonder that the novice has regarding the capabilities of the teacher throughout human culture that has led to the mentor archetype being a character who has magical and supernatural capabilities in a great diversity of myths, stories and legends. Another possibly important feature, though not discussed explicitly by either Campbell (1949) or Vogler (2007) is that these mentors tend to feature as outsiders, as already being ‘Masters of two worlds’ (Campbell, 1949 and Cousineau, 1991), in that they exist within the mundane world, yet are also separate from it, and they have power within it, and power outside of it. I think this echoes ideas discussed by Hobson and Malderez (2013) in discussing the threats to mentoring where mentors are tied to the performance management processes. In the heroic mythos, there exist clear parallels..</p>
<p><b>Professional Lens</b></p>	<p>Being concerned with the initial placement, and the attendant fears and concerns of how she would be perceived, the pertinent professional attributes in this anecdote and the one following appear to be linked to that of</p> <p>Induction: A period of induction and a trainee role is a prerequisite to being recognised as a full member of a professional body (Macbeath, 2012, P.15).</p> <p>As well as ‘professional association’ and ‘authenticity’ (ibid). What is especially key in this particular anecdote is that Amy has concerns about her abilities to overcome her induction period, and as shall be explored</p>

in the following anecdote concerning the Head of Department in her placement school, Amy had concerns about how she would be recognised and regarded. Implicit in these two accounts is the idea that Amy felt confident that her University Based Mentor, who is named and with whom she felt she had a supportive and warm relationship, understood her status as a trainee teacher, whereas the Head of Department, who is not named, and who is marked by Amy in stark contrast by the limitation of her role, as far as Amy was aware or thought, was marked by Amy's perception that she would regard her as an incompetent yet fully accountable teacher.

#### **Anecdote 6: She just didn't know me.**

**I know you said that you couldn't explain it, but actually thinking about it, you did kind of describe it as that fear of failure. I'm not saying that it would have been her being a bad teacher. You've already spelled out she actually seemed like a very highly competent teacher, but what was different, I suppose, about that relationship with her that you couldn't have that?**

1. I think because she just didn't know me. (Abstract)
2. I was just a trainee coming in, (Orientation)
3. taking over her class, (Complicating Action)
4. whereas I'd built up that relationship with Keith a little bit longer, (Evaluation) (It is interesting to note that the meeting with the mentor as a stage in the heroic mythos occurs towards the end of the first act (Vogler, 2007), that of departure, prior to the initiation, and this is another clear parallel within this particular narrative)
5. because for the first four weeks we were going to Uni every day, (Orientation)
6. and so we were seeing the course leaders a lot. (Orientation and Complicating Action)
7. They had read our subject knowledge audits and knew a bit about us, (Complicating Action and Evaluation)
8. and had interviewed us, (Complicating Action)
9. and had spent more time with us. (Complicating Action)
10. I felt like I was just another trainee for another placement working with her class. (Evaluation, Orientation and Complicating Action)
11. I don't know. (Evaluation)
12. It was very different by the end, (Resolution) (Suggests what Campbell (1949 and 1993) referred to as 'Atonement with the father', a later stage of the second act of the heroic mythos journey of initiation) (Links to the idea of the 'dialectical structure', in that the higher form of this poetic turn suggests a philosophical stance whereby the poet can 'take up and inhabit incompatible points of view' (Beer, P.112).

13. but I think at that early stage it was only week 9, (orientation)
14. week 11, (Orientation)
15. something like that. (Orientation)
16. I didn't want to take too much of her time. (Evaluation)

**That's interesting, actually. You actually used the word "judging", which is quite interesting. Where do you think that kind of came from? You mentioned that with Keith it wasn't there. I mean you saw it kind of like a bubble. You saw it as a judging thing. Where did that come from? Does that make sense? Because you're the same person in both these relationships. You've got a thing in one place and not in the other. I'm wondering how you kind of felt that. I don't know. If you were to describe what in that environment made you feel that way, what do you think? I appreciate it's quite a tricky question.**

17. I suppose both the head of department and Simon had an element of power, (Abstract and Evaluation) (Antithesis – suggestion of either or both 'Ironic Structure' (Bakken, 2007, pp.1-26) or 'The Dialectical Argument Structure' (Beer, 2007, pp.99-119))
18. because she's obviously in charge of a whole department. (Evaluation and Orientation) (Father figure from the heroic mythos? Campbell, 1949)
19. He was an assistant head (Orientation) (The use of a list here suggests that the mentor figure may be heroic mentor from the 'meeting with the mentor' (Vogler, 2007); furthermore, the mentor is someone who is already at the summit of heroic achievement, being a 'Master of both worlds' (Campbell, 1949 and Cousineau, 1991))
20. and an English teacher (Orientation)
21. and a media teacher (Orientation)
22. and in charge of the course. (Orientation)
23. With Simon, (Orientation and Evaluation)
24. I saw a different side to him, (Complicating Action)
25. a very caring, (Evaluation)
26. sort of, (Evaluation)
27. nurturing side. (Evaluation)
28. I didn't see that side to her. (Orientation, Complicating Action and Evaluation) (Perception)
29. So I just felt that's where the judgement came from, (Evaluation) ('Judgementoring' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013))
30. because she was just head of department and nothing else, (Evaluation) (The 'nothing else' seems to be naive, and could therefore, in heroic terms, be a 'self-generated' monster of the ego and superego (Campbell, 1949, 1991, P.130), and yet an earlier statement suggests at some stage an 'atonement' (Campbell, 1949, 1993, pp.126-149))

- 31. whereas he was a head of department, (Orientation and Evaluation)
- 32. a course leader, (Orientation and Evaluation)
- 33. your guide, (Orientation and Evaluation)
- 34. your friend. (Orientation and Evaluation)
- 35. I didn't see that side to her. (Evaluation)

**Okay, I see.**

- 36. Because I just saw her as the head of department, (Complication Action and Evaluation)
- 37. I just saw her constantly as... (Orientation and Evaluation)
- 38. well, (Evaluation)
- 39. she'll be judging everything from that head of department perspective, (Evaluation)
- 40. sort of thing. (Evaluation)

**That does make complete sense. That's because her role, I suppose, is ...**

- 41. Yeah, (Evaluation)
- 42. and I kept seeing it as, (Orientation)
- 43. "She's the head of department. (Evaluation)
- 44. She will be judging everything I'm doing (Evaluation – again 'judgementoring'!!!)
- 45. because she's head of department (Evaluation)
- 46. and it will affect her department," (Evaluation)
- 47. whereas I never, ever, ever saw Simon in that way. (Evaluation and Resolution)  
(Note, this does again seem to show 'the dialectical turn' as Amy consistently moved between the two characters in her narrative to compare them and what they stand for in relation to her as a trainee teacher)

**No, it makes sense. I mean I trained, I think, a little bit before you, but I recognise that. I had the same thing. I trained at university. I was doing a GTP route.**

- 48. Yeah, yeah.

