# How an ecological interpretation of agency can aid our understanding of the 'storied lives' of the Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinator.

## Professional Doctorate in Education

## 2022

## Judith Penikett

## Summary

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) is a nationally adopted qualification in Wales at Key Stages 4 and 5. This study focused upon the Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinator (WBC) and how they contend with challenges or take advantage of (potential) opportunities the role creates.

It considered how schools might act to create more positive opportunities and outcomes for agency by framing it ecologically. By explaining the impact of material, cultural and structural factors on the practice certain contextual factors which constrain and/or enable agency were identified.

A qualitative approach utilising semi-structured interviews and narrative was used to elicit responses and to bring an understanding to their stories of practice. An inductive analysis yielded two latent themes: Institutional influence and influence of talk. This study makes two claims:

- A school may create a more positive and active ecology by shaping the environmental conditions for practitioners to engage in Talk-in-Practice and,
- the outcomes of Talk-in-Practice may enable and enrich the practitioner's sense of agency.

In relation to curriculum reform the WBQ has been used as an example of change. The wider purpose of this study has been to discover the of the impact of the change and how practitioners can be supported during such times.

(201 words)

# Contents                                                                    Pages

## Acknowledgements

My grateful thanks are extended to the fifteen WBCs who gave of their time to recount to me their stories of practice.

Similarly, without the continued support and belief of my family I could not have completed this dissertation.

A final thank you to my good friend Emmajane who has always said 'you can do this' and to my supervisors for their patience.

## List of figures

# Glossary of terms

| | |
|---|---|
| ALN | Additional learning Needs |
| Capped 9 score | The Capped 9 score is a Performance measure calculating the average of the score for each individual learner in the cohort, capped at a specified volume of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications |
| CI | Critical incidents |
| CIT | Critical incident Technique |
| CSC | Central South Consortium |
| EAL | English as a second language |
| eFSM | Pupils eligible for free school meals (household annual income of < £16,000) Proxy of socio-economic disadvantage. |
| ESTYN | Education and Training Inspectorate for Wales |
| GCSE | General Certificate of Secondary Education |
| GCE | General Certificate of Education |
| KS2 | Key Stage 2 – Years 4- 6 – Pupils aged 7-11 years |
| KS3 | Key Stage 3 – Years 7-9 – Pupils aged 11-14 years |
| KS4 | Key Stage 4 – Years 10 and 11 – Pupils aged 14-16 years |
| KS5 | Key Stage 5 – Years 12 and 13 – Pupils aged 16-19 years |
| L1 | Level 1 – KS4 or post 16 qualification – equivalent GCSE grades D-G |
| L2 | Level 2 – end of KS4 qualification - equivalent GCSE grades A*-C |
| L2 E+M | Level 2 threshold figure of 5 GCSE qualification including Maths and English at C grade or above |
| L3 | Level 3 – post 16 qualification |
| Literacy Measure | Calculates the average of the scores for all individual learners in the cohort, taking the best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs awarded to a learner: GCSE English language, GCSE Welsh language (first language only), GCSE English literature or GCSE Welsh literature. It is one GCSE in size. |
| NAW | National Assembly for Wales |

| | |
|---|---|
| NQT | Newly Qualified Teacher |
| Numeracy measure | Calculates the average of the scores for all individual learners in the cohort, taking the best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs awarded to a learner: GCSE mathematics or GCSE mathematics – numeracy. It is one GCSE in size. |
| PGCE | Post Graduate Certificate in Education |
| SCC | Skills Challenge Certificate |
| School Categorisation | Each secondary school is placed into one of four colour-coded support categories which trigger a tailored support package. The least support for improvement is given to GREEN schools (up to 4 days of support), YELLOW schools (up to 10 days of support), AMBER schools (up to 15 days of support) and REDs schools (up to 25 days of support) |
| Science Measure | Calculates the average of the scores for all individual learners in the cohort, taking the best grade from science GCSEs awarded to a learner. Currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners: GCSE biology; GCSE chemistry; GCSE physics; GCSE science (double award); GCSE applied science (double award); and GCSE applied science (single award) It is one GCSE in size |
| SLT | Senior Leadership Team |
| TLR | Teaching and Leadership responsibility |
| WAG | Welsh Assembly Government |
| WB | Welsh Baccalaureate |
| WBC | Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinator |
| WBQ | Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification |
| WG | Welsh Government |
| WISERD | Wales Institute of Social & Economic Research, Data & Methods |
| WJEC | Welsh Joint Education Committee |
| WBQ Measure | Calculates the average of the scores for the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate awards for all individual learners in the cohort, whether it is the Foundation (Level 1) or the National (Level 2) award: Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate); and National Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate) |
| Y13 | Year 13 – second year of Key Stage 5 |
| UCAS | Universities and Colleges Admissions Service |