<b>Anecdote 6 – ‘She just didn’t know me.’</b>	
<b>Conflict Statement</b>	Whilst respecting the capabilities of the Head of the English Department that Amy joined on her placement, as well as the esteem for this person held by the students, Amy expresses considerable concern at approaching this individual for the necessary help and support that she, as a trainee teacher, requires, and this seems to stem from the fact that the Head of Department has a specific monitoring and management role within the school.
<b>Context</b>	See previous notes on ‘Judgementoring’ (Hobson and Malderez (2013). Also need to expand research into coaching and mentoring literature. Look at specific social and historical context from Ball (2017) and Jones (2016).
<b>Setting</b>	See notes on previous anecdote.
<b>Dramatic Personae</b>	See previous notes – Important to note that the Head of Department has previously been identified as a contender for the role of ‘The father’ from the heroic mythos. Also important to note the ambiguity. Amy has recognised that both of the professionals discussed in the ‘dialectical structure’ are exemplary teachers and professionals, yet Amy has a fear of the Head of Department because of the nature of their professional relationship.
<b>Poetic Turn</b>	This anecdote continues the dialectical approach; and there is some evidence that Amy did reach the height of this turn, either in the heroic mythos of the ‘atonement with the father’, or in achieving the taking up and reconciling what at first seemed to be contradictory points of view, when she recognises that it is her view of the head of department that leads to the fear that exists in her own mind, and also, that by the end of her placement, her feelings had changed, where she said that ‘It was very different by the end’. That actually points toward atonement, what Keats referred to as ‘Negative Capability’, of being able to be comfortable with different points of view and perspectives without stubbornly sticking to one interpretation or way of seeing. Whilst it could be argued that this would represent an intellectual and philosophical indifference (too vague – needs to be specific and supported!), I think that an exploration of the heroic mythos may provide a more detailed explanation of how such a reconciliation of two seemingly opposite points of view could be reconciled. Although my failure to pick up on this point during the course of the interview to pick up on the clues offered by Amy to investigate how this difficult relationship was reconciled, there is enough evidence here to see that this did happen, and that this was a result of the intervention of the mentor. The key thing to note here is that the dialectical structure has culminated with two seemingly diametrically opposed characters and points of view have reached a happy resolution in terms of structure.
<b>Heroic</b>	What is particularly interesting here is that whilst the Head of Department is presented in a way in which she does seem to be adversarial at first, there are clues in the text that this is a matter of perception, that this is something that Amy perceived because of her

own position and her own lack of experience. This is particularly evident when Amy makes repeated references to sight as a metaphor, as not being able to see further or deeper qualities held by the Head of Department, not that these qualities were not actually there. The repetition of 'I just saw her' and 'I kept seeing her as' suggest that much of the adversity represented by the Head of Department existed as perceptions held by Amy, and that these perceptions existed because of her naivety that was a result of her lack of experience, and because of the nature of the professional relationship. Indeed, there are references to the Head of Department being an 'amazing teacher' in an earlier anecdote. So why would this person be a fearful character within the narrative? In the discussion of context, this can be understood. Campbell (1949, 1993, P.129) offers some insights into characters from heroic mythological structures that may provide interesting parallels and insights. He observes that

The ogre aspect of the father is a reflex of the victim's own ego – derived from the sensational nursery scene that has been left behind.

So too it is possible to perceive that Amy has already recognised that the Head of Department is a strong teacher, and that the fears that she has seem to stem from her own insecurities. In the stage of the heroic journey where there is 'the atonement with the father' (Campbell, 1949 and 1993), the hero must come to gain a more adult attitude, one where there is 'a better balanced, more realistic view of the father' (P.130) through 'no more than the abandonment of that self-generated double monster', of id and ego. In relating this to the actual experiences she had in her trainee placement, to successfully progress, she would need to develop a more realistic understanding of the Head of Department and what the Head of Department represented; however, it is important to recognise that this is inherently difficult. Interestingly, Campbell (1949 and 1993, P.131) also notes that these difficulties are overcome through faith in the supernatural female figure, who in Amy's anecdote is her University based mentor, who has enabled Amy, like the hero in the mythic journey, to be 'protected through all the frightening experiences of the father's ego-shattering initiation'. Clearly, the experience of the father figure of the Head of Department, who seems to somehow act as a focus within the narrative for a number of difficulties referred to by Amy in regard to her time management, her struggles to maintain her high grade average, the realities of teaching, and her own comparisons with a highly competent Head of Department whose classes she takes on, has been 'ego-shattering', and this has been the nature of this 'initiation'. The courage and ability to pass successfully through this stage has clearly come from the 'helpful female figure' of the, in this case male, mentor. Campbell (1949 and 1993) has a further observation of this atonement and the role played by the two key players that may prove especially illuminating in exploring how the two previously diametrically opposed viewpoints

	<p>found resolution in the dialectical structure presented by Amy:</p> <p>For if it is impossible to trust the terrifying father face, then one's faith must be centred elsewhere (Spider Woman, Blessed Mother); and with that reliance for support, one endures the crisis – only to find, in the end, that the father and mother reflect each other, and are in essence the same.</p> <p>In terms of Amy progressing in terms of her own heroic mythos, both of the people encountered, the ego-shattering father of the Head of Department, and the kindly and supportive mentor, have helped her on her journey, and without both of these figures, it is possible to speculate that a vital aspect may have been missing. It is worth investigating this more specifically in relation to the development of the professional identity of the teacher. Both of these roles were necessary to develop the teacher through the initial phases of her career.</p>
<b>Professional</b>	<p>Again, the chief aspects of these series of anecdotes have been those of 'initiation' and 'Legitimacy' (Macbeath, 2012, P.15). In terms of initiation and training, the investigation into the successful conclusion of a philosophical maturity obtained that was represented by Amy through the dialectical structure, and through ideas suggested by the twin and interdependent figures of the terrible father and kindly mother, the Head of Department representing the actuality and difficult realities of the classroom, and the Mentor who provided the emotional support and guidance to successfully meet the challenges, may support ideas suggested by Hobson and Malderez (2013) with 'Judgementoring'. Whilst it is a fact that teachers, indeed all professionals, must be adequately prepared for the realities of their professions and work, they do not yet have the skills and talents and maturity to do so. By drawing on the parallels that exist between the suggested model of the mentor, and the archetypes of the mentor and father in the heroic monomyth, the presence of a mentor who is separate from the Performance Management Process, and yet who is also someone who understands and has mastery of those processes, as well as a supportive and nurturing relationship with the mentee, provides a deeper, more universal cultural model that has appeared in a plurality of cultural texts.</p>

## Appendix 5: Summaries of Generational Cohorts

### Appendix 5.1 Summary First Generational Cohort: 1988 - 1997

Subject	Mike	Fred	Jack	Louise
<b>Negative Childhood Experience of school</b>	Concessional Turn (1 and 10)	Concessional Structure (2 and 3) Dialectical Structure (2)		
<b>Positive Childhood Experience of school</b>		Concessional Structure (1) Dialectical Structure (2) Retrospective-prospective (2)		Described not being discouraged from the sciences because of gender.
<b>Negative Experience Teacher at School</b>	Emblem Turn (10) and Retrospective-Prospective Turn (10)	Concessional and Retrospective-prospective(2 and 3)		
<b>Positive Experience Teacher at School</b>	(Head teacher) Dialectical Turn (10) and Retrospective-prospective Turn (10)			
<b>Influence of relative who is a teacher</b>				Retrospective-prospective (5) in describing influence of mother (however, note difference in that mother unionised and warns off)
<b>Poor Academic Childhood Background</b>	Concessional Turn (1)			
<b>Strong Academic Childhood Background</b>				Present – Turn?

<b>Working Class / Geographically significant Background</b>	Concessional Turn (1 and 14)	Concessional Structure (1 and 2)	Concessional Structure (1) – Note that highlights being ‘Essex Boy’ in a concessional turn, and later of having a ‘socialist’ perspective, but no reference to class. Separate subject?	
<b>Middle Class Background</b>				Ironic Turn (8) (Verbal Irony is strongly stressed, rather than grand) in highlighting a very middleclass upbringing and now teaching in the inner city school.
<b>Positive Higher Education</b>	Concessional Turn (2) Midcourse Turn (2) Apotheosis (2)			Ironic Turn (8) and Retrospective-prospective (8) and Listing Turn (8)
<b>Negative Higher Education</b>				
<b>Did not intend to become a teacher, but did</b>	Concessional Turn (1 and 2)		Concessional Turn (1) Retrospective-Prospective (1)	
<b>Positive Work Before Teaching</b>				
<b>Negative Work Before Teaching</b>				Midcourse Turn (2) in that work as physicist research laboratory scientist encounters sexism, and this is not what she

				expected following positive experiences on her degree. Possibly Ironic Turn? Listing Turn (8)
<b>PGCE</b>	Apotheosis (13)	Mentioned (1) Listing (5) Mentioned positively (5)		Reported factually.
<b>Positive Encounter Other Teachers</b>	Dialectical Turn (11), Retrospective-prospective Turn (11) and <b>A Fork in the Road Turn?</b> (11) Apotheosis (13)			Positive Retrospective-prospective (6)
<b>Negative Encounter Other Teachers</b>	See Prescription vs. Autonomy (3 and 4)	Dialectical and Retrospective-Prospective Turn (8)		Retrospective-prospective (3) and seems to have elements of Atonement with the Father from Heroic...etc.
<b>Positive Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>	Apotheosis (12 and 13)	Encounter with an inspirational mentor who challenges him makes this an Ironic Turn (9) as finds he has become the didactic teacher who he thought he could be better than. Later, this is revealed to be a stage on a cyclical turn.	*Note – In acting in a mentoring role himself describes an Ironic Turn and a Retrospective-prospective Turn (6) mentoring someone else who has a seemingly good lesson but isn't, and reflects on similar in his own early career. (Separate subject?). Retrospective-prospective	Positive Retrospective-prospective (5 and 6) – Note, very classic use of this turn, as is used to reflect on differences between then and now, possibly suggesting Elegy Turn? Experiences 'the making of me' compared to how in present context may not have made it.

			(10) for a Senior NQT Mentor and advisor.	
<b>Negative Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>			Digression Turn (10) reflection on those who have left the classroom to enter teacher training or advisory roles.	
<b>Experience Wider Change</b>	See Prescription vs. Autonomy	Dialectical Turn (6) Midcourse turn 'All of a sudden' but not personally affected.		'All of a sudden' Midcourse Turn (4) at larger level, but not personally affected. 'Massive upheaval'.
<b>Prescription vs. Autonomy</b>	Dialectical argument turn (3, 4 and 5) and The Elegy Turn (5) with elements of Listing Turn (5) and Retrospective-prospective to reconsider the present (5).		Elegy Turn and Dialectical Structure (2, 3, 5 and 7) exploring how teaching at the start of career was more innovative, whilst teaching now is more restrictive. This is also emphasised with the rhetorical use of the Listing Turn (5). Becomes a midcourse turn in a moment of moral crisis (7). Later uses an Ironic Turn (8) combined with the Dialectical Turn (8) in terms of discussion of the use of coursework in education.	

<p><b>Positive experiences as a teacher – Moments of Success</b></p>	<p>Apotheosis (12) and Concessional (12), with overcoming dyslexia, lack of social aspiration...etc. to become a teacher – culmination of the concessional turn. Extended reflections in what was learned with meta-literary references to learning journey...etc.</p>	<p>Apotheosis (1) suggested as a desirable reason for entering the profession, and a minor Apotheosis (7) is broadly described when achieving a more caring role for students.</p>	<p>Apotheosis and Dialectical Argument (4 and 5) in early leadership role describing bringing ‘order out of chaos’, in that success inspired intellectual reflection and there is a resolution of extremes and duality.</p>	<p>Minor Apotheosis (7) in descriptions of wanting to support girls going into sciences from own experiences. Structure is there, but tone is not overly celebratory. Major Apotheosis in (11) describing how is now a positive mentor for three NQTs in a department, and speaks with a more confident tone, highly reflective, having overcome and learned things from previous negative encounters with difficult teachers or an unsupportive Head.</p>
<p><b>Negative experiences as a teacher – Moments of crisis and departure</b></p>	<p>Repeated use of the Listing Turn (6 and 7) and also of the frustration in the variation of the Dialectical Argument Turn without resolution. Cyclical Turn (15) Midcourse Turn (16) to describe personal moral crisis. This is further emphasised with a</p>			<p>Midcourse Turn and Elegy (9) combined with ‘Retrospective-prospective’ describing the lack of support from a successful school when became full time carer for terminally ill husband. Reflects on how that would be for an NQT teacher. Leaves school but</p>

	<p>rhetorical use of the Listing Turn (16) to undermine all things schools should be with the reality. Used to describe leaving profession.</p> <p>Final midcourse turn in (17) with admission of cheating.</p>			<p>not profession. Also Dialectical Turn (10) when comparing to better present school with a more morally admired Head.</p>
<p><b>Negative experience as a teacher - Moments of Crisis and Resolution or Adapting</b></p>	<p>Cyclical Turn (15)</p>	<p>Cyclical Turn (9) when faces moral difficulty with being in a suburban middleclass school and transitions back to a school closer to his own experiences.</p>	<p>See Midcourse Turn (7) – Not fully resolved, but is able to assert moral individuality and autonomy.</p>	<p>10 – As above 9 – departure is a positive!</p> <p>12: Retrospective-prospective and successful dialectical argument in learning how to prioritise and be ‘more philosophical’. Refers to earlier experiences but speaks positively about the present.</p>

## Appendix 5.2 Summary Second Generational Cohort (Labour) 1997 - 2010

Subject	Mary	Lucy	Kevin
<b>Negative Childhood Experience of school</b>			Describes that he was bullied in school in early anecdotes, but does not go into much detail. Not negative to be considered nadir.
<b>Positive Childhood Experience of school</b>	Suggested.	Retrospective-prospective in describing influence of a young, female teacher and also of sixth form study at private school (2).	
<b>Negative Experience Teacher at School</b>	In (9) describes a teacher hitting a student, and this is contrasted directly with the positive teacher (see below).	Anecdote of a negative teacher from school (14) who is described using the metaphor of a sledgehammer. This is also a retrospective-prospective structure, in that Abi describes how she compares herself to this teacher when she finds that she does not use praise enough or uses praise as a bolt on.	As a Teaching Assistant (5 and 6) observed a very poor teacher relying on text books who did badly in the job, and this being used as an inspiration to be better, and this is similar to other male teachers in different generations defining themselves by the poor examples of others whom they then better, in a form of concessional structure.
<b>Positive Experience Teacher at School</b>	In (9) describes an inspirational teacher contrasted with a teacher who breaks a ruler over a female student's back. See above.	Highly influential younger teacher (12) when she was at private school, and the turn appears to be elegiac, with a loving description of the past continuously compared to the present, chiefly so that she can compare herself to the teacher in the past, who is described in a very romantic way. It is also	

		retrospective-prospective, in that this used to discuss how she is as a teacher now, and dreads the idea of what her students think of her as a teacher. This also serves to contrast the positive expectations that she had of the profession to her later experiences of it. There are also elements of the exceptional child (again naïve and setting up a fall, similar to others), in that she highlights that she was the only student in the A level class who obtained the grade, and she seems to identify herself strongly to this inspirational teacher.	
<b>Influence of relative who is a teacher</b>		N/A	Describes (3) parents who were a teacher and a social worker, and of wanting to do something similar. Also makes some use of the ironic turn to describe how the expectations of going into University and the sorts of careers that that experience can lead to are not necessarily true.
<b>Poor Academic Childhood Background</b>		Describes having not been able to have achieved her maths GCSE and having to then have to go to evening classes to get the requisite qualification to go onto the PGCE.	
<b>Strong Academic</b>		Yes – RELATIVELY.	Yes.