## Appendix

## Prologue

*Who can say what teachers think they are up to...? Who indeed? To say that teachers are the ones who understand, know and can say seems so obvious that it is beneath reporting.*

*But in the often odd, sometimes upside-down world of social research, the obvious news must be reported and repeated: The secret of teaching is to be found in the local detail and the everyday life of teachers; teachers can be the richest and most useful source of knowledge about teaching; those who hope to understand teaching must turn at some point to teachers themselves (Ayres 1992, p. v).*

## Introduction

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (hereafter WBQ) is a distinctive Welsh qualification which was created to meet the diverse needs of young people (Welsh Joint Education Committee 2014). This study focuses upon the role of the Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinator (hereafter WBC) and how they contend with challenges or take advantage of the (potential) opportunities the role creates. The WBQ is not a statutory qualification and nor is it compulsory for pupils to study or for centres to provide. Instead, its inclusion within the curriculum has been encouraged through the principle of 'universal adoption' (NAW 2015, p.1) which Estyn advise is good practice as it is '… at its most successful in schools where it is a compulsory element of the curriculum' (Estyn 2012, para 40).

In relation to curriculum reform the WBQ is used as an example as it has been considered a significant change within the Welsh education system (Jenkins et al. 1997). As such the wider purpose of this study is to discover the impact of change within the curriculum and how practitioners can be supported during these times of change.

Currently, there has been no graduate or post graduate subject-based qualification for the practitioner regarding the WBQ. Therefore, a WBC would begin teaching and co-ordinating this qualification as a non-specialist. There are approximately 185 secondary schools in Wales (Welsh Government 2019) the majority of which have a designated WBC. As the WBQ is currently a performance measure (NAW 2019) for secondary schools the WBC role, whilst relatively new, is considered pivotal and those who co-ordinate the WBQ have a distinct middle-leader role within the Teaching, Learning and Responsibility (hereafter TLR) structure of the school. This research aims to provide an understanding of the lives of those positioned at the "front line" of delivering a new curriculum.

### The Context

1987 marked the end of an era in which the Welsh Office Education Department played no part in the development of curriculum policy (Daugherty et al. 2000) and heralded the arrival of 'democratic devolution'. The arrival of administrative and democratic devolution in Wales had a significant impact on secondary education. The Welsh Office publications *A Bright Future* (1995) and *Wales 2010: Creating our futures* (1993) suggested the development of a WBQ, more than any other initiative, provided a means to address the inadequacies of educational performance in Wales when compared to competitors within the UK and overseas (Jenkins et al. 1997).

The document *Wales 2010: Creating our futures* (1993) made clear that the development of a WB 'struck a greater chord' (Jenkins et al, 1997, p.1) as it addressed the:

- inadequacies of educational performance in Wales in relation to the rest of the UK and other competitor countries,

- perceived narrowness of the 'A Level' curriculum,

- need to raise the status of vocational qualifications and

- primacy of education in achieving higher economic performance and competitive advantage for the individual and Wales as a whole.

The newly established National Assembly for Wales (hereafter NAW) having secured political devolution in 1997 was given responsibility for the governance of key policy areas including education in 1999. Subsequently, the Welsh Assembly Government (hereafter WAG) negotiated with Whitehall the powers within the Education Act (2002) to vary any or all of the curriculum provisions of the 1988 Education Act. The WAG was now positioned at the forefront of debate regarding the school curriculum in Wales (Daugherty et al. 2003, p.251).