<b>Childhood Background</b>			
<b>Working Class / Geographically significant Background</b>		Private school background. Wants to become a teacher like the teacher in the private school whom she admired.	Not working class, but highlights having come from the left (1 and 2).
<b>Middle Class Background</b>		Yes. Was sent to a private school.	See above.
<b>Positive Higher Education</b>	Describes going to University (2) as a mature student to study comparative religion after the birth of her daughter, when her daughter was a young child, and this experience is described in positive terms such as 'loved', 'inspirational', 'remarkable', 'challenging' and 'transformative' in opening her mind to how religion could be oppressive towards women. In the early anecdote in the interview this establishes that Ruth became interested in the more critical and challenging aspects of academia as leading her to eventually move towards teaching. This also has elements of the emblem structure, in that she contrasts Universities and religious institutions in terms of how knowledge is created and shared. Key theme emerging is		Describes how after not enjoying school he did enjoy being at University and giving presentations and so on (1).

	that of women against patriarchy. This is returned to in (12) where even more powerful language is used. This is the apotheosis where women are able to 'blow apart' the notions of patriarchal power and control.		
<b>Negative Higher Education</b>	Describes (3) difficulties with certain males in the church dissuading her from undertaking certain studies, and this then influencing her to make women in Christianity the focus of her research, and later there is a more powerful account (10) of the bullying behaviour of men, and that serves as the nadir experience, even though it is chiefly concerned with a lecturer and colleague rather than Ruth who is made to suffer.		
<b>Did not intend to become a teacher, but did</b>		N/A	Makes use of the concessional structure at different points in the first anecdote (1) to highlight that he did not envision becoming a teacher, but it is then the thoughtful consideration of the different things that it would allow him to do (chiefly of the positive altruistic things he can achieve) that lead him to opt for the career) that he

			<p>provides an extended apology for his decision to become a teacher. Also in (2) Again, the use of the concessional turn. When Jack first worked in the school as a teaching assistant, he was reminded of his own school experiences when he had been bullied and had lacked confidence. However, he grows to like the students, and he also references having seen poor teachers whilst he was a teaching assistant, and was motivated by the fact that he thought that he could do it better. This is a further example of a male teacher being inspired and motivated by negative experiences to be a teacher. The growing to like the kids is also a significant shift, given that earlier in the anecdote he had described not getting on with the other students and finding schools to be a difficult atmosphere.</p>
<p><b>Did intend to become a teacher</b></p>	<p>(4) Did intent to having discovered a love for the world of teaching and academia through her involvement with the University. Having been inspired by her participation in her degree and Post-Graduate study to become a teacher or lecturer,</p>	<p>Abi uses a listing turn in her first anecdote (1) to describe the succession of things she had to do to get into the profession, describing how she ‘always wanted to be a teacher’; and the list culminates with the volta marked by two contrasting connectives ‘but’ to</p>	

	Ruth had initially considered the PGCSE, but did not have the required O-Level in Maths to obtain entry onto a course; however, within the context of this anecdote, which does compress time significantly, Ruth reflects on her own abilities and the confidence that she has gained, and decides to go for the Cert. Ed as an alternative.	describe how despite the many things to do, she had stuck with it, true to her purpose. Note similarity with other teacher who did not have the requisite maths qualification.	
<b>Positive Work Before Teaching</b>			Experiences of being TA
<b>Negative Work Before Teaching</b>			Experiences of being TA
<b>PGCE</b>		In (9) PGCE describes having a mix of University involvement and placements, and that being standard at the time, and compares this to present day training, which she feels is sometimes inadequate. She comments that she felt that there was a disconnect between the main lecturer/course provider, who she suggests was not really in the classroom at all, and that theory was dry articles that were disconnected from the practical experience of the classroom, and she reflects that she would have liked the theory to have	

		been based around actual teaching, perhaps through seeing her course provider teach, or through watching videos of actual teaching and discussing with those on the course.	
<b>GTP</b>			Describes stumbling across the salaried training route into teaching and describes this as a 'great gig', but with few reflections on the differences between that and the PGCE (4) in that he reflects that they might have been expected to take on more teaching initially.
<b>Cert Ed</b>	Positive experience of learning, but frustrated with the students (5): Throughout the course of her studies, Ruth is challenged and excited by the ideas of Freire (1968) that were critical of authoritarian pedagogy, and which would seem a natural progression of Ruth's own growing opposition to patriarchal, dogmatic and authoritarian ideas in knowledge, learning and education; however, when she becomes a teacher and wishes to follow these ideas, she finds that the course that she is teaching, the attitudes of the		

	students, and the curriculum path, has a more didactic approach.		
<b>Positive Encounter Other Teachers</b>			
<b>Negative Encounter Other Teachers</b>			
<b>Positive encounters leaders</b>			
<b>Negative encounters leaders</b>	See (10) for discussions of a very patriarchal and bullying culture from men in a university who were opposed to a group of women studying spiritual aspects of things.	Uses the emblem turn, in describing a desk, an ironic turn, and a peripetia in describing an encounter in her early career with a head teacher in a private school where she worked. The desk serves as a symbol of patriarchal authority, to which she is summoned. She also describes how the school and the leadership create an initial impression of valuing staff, yet this is revealed to be false, and the ironic turn is also a peripetia and nadir experience, as thematically Abi does not grow to become like the adult teacher she admired in private school when she was a student; however, there is a further irony in that the power of the head teacher is undermined, as suggests that he is in thrall to the paying parents.	Describes (10) a Head Teacher who was like an academy head, and the turns in this anecdote appear to be both nadir and partial apotheosis. Although this is qualified by the fact that the participant knows that this is not the school or ultimately the profession for him, he moves from having a difficult head teacher to challenging her, and to then improving his own teaching and winning her respect. Something here about atonement with the father? As interview develops, does reflect more negatively on the accusatory approach (12), which he veers between calling bullying and not bullying, and which although is an individual, and although he acknowledges that he did require 'a bit of a kick up the arse', he attributes this pressure and lack of freedom and autonomy to his choice to leave the

		Overall, the notions of power and autonomy for teachers and head teachers are revealed to be unreal and false, with outside pressures constraining power. This anecdote, on several levels, demonstrates how far removed the perceptions that teachers and head teachers have of autonomy and power are from the realities of private education. The desk then becomes an emblem that can be ridiculed.	profession. Did not view experience of improving teaching as transformative enough to be considered a redemption narrative.
<b>Positive Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>	Positive influence (5) in a sense in that a course lecturer on the Cert Ed is sympathetic and is able to provide some insight into the student body.	Discusses having a school based mentor who she never saw teach, and that she was left alone quite a lot, although she spoke positively about seminars and lectures in her PGCE course, but not in detail (9).	Describes (7) two teachers, one the professional mentor, and the other a teacher who was in the school where he trained, who influenced him. Both were more traditional teachers, and both were male. Speaks enthusiastically about them, without any particular type of turn, but seems to value and respect the authority that they had, and their ability to be the sort of teachers that they were.
<b>Negative Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>		See above notes on PGCE about the disconnect between theory and practice, and the wish for a younger course provider (9). Also describes a potentially difficult relationship with a school based mentor on the first placement who had to go to the	

		<p>University about her pestering him regarding work, and it seems significant that it is a male teacher, and she takes umbrage at what she calls a 'Calm down, dear' moment, and when he is condescending to her, telling her that she'll be alright, she asserts her own strength of character. Similar to the female participant in the first generation.</p> <p>(10) This is a retrospective-prospective turn, as it is told in relation to her reflections about her own role as a mentor within the department, and about mentorship in general.</p>	
<b>Experience Wider Change</b>	<p>Some reference to it being New Labour and Tony Blair the new prime minister when she went into teaching, but she highlights that this did not influence her to enter the profession. She does use an ironic structure to highlight that in the end she found New Labour and the Tory party to be indistinguishable.</p>	<p>Discussion of how culture has changed with coursework and expectations on teachers having a direct impact on retention and recruitment.</p>	<p>Describes moving to a school in the South East in 2011, and noticing that the pressures on schools were different. Previously, he had not had an onerous workload, and had achieved decent passes in GCSE; however, he describes a midcourse turn where there is now significant pressures that he struggles to meet, and these trigger informal capability procedures...etc.</p>
<b>Prescription vs. Autonomy</b>	<p>See above – clearly values more critically engaged thinking that is transformative and is frustrated by students who do not have that</p>	<p>See (6) above. Furthermore, in one anecdote (7), discusses how a student was able to effectively cheat in controlled assessments in a</p>	<p>See (12) and the description to leave teaching for a career that promised more autonomy and where he felt more valued as a professional, where</p>

	approach.	school, but after reporting the student was silenced. Reflects that the pressures are the same in both private and publicly funded schools.	he felt he was able to function more effectively under his own self direction.
<b>Positive experiences as a teacher – Moments of Success</b>			There is a suggested apotheosis, in (13) where he describes enjoying teaching and his life in London, to the point that he declares that he enjoyed it, and wanted to be a teacher forever, but the true apotheosis, the thematic highpoint, centres on his joining the union as a paid worker, where he is able to express himself and has professional autonomy, and he already highlights that what he thinks the most important things that humans can have is freedom, something that he could not have in teaching. Like Abi, he seems to strongly dislike being told what to do, and it is being autonomous and in control that is important.
<b>Negative experiences as a teacher – Moments of crisis and departure</b>	Not a crisis as such, but in (6) describes how there was not enough money in Post 16 teaching and so moved on, having taught for four years.	Nadir experience. Whilst the interview had started with having always wanted to be a teacher, here, she describes at length how the pressures of the job have eroded her enthusiasm and confidence, and she discusses the wider contexts of the stresses of the profession in a way that is reminiscent of a participant	In (11) describes how moving to another school that was LEA led to him having a 'useless' head of department, and that he had to start all over again, and having considered union jobs many times in the past, used this as a catalyst to move into working for the National Union of Teachers, having previously been a rep or involved as a voluntary

		<p>from the next generation, in discussing the negative effects of the job on mental health. There is also a strange metaphor, regarding the chipping away at a lump of fire – what this clearly represents is an erosion. She makes explicit reference to thinking of leaving teaching, but being trapped because of present circumstances. Does not actually depart, but the admission of wanting to leave and not being able to is significant.</p> <p>Also describes leaving a managerial position (15) to go to another school, and this is described significantly through the use of a peripetia and anagnorisis in an ironic turn: She highlights repeatedly that she did not envision the problems that she would face in her department, and the stresses that would make her unhappy, and this leads to her departure.</p>	<p>officer in various associations and divisions.</p>
<p><b>Negative experience as a teacher - Moments of Crisis and Resolution or Adapting</b></p>		<p>There is also an apology (2) in providing a lengthy justification of the choice of the career, highlighting the many positives; however, there is also some use of aporia, questioning and doubt, where she</p>	<p>Moving into the union role (12).</p>

		<p>wonders, in retrospect, whether she would have felt happier or more fulfilled had she chosen a different career, or even tried to work in industry or another type of environment, having gone immediately into education following her undergraduate study. This is expanded into a dialectical argument structure (3) where she is unable to resolve the positives and negatives, culminating in the statement 'I don't know'. There is something reminiscent here in Miller's ideas concerning the universality of the structure of tragedy in everyday life, in the frustrations Abi has had as a teacher, in not earning enough money or having the recognition that she feels that she is due for being within the profession. Could also be an example of negative dialectical, and anomie. There is also an Ironic Turn (5), where Abi reflects that despite being inspired to become a teacher by her experiences as a sixth form student, yet she finds that 'actually' she is not a good teacher of A Level, but she</p>	
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		has adapted to teach other year groups.	
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### Appendix 5.3 Summary Coalition Generational Cohort 2010-2015

Subject	Amy	Becky	Matthew
<b>Negative Childhood Experience of school</b>	N/A	N/A	Concessional Structure (2) claiming to have hated school, and cites this as being something that can help people to become good teachers, as they seek to address issues that they had had.
<b>Positive Childhood Experience of school</b>	(2) Reports through the retrospective-prospective structure of enjoying school and of playing the teacher following the formative experience of helping and supporting her brother (see below). Also has Elegy Structure (10) in praising her own experiences of school, acknowledging perhaps having 'rose-tinted glasses', as the memories of the past are used to praise a particular conception of teaching, and within that there is a criticism of the present. Early Apotheosis of supporting brother inspiring her attitude at school?	Retrospective-prospective (1 and 2) and early formative apotheosis (2) representing a pinnacle experience, where exceptional abilities as a student at school are revealed. Variations of the word 'love' and 'lovely' used as a passim throughout to describe the teachers and her experiences of school. She also makes use of the concessional structure, describing the apotheosis as 'cheesy', and this seems to be in response to how highly she regards the experience and may not wish to appear arrogant.	(4) see Positive Teacher – However, note that Matthew highlights both positive and negative aspects, but regards childhood schooling overall as negative.
<b>Negative Experience</b>	N/A	N/A	Concessional Structure (2 and 5) of

<p><b>Teacher at School</b></p>			<p>having teachers who were poor, yet this inspired positive teaching, to the extent that Matthew observes, in a statement that could apply to many of the male narratives that also employed the concessional structure, where he stated that <b>'I think it's quite useful for teachers who don't like school to go into teaching'</b> and furthermore, in Anecdote 5, where describing a teacher who he thought was a poor teacher but inspired him, he in his abstract statement said that 'I can be motivated by being scorned as well' and there are here elements of a dialectical argument, where Matthew specifies that between the two, it is the negative experience that was more vital in his becoming a teacher. In his further explanation, he describes how being a student from a particular background, who exhibited certain behaviours, gave him an insight into the lives of particular groups of students. This follows a broader trend where many males seem to identify with the students, and is contrasted with female narratives, especially from later generations, who seemed to more often identify, in their early lives, with</p>
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			<p>teachers. As with other teachers who use the concessional structure at this juncture in their careers, there is an explicit moral and social purpose referred to. Interestingly, he also refers to a 'symbolic idea', that the negative teacher is something that exists beyond just this individual anecdote and life story. Matthew is referring to something that he feels or thinks exists in culture.</p>
<p><b>Positive Experience Teacher at School</b></p>	<p>See above for the use of the Elegy Structure (10) to praise the teachers and childhood experiences of school. This is used to make a criticism of the academy model that took over the school where Amy took on her NQT year.</p> <p>Also retrospective-prospective discussion of an English teacher that she had at school (15) who she describes as being a further reason why she went into teaching, and she uses a semantic field linked to mental health to emphasise how he lacked conformity, and within the context of the broader interview, stands as a stark contrast to the</p>	<p>As discussed below, early apotheosis (2) where she achieves a particularly high grade in school that was celebrated by a teacher. Also refers to teachers as being inspirational, describing one in particular as being 'lovely' and 'nice'. Also describes how inspirational they were, and also that the attitudes that they displayed to their students was 'infectious'. For this teacher, the influence of a teacher relative and also teachers who taught her at school are cited as having a direct influence on her choice to enter the profession. 'Passion', 'enjoyment', 'brilliant'...etc. makes for a range of words that semantically indicate how the experience of school was</p>	<p>Retrospective-prospective (4) on the influence of a teacher he had had at school that on reflection causes Matthew to consider that this was an influence on becoming a teacher. Uses a number of stylistic repetition structural features, such as anaphora and diacope, to list or drive home the positive aspects of this person. Also, the person acts as an 'inspiration', a male equivalent of a goddess in the call to adventure.</p>