As the devolved administration began to dissociate itself from the neoliberal policies of previous London-based administrations; including Thatcher's New Right principles and Blair's "third way" Labourism three stages of policymaking in education in Wales commenced (Egan 2017). The initial stage, from 1999, observed a seemingly experimental approach by the devolved Labour Assembly Government, in which an all-Wales alternative was developed to counter the rhetoric of choice and competition characterised by the educational policy of Westminster (Reynolds 2008). The publication of *The Learning Country (2001)* was considered to be 'a radical departure… providing Wales with an education system based on different social principles' (Jones and Roderick 2003, p.225). This period was characterised by the development of a distinctive curriculum. This included the Foundation Phase and WBQ. The creation of this all-Wales alternative sought to foster trust and collaboration between policymakers and practitioners (Jones 2011; Power 2016) and to put "clear red water" (Morgan 2002) between Westminster and Welsh educational policy (Moon 2012).

The second stage of policy making from 2010 began when the PISA results showed that Wales had performed poorly in relation to its national and international counterparts (Andrews 2011; 2014).  Consequently, this period saw a growth in accountability measures, an increase in the use of data and of performance measures within education. In addition, a greater focus on literacy and numeracy, the introduction of a programme of national testing (Egan 2017) and the redesign of GCSE qualifications in English and Maths were initiatives also implemented.

The third stage of education policymaking began (Egan 2017) with the introduction of the *National Mission* (WG 2017a), a suite of improvements focussed on the "co-construction" of policy with professionals and other stakeholders. This collaborative and collegiate way of working (WG 2017a) was accompanied by a reduction in external accountability (NAW 2018) and an increase in democratic and internal accountability (Biesta et al. 2015; Cochran-Smith et al. 2018; Fullan et al. 2015).

A subsequent review of the accountability system for schools (WG 2019) at Key Stage 4 (hereafter KS4) found that the existing system and its use of performance measures had yielded negative and unintended consequences. While new evaluation and improvement arrangements, which were to replace the current accountability system, were in-development (p.4) WG launched interim KS4 measures which required the attainment of specific qualifications.
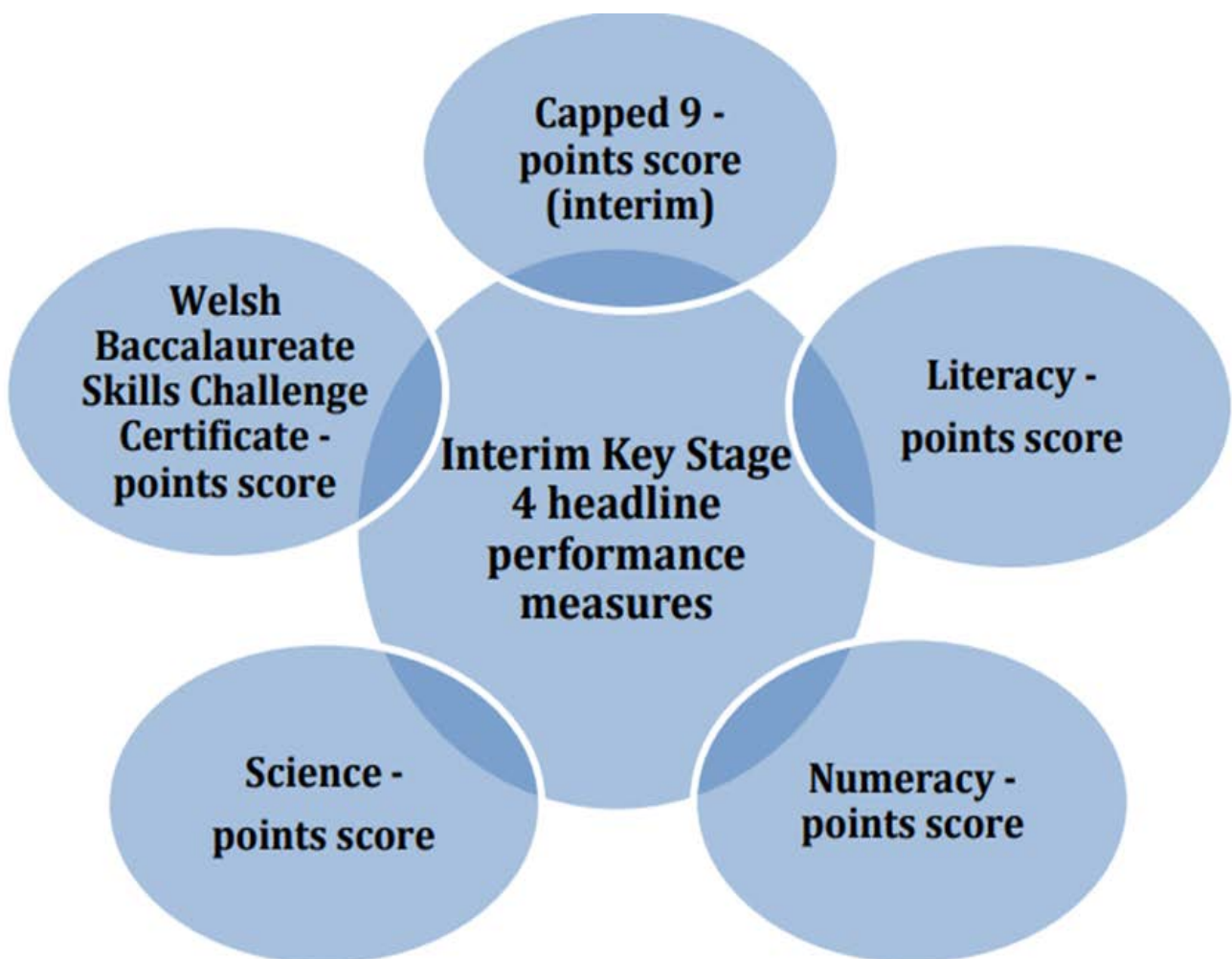