	academy model of control and lack of autonomy and individuality.	very pleasant, and this inspired her to follow her teachers' example to become a teacher itself.	
<b>Influence of relative who is a teacher</b>	N/A	Describes an aunt who was a teacher and then a head teacher (1) who was a major influence. Describes early experiences of seeing her aunt's classroom and school on certain days and, as with her inspiring teacher at school, this forms an impression of school as being a positive and pleasant place to work. The turn employed here is chiefly retrospective-prospective.	None
<b>Poor Academic Childhood Background</b>	N/A	N/A	Concessional Structure (2) – See experiences of teacher for more specific analysis. Also refers to the bullying Head of Department who mocks him for his degree, which he feels particularly sensitive about, and which forms his nadir experience.
<b>Strong Academic Childhood Background</b>	(2) See above	High academic performance is described in (2) in an early apotheosis, or high point. See discussion above.	Mixed. Not specified within anecdote, but highlights not having the subject specific degree.
<b>Working Class / Geographically significant Background</b>	N/A	N/A	Concessional Structure (2)
<b>Middle Class Background</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Positive Higher Education</b>	Only briefly referred to.	Brief reference to having enjoyed	N/A

		the course of study in literature from GCSE, through A Level and on to University.	
<b>Negative Higher Education</b>	N/A	See discussion of negative perception of University involvement in the schools direct route into teaching.	See discussion of negative discussion of University involvement in the PGCE. Does not discuss undergraduate.
<b>Did not intend to become a teacher, but did</b>	N/A	N/A	Concessional Structure (2) (6)
<b>Did intend to become a teacher from young age</b>	Interestingly, makes use of the concessional structure (1) whilst also highlighting that wanted to be a teacher from a young age. Also used the listing turn to emphasise this. Stresses altruistic reasons for becoming a teacher by listing the various other public sector professions that she would be unsuited to, also therefore subtly suggesting the appropriateness of her choice to become a teacher, whilst also achieving authenticity through a gambit of modesty. Also the use of the 'Retrospective-prospective' structure to highlight the significance of an early event, in this case helping a brother who had a speech and learning impediment when she	Highlights that did always want to be a teacher and nothing else (1 and 2) and cites an experience that seems to be an early apotheosis (2) where she achieves a particularly high grade in school that was celebrated by a teacher.	N/A

	<p>was herself a young child, is clearly close to her heart. Also has links to classical stages of the hero's journey.</p> <p>Also, highlights what seems to be an early apotheosis, when she teaches her brother with communication difficulties to speak. Highlights own exceptionalism.</p>		
<b>Positive Work Before Teaching</b>	<p>Took time out to work in a succession of jobs for a year before undertook training.</p>	<p>Makes brief reference to having had a year out after university, where she worked as a receptionist, which she enjoyed, before going into school for work, but this is not explored in depth.</p>	N/A
<b>Negative Work Before Teaching</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>PGCE</b>	<p>Use of the Ironic Structure, and this is used to show how the naive pre-career assumptions are challenged (3 and 4) and there is a recognition and realisation from Amy that the idea of perfection itself was not real. There is a sense of growing up, perhaps a bildungsroman, an awakening to reality, that seems appropriate given the age and career stage.</p>	N/A	<p>(6) and (12) and it is described as 'a sham'. There are therefore elements of the ironic structure, as Matthew extolls the virtues of research and proper training, yet bemoans the fact that this was not provided by the institution where he trained.</p>

<b>Schools Direct</b>	N/A	<p>Dialectical argument and retrospective-prospective (3 and 4) debating the positives and negatives of a more theoretical or practical route through to QTS, coming out as being more in favour of the practical route, despite having since left teaching, though not schools, and is highly positive about working with other teachers and mentors; however, is highly critical of University involvement in the Schools Direct programme and speaks at length at having attended very few seminars and lectures (less than five) and these leaving no impression on her. Hers was the first year of the Schools Direct Route, and she talks about being used as a 'Guinee pig' and acknowledges her own lack of theoretical knowledge, which does not overly concern her. This is an interesting contrast with those participants who have spoken very highly of University courses and course mentors.</p>	
<b>Positive Encounter Other Teachers</b>		<p>Describes positive influence, briefly, of myself and other teachers who supported her in her training, but this is not described in any detail or</p>	

		at great length.	
<b>Negative Encounter Other Teachers</b>		N/A	Yes. See below for negative experience of a school in (8) reference to 'Gorgons' in an academy chain with a high staff turn over.
<b>Positive Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>	Anecdote (5 and 8) seems to have some similarities to apotheosis, in that in contrasts with the negative (4) experience. There is a dialectical argument concerning the various merits and faults of working with a Head of Department or with a University mentor. See the dialectical argument (5 and 6).	Not overtly described, and University providers are seen as largely absent, other than for the fact that they come in and observe when they should, and that there were elements of the course available, but that these were not taken as there was a priority given to just being on the ground and teaching.	It is significant that this is absent.
<b>Negative Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>	Anecdote (4, 5 and 6) serves as a contrast to the positive one. This comes close to a nadir experience, where Amy experiences extreme doubt. Here, Amy is looking at a Head of Department who acts as a school-based mentor, and this is contrasted with the University mentor. It is worth considering ideas surrounding 'Judgementoring', as the issue seems to be with the position occupied by the school based mentor as the leader of a	See above discussion (5) regarding negative perception of course providers for the Schools Direct Programme. What is interesting about the anecdotes describing these is just the fact that they are not described, and for me, as a listener and reader who has been aware of the significance of course providers in other anecdotes, conspicuous by their absence. Not only does she make repeated reference to not attending courses, a lack of communication, and of no impression being made by them,	Mentor resigns early into his training, and there are elements of villanelle used in the description of her being 'broken' (12). Also makes references to the people running the course to be pleasant people yet they are also professionally inept. He may be experiencing a sense of anomie, especially as he is receiving little from the people he is expecting to look to for guidance.

	department.	there is a reference in the nadir experience to not having guidance and support. Listing turn, retrospective-prospective turn, and also the description of what is a nadir experience, an experience of crisis and departure. Clearly retrospective-prospective in that there is a clear re-evaluation of the past, present and future, based upon new experiences and reflection of old. The listing turn is used to emphasis the negative aspects of the jog, which are chiefly to do with workload and failure to manage that. What is interesting is the bemoaning of not having someone to support with dealing with the workload issue, whilst in an account from another teacher who had faced that problem in training had successfully sought the support and guidance of a mentor who had been able to offer pragmatic guidance and advice. As a reader, I was aware of this comparison, but of course she was not.	
<b>Experience Wider Change</b>	(7) Failed dialectical argument structure, in that there is no resolution or compromise for the	In (8) makes explicit reference to the academy chain model and the wider culture of having to obtain a C grade,	(13) 'a lovely little bonfire for them' to describe Gove and changes to the EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance). As