*Figure 1: The KS4 interim performance measures (WG 2019, p.10)*

These included five headline measures (Figure 1):

1.    Capped 9 measure (interim)

2.    Literacy measure

3.    Numeracy measure

4.    Science measure

5.    Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure

The Capped 9 measure calculates each learner's average score from their best 9 grades at GCSE level or equivalent. Three of the nine grades must include literacy, numeracy and science (GCSEs only) while the remaining six slots were to reflect the learner's best six remaining qualifications (Figure 2) (WG 2019, p.11). Of note, literacy was also a standalone performance measure, as were numeracy and science. The Welsh Baccalaureate SSC qualification could count towards the other six awards which make up the Capped 9 measure and would standalone alone as a measure, at Foundation Level 1 or National Level 2.

| No* | Slot | | Requirement |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Literacy slot | Subject specific requirements** (GCSEs only) | Best result of first awarding of: Welsh first language or English language or Welsh literature or English literature |
| 2 | Numeracy slot | | Best result of first awarding of: mathematics – numeracy or mathematics |
| 3 | Science slot | | Best result of first awarding of (currently limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners): biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award) |
| 4 5 6 7 8 9 | 'Other six' (GCSEs or equivalent volume of qualifications) | Best six remaining qualification awards*** | All qualifications approved/designated for pre-16 delivery in Wales can count, subject to usual discounting rules and excluding Essential Skills Wales qualifications.

The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualification can count towards one of these slots where it features in a learner's best remaining awards. |

*Figure 2: An overview of the Capped 9 Points score (WG 2019, p.11)*

At KS4, the WBQ has been part of the published performance measure since 2018 and schools are judged on their students' achievement of the Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC hereafter). Similarly, at post-16 performance indicators include the Advanced level SCC and is included as an A-level equivalent within the value-added measure. These performance measures remain in conflict within the third stage of education policy making (Egan 2017) despite WG commitment to the *National Mission* (WG 2017a) 'to support deeper collaborations between schools and secure the raising of standards for all learners' (WG 2019, p.5).