	<p>situation where there was pressure to achieve certain grades for the students when they were not capable of doing it themselves. There are features of repetition, and also of using strange phrases relating to parts of the teacher being in the students' work, which have featured in other accounts. Clearly there is discomfort with the moral compromise. The dialectical argument highlights the moral problem that arises. Also when discussing the academisation that occurred in her early career, she made use of the Ironic Turn (9), so show how her naïve expectations about what that meant were changed when she had a drastic realisation about the business nature of the model. This is significant as it highlights the general naivety teachers had when the academy model was introduced, and the Ironic structure has similarities to tragedy, in terms of anagnorisis, painting the academy chain in</p>	<p>and this links in to ideas about 'performativity' (Ball, 2003), though she does not make any specific reference to theorists.</p>	<p>a researcher, often contextualises his own experiences within wider, global movements and policies in education.</p>
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	the role of the villain.		
<b>Prescription vs. Autonomy</b>	(11) and also the earlier descriptions of the academy model. Makes use of the Midcourse Turn in terms of the genre shifting, as her story of teaching becomes negative, and she describes herself becoming a 'hypocrite'. The issues here seem to stem around the fact that she wanted to be an empowered teacher who was autonomous and strong, and under the academy model she has become controlled and morally compromised. This would represent the major nadir experience (more significant than the training episodes), as this stands in stark contrast to the proto-teacher that appeared in the childhood anecdote, where she had served as her own inspiration. This further emphasised in (14) where she uses more extreme language devices. The use of the passim for 'numbers' has elements of the villanelle structure, in terms of the obsessiveness and	Explicitly states that 'I just thought it's too formulaic. It's not creative' when discussing her experience of teaching the IGCSE at secondary school, when comparing to what she imagined teaching would be like in her precareer. Elements of the Ironic Turn, and of anagnorisis, in that Becky makes reference to wishing that she had known better, both before going into teaching and having left it. This turn is also emphasised through the use of the listing turn. There is also an element of the dialectical argument structure, as she debates the benefits of a creative approach to teaching, and of the success of getting her cohorts of students success in the IGCSE, which was restrictive and total lacking in creative approach. There is no happy resolution though, and Becky finds herself caught between two positions and a state of confusion. Ultimately, the workload arising from this situation led to her leaving the profession, though she states that she has mixed feelings	Midcourse Turn (7) and (8) listing turn to describe the difficult school. 'Everything changed' serves to show how drastic the change was in the abstract and at the start. Also in (10) Listing Turn and Dialectical Argument in debating with himself, and this reveals the conflict between the system and the individual. See (9) below for the highpoint where autonomy is achieved. Also see the use of the villanelle turn structure in both in 10 and throughout, revealing the obsessions of a person who is an outsider (Jason, 1980, P.141). The form is most famously used by Path and Thomas, and has associations with a thematic concern with fate and fatalism. Matthew makes repeated references through 'oppressive' places to work, and to 'bullies'. He also emphasises his own outsider status by repeatedly making references to working against or at odds with people who are associated with authority, by refusing to become such a figure himself, and through his choice to leave teaching. It is the inevitability of the system, and what it would do to him

	<p>extremity of emotions, and the simile, comparing the children to the dead, is also extreme. All of these elements mark these aspects as nadir, revealing that what Amy opposes, when in discussion with me, is the overly prescriptive and managerial approach of the academy model. It is particularly marked also in (11), and also in (16) and (17).</p>	<p>regarding this. Whilst she does not discuss the wider reasons behind it, the IGCSE is something that a number of secondary schools adopted as it was seen as easier than the usual GCSE as it had a 60% teacher assessed coursework element, so was seen as less demanding than the other GCSEs, and yet was valid for school league tables. Note that the description in the anecdote before, regarding the amount of work in such a situation was the nadir experience that led to her leaving the profession. IN Anecdote (7) she further hones in on the fact that it was the requirement to spend time completing ‘fifty’ drafts of coursework, the workload that required, and the guilt surrounding ‘engineering’ the success of the students, that was the professional nadir that led to her leaving. Guilt around coursework has been discussed by other teachers. She marks it as a nadir, however, in (8) through the extremity of language, using repetition of words like ‘hate’, which are in stark contrast to earlier words</p>	<p>were he to remain within it, that leads him to rebel, and to rage. He refers to leaving because he ‘cannot keep’ his ‘mouth shut’. Whilst drawing on the theory of the villanelle is useful to explore what repetition and the particular tone employed reveals, it is important to note that Matthew was not writing a poem, and was not using other elements of the formal structure, but the structural element of the obsessive repetition was present. Tgis is repeated in (14) for description of negative encounter with the ultimate nemesis, in the bullying Head Teacher. Also makes extensive use of ‘The Emblem Turn’, to look at the symbol of the office (without books), and also of the office outside of school that teachers are required to set cover and travel to. This again reflects similar anecdotes from other teachers.</p>
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		linked semantically to 'love', and also statements like 'I couldn't cope with pressures or stresses and unhappiness from every kind of angle'.	
<b>Positive experiences as a teacher – Moments of Success</b>	The apotheosis occurs in Anecdote 13, where Amy describes, using the descriptive-meditative structure, a lesson that is the opposite in form and structure to the teacher-led lessons that she has overtly criticised in other anecdotes, and she calls this a great lesson precisely because it was not teacher-led, and because the students were actively engaged in something that they cared about.	There is some discussion of getting students to achieve C grades, but this is not an apotheosis. In fact, there is a sense of guilt around this success, and could be seen as part of a wider nadir episode at the school.	An apotheosis (9) occurs in that Matthew has a positive experience where he is able to get 120 students on a media course at his final school (an oppressive school that treats working class kids poorly and where the SLT look down on students and the community and which does not achieve good results) to achieve strong results. This is a clear example of an apotheosis, in that although this lacks some of the heightened language from other examples (perhaps also because of the nature of the manner in which Matthew speaks, which is quiet, reflective, and with a tendency to be somewhat gloomy), it does resolve, heroically, the dominant themes and concerns raised in the nadir experience (and Matthew himself already highlighted that negative experiences were more vital for him than positive ones). The highest point of development for Matthew comes in being able to actually do something

			<p>'rebellious' against an oppressive SLT (allowing a thematic slaying of the equivalent to the gorgons or Jabba'); achieves excellent results for his students (resolving his own concerns from his poor experiences of school) and is consequently highly regarded both by his employers, and, more importantly, for himself, which neatly addresses his worries that he may have been a 'terrible teacher'; however, despite this anecdote being an apotheosis, there is an ironic use of a deliberately bathetic conclusion: 'I'm not a terrible teacher. I then left.' This ironic turn serves to provide a sting in the tail of the tale through the introduction of the commonplace. So terrible were Matthew's experiences in the education system that whilst he was able to redeem himself to the extent of maintaining his own heroic status, he is unable to complete the boon to mankind that could have been achieved by staying in the profession. The irony, then, is that this teacher who has overcome these obstacles is so worn down that he leaves anyway. This bathetic ironic turn is all the more poignant by its commonality and</p>
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			simplicity, especially after a lengthy apotheosis which was stylistically a listing turn, where a number of achievements were described. The pinnacle and climax are deliberately undermined by the skilful insertion of the anticlimactic.
<b>Negative experiences as a teacher – Moments of crisis and departure</b>	Anecdote (17) Variation of the retrospective-prospective and dialectical as ponders how unlikely it is that she will remain in the profession, given the pressures of performance management and academisation. Repeats the phrase 'I don't know' multiple times, seeming to indicate a sense of anomie.	See above!	(3) Also has a nadir experience at an academy school (8) where bullying Head of Department and colleagues are referred to as 'gorgons'. In Anecdote (10) - Listing Turn and Dialectical Argument in debating with himself, and this reveals the conflict between the system and the individual. Also (14) explicitly discusses that he has chosen to leave teaching, only returning occasionally between contracts working as a private researcher hired by charities...etc. and multinational organisations, which he is not always happy working for.
<b>Negative experience as a teacher - Moments of Crisis and Resolution or Adapting</b>		In Anecdote (9), there is not exactly a midcourse turn, but there is a description of leaving teaching but remaining working in schools as a teaching assistant, where she is able to work closely with students, without the pressures associated with teaching. In a way, she avoids	

		<p>the midcourse turn. As teaching became prescriptive and stressful, she remained true to her own value system and what she wanted to do, and remained doing the actual work that she wanted, though that was not actually being employed as a class teacher.</p>	
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## Appendix 5.4 Summary Conservative Generational Cohort 2015 - Present