## The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

The WBQ was designed to provide a broader range of experiences than traditional GCSE and GCE qualification at KS4 and 5 (WG 2019). A student can achieve the WBQ at three levels: Foundation (Level 1), National (Level 2) and Advanced (Level 3) (WG 2019, p.6). At all levels, the WBQ comprises the successful completion of multiple elements, namely the Skills Challenge Certificate and the other supporting qualifications (Figure 3).
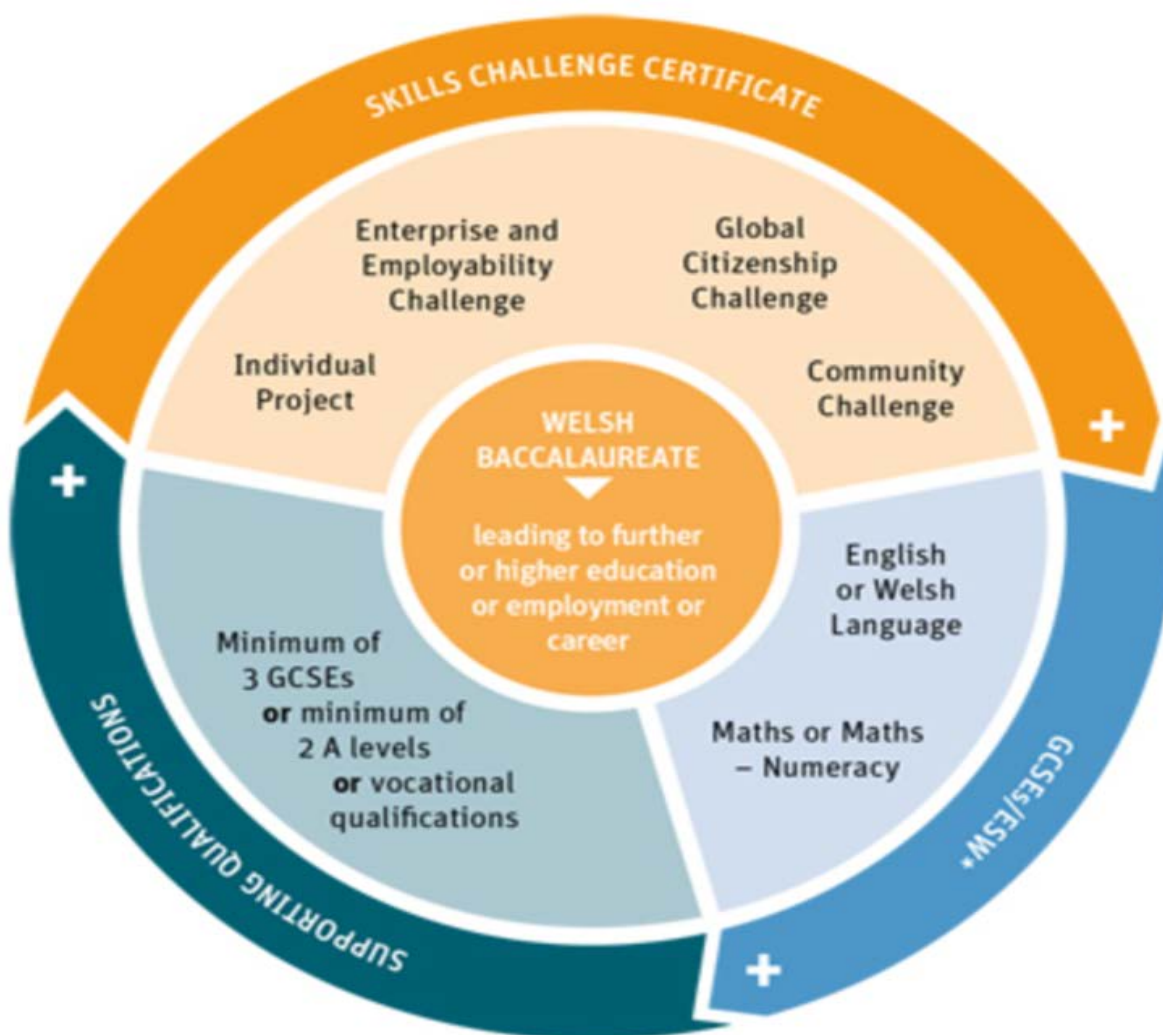


*Figure 3: Structure of the WBQ (WJEC)*

There are four components of the SCC (WJEC 2015):

- The Individual Project provides opportunity to research an area of personal interest while developing a range of skills e.g., Independence, Digital Literacy, Planning and Organisation (WJEC 2021, p.11).

- The Enterprise and Employability Challenge encourages students to develop their creative and enterprise skills. They liaise with employers and collaborate with others to develop a business idea (WJEC 2021, p.16).

- The Global Citizenship Challenge requires students to become ethically informed citizens of Wales by increasing their awareness of global issues, events and perspectives. (WJEC 2021, p.21). (See Appendix 6).

- The Community Challenge encourages learners to become active citizens through their participation in a community, social or neighbourhood project working individually or in a team. (WJEC 2021, p.25).