Subject	Sue	Jules
<b>Negative Childhood Experience of school</b>		<p>This is a nadir experience (10) in that it serves as a counterpoint or set up the later apotheosis, where Jules can be seen to finally defeat, thematically, the lows encountered at this nadir experience, where he was bullied by one teacher, and let down by a head teacher, and at risk from being excluded from his grammar school for not being academically successful. The Headmaster is the villain of this piece (expanded on in anecdote 11), and whilst there is not an obvious emblem, as there is in other anecdotes from other teachers describing negative experiences with those in authority, it may be significant that there is an obstinacy about the head teacher, who wants to remove the problem. Where he writes that 'We got hauled up in front of this headmaster's office' (Phatic following 11), there is again the idea of the people in trouble being mobile, and the authority figure being stationary. In none of these episodes do the figures in authority appear outside of the office.</p>
<b>Positive Childhood Experience of school</b>	<p>Described broadly happy experiences of going to an outstanding all girls school, and of attending a programme at that school that supported her in becoming the first person in her family to attend university, something that she will do in her first promotion at a new school, indicating a circular structure.</p>	
<b>Negative Experience Teacher at School</b>		<p>See above.</p>
<b>Positive Experience Teacher at School</b>		

<b>Influence of relative who is a teacher</b>		
<b>Poor Academic Childhood Background</b>		Partially (see 10) in that was generally successful, but did have the experience of the not achieving equivalent to peers in grammar school in one subject and being threatened with expulsion. This acts as a nadir experience and sets up the later Apotheosis. Interesting that this male who attended grammar school and earned a PhD was largely negative in his recollections of school, whilst less successful female participants were more positive in their recollections. General trend?
<b>Strong Academic Childhood Background</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Working Class / Geographically significant Background</b>	Middle Class	Middle Class
<b>Middle Class Background</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Positive Higher Education</b>		PhD. Not described in detail.
<b>Negative Higher Education</b>		
<b>Did not intend to become a teacher, but did</b>	<p>Concessional turn (1 and 3) in that talks about wanting to join the library prison service, based upon love of a particular film</p> <p>Retrospective-prospective concerning the impact of the film when she was younger.</p> <p>Midcourse Turn introduced as it was a significant departure to move from being a librarian to become a teacher. What seems shocking is how quickly it happens. The HR manager of a school, faced with a recruitment and retention crisis, finds out that the new school librarian has a relevant</p>	

	degree, and so she is approached in October and by December is signed up for the course. It is highlighted that there is a realisation that the position of a school librarian has similar constraints as she had faced before, in that you cannot become a better paid or more successful school librarian. The structure of the anecdote closes with a summation that highlights how swift the enrolment onto the course had been.	
<b>Positive Work Before Teaching</b>		Some discussion of enjoying making a positive contribution in initial career as a scientist before negative experiences drove to teaching, but in a general sense. Most experiences of work described are negative. There is discussion of enjoying training people and then of privately mentoring students.
<b>Negative Work Before Teaching</b>	Anecdote 1 describes how there is a 'glass ceiling' in the library service, and there were limitations in terms of career progression. Working in the library Sue did not match the ideal expectations that she had had when she was younger.	Midcourse turn and retrospective-prospective 7, 8 and 9 – Moves into teaching at a relative mature age as is not getting the recognition or respect in previous employment. Relates negative experience as a catalyst to move into teaching. Makes use of the listing turn, to pile on the various indignities and unreasonable behaviour of the previous employer, and the resolution comes in a drastic midcourse turn where Jules decides, seemingly on the spur of the moment, to make a drastic change in career direction, and this highlighted with the use of an expletive.
<b>PGCE</b>	Yes – Negative experience as an additional part through the SCITT program.	No
<b>SCITT</b>	Anecdotes 3 and 4, highlighting the issues of starting off as an unqualified teacher without any of the formal aspects of training (5). Describes having to learn through observation of colleagues,	Elements of dialectical argument in the debate between theory and practice from a teacher who already has a science doctorate and who comes from industry. See support from mentor (Anecdotes 2, 3 and 4)

	but without the formal aspects of what to look for this is described as having to look at things 'blind'; however, the description of the course is of a range of deliverers providing training in a range of aspects.	Reasoning for preferring practice over theory (6)
<b>Positive Encounter Other Teachers</b>	Refers to learning from colleagues in school.	A listing turn used as a stylistic feature. The positive description of teachers who are not out for themselves and who have a moral purpose also contrasts with the experiences that he had in his previous employment as a scientist in the pharmaceutical industry.
<b>Negative Encounter Other Teachers</b>		
<b>Positive Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>	Description of an inspirational teacher from when she was an UQT who acted as an unofficial mentor. Links in with the heroic idea of the good wizard or with the encounter with the goddess. In this retrospective-prospective turn, there is the repeated use of the word 'magic' in describing her teaching, and there is also the element of their being someone who has the mastery of the two worlds in that the person has authority but who is also caring (11). See below. Dialectical argument? There is a comparison. (10)	Uses listing turn as a stylistic feature within a dialectical argument, exploring the individual strengths he has a teacher that are undermined when it goes wrong and he is required to seek help and support, and the resolution of the argument lies in finding that it is a strength to have the maturity and professionalism to seek the support of those who are more experienced. (Anecdote 2, 3 and 4)
<b>Negative Influence of Mentors and or Course Providers</b>	Elements of dialectical turn in that there is a debate between getting support between colleagues in school against the assigned mentor, who was the Executive Head Teacher, for the NQT year, whilst the mentor within the department for the trainee year was more positive. (10)	

<b>Experience other leaders</b>	Sue uses an emblematic turn (7) to use the description of the office of the CEO of the academy chain to undermine authority. As well as describing an empty office that has a desk with no personal adornments, post-it-notes or other signs of work (just a computer and a phone), there is also an extended discussion of the lack of actual presence of the CEO, the person in charge. The use of the 'we' to describe everyone other than the CEO when comparing working habits, is subversive.	
<b>Experience Wider Change</b>		
<b>Prescription vs. Autonomy</b>		A minor anecdote (14) investigating some onerous aspects of administering homework using the dialectical turn is present, but this is chiefly questioning the effectiveness of particular approaches.
<b>Positive experiences as a teacher – Moments of Success</b>		With a single student, and this counts as a pinnacle experience, where he inspires a student with autism that echoes a famous televised moment from one of the 'Educating –' series. This counts as the highest point in the development of the narrative as a whole, and reconciles a number of themes. Firstly, he was the student who, because of academic difficulties, was bullied or at danger of exclusion from school because of the actions and attitudes of teachers he encountered as a student in the private sector, and also as a resolution of the theme when he was a frustrated employee who was not being rewarded or acknowledged for the work he was doing: in this pinnacle anecdote, those frustrations find happy resolution as he enables a student who is on the autism spectrum to achieve in front of other teachers and her peers. This apotheosis (13) is signified by

		<p>the use of the phrase ‘the biggest thing I’ve had this year’, which is a superlative, highlighting that, at least grammatically and mathematically, that this is the pinnacle experience of the narrative as a whole, yet is also acknowledged with a concessional turn used as a stylistic feature, ‘it sounds silly’, as if acknowledging the potential cynical reading by the interviewer, which actually serves to reveal the importance of the episode. The semantic field of success, the comparison to the ‘shitty’ aspects of the job, and the idea of something being worthwhile, as well as this coming from a student with special educational needs, marks this as an apotheosis that counteracts the earlier nadir episodes, or low points, neatly.</p>
<p><b>Negative experiences as a teacher – Moments of crisis and departure</b></p>	<p>Chooses to leave because of lack of opportunity and because of stress. Uses a semantic field linked to warfare to describe stress – ‘killing’ and ‘waiting for a bomb to go off’. Note that does not leave teaching, but does leave the academy system to go to a LEA school.</p>	
<p><b>Negative experience as a teacher - Moments of Crisis and Resolution or Adapting</b></p>		<p>See earlier anecdotes from teacher training and coping with behavioural problems, but does not really count as a crisis moment.</p>