The WJEC (2015) clearly state the practical pedagogy of each SCC is very different from other WJEC qualifications particularly the GCSE. Teachers are required to support learners to - action plan, identify resources and risk, and select and collate information. Additionally, teachers are required to impart the use of digital techniques, how to assess the credibility of information etc (WJEC 2021, p.13) (Appendix 5).

The demands placed on the WBQ teacher and the WBC are unlike those required of a history or physics teacher where knowledge and content are the main drivers. The role of the WBQ teacher is to support the learner in their skills development, while the student decides the topic and therefore the content of each challenge. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for students to undertake the WBQ, i.e., it is not compulsory (WG 2015) the policy directive is for all schools to include it in the suite of qualifications they offer all students. WG (2015) assert that every learner should have the opportunity to benefit from the WBQ and that it should be offered to all in line with their policy of universal adoption.

Consequently, the aims of the WBQ are to (WJEC 2015):

- develop and assess a wide range of essential and employability skills;

- promote the value and development of skills for education, life and work;

- provide opportunities to develop and assess skills through purposeful, meaningful and engaging learning experiences;

- make learning relevant and be set-in real-life contexts for real-life purposes;

- to build on and align with the wider curriculum and associated learning frameworks.

Since its introduction in 2001 the WBQ has become a focus of scrutiny. The first review, during the pilot phase of 2001-2007, was undertaken by internal evaluators from the WJEC and University of Bath (Hayden and Thomas 2007). The first iteration of the WBQ was 'heavily influenced by the IB programme' (Hayden and Thompson 2007, p.86) (Appendix 3 and 4) and was authored by former head teachers. The 'revised' and more 'rigorous' WBQ (NAW 2015, p.1) was commissioned within a policy context of increased political pressure to improve Wales's relative underperformance nationally and internationally. With the subsequent publication of the *Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19*, the revised WBQ was positioned at the heart of the new qualifications system through the policy of universal adoption. (Appendix 1 and 2).  Notable and subsequent reviews have included:

- The Education and Training Inspectorate for Wales's evaluation (2012) (hereafter Estyn) signalled the conception of the more 'rigorous' and 'revised' iteration (WG 2015, p.1)

- WG's research to inform *Successful Futures* recommended 'continuing support for the …. WBQ at KS4 and beyond' (p.15).

- Qualifications Wales's review (2017) highlighted the need to improve the capacity and expertise of practitioner delivery.

- Qualifications Wales's review of the SCC (2017) suggested rationalising the number of SCCs.

- WG's announcement (2018) that the Level 2 measures would now include - *The School Performance Measure* (WG February, 2019) reiterated the inclusion of the WBQ (and SCC) in 'The Capped 9 Measure' and have its own the 'Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate Measure'.

- *Bacc to the Future* (NAW April 2019) provided guidance regarding universal adoption of the WBQ and how the WBQ could support the skills curriculum proposed for adoption in 2022 (Donaldson 2017).

A central facet of educational reform in Wales has been the principle of subsidiarity. This principle aims to both respect and foster responsibility at the individual practitioner level (Newton 2020), to encourage ownership and apposite decision making by those who are the closest to the pedagogic process. The rationale for this curriculum reform (discernible in Donaldson 2016a; 2016b) is its idea of 'stakeholder involvement' and close alignment with the concept of 'distributive leadership' (Newton 2020).  This principle is reflected within the third stage of education policy making (Egan 2017) which highlights a reduction in external accountability (NAW 2018) and an

increase in internal accountability (Biesta et al. 2015; Cochran-Smith et al. 2018; Fullan et al. 2015). This is in contrast to the first review of the WBQ where the conception, introduction and review of the WBQ can be located within the first stage; this was then followed by the accountability measures of the second stage of policy making (Egan 2017).

## The Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinator

All WBCs begin teaching the qualification as a non-specialist and of consequence, the National Education Union Cymru have reported the many difficulties Head Teachers encounter in finding teachers who 'specialise' in the WBQ (NAW 2019, p.52).

The terms professional development and professional learning have long been used interchangeably within the literature of professional practice.  Whereas the term professional development implies the delivery of some kind of information, Timperley contends, 'Professional learning … challenges previous assumptions and creates new meanings [and] requires transformative rather than additive change to teaching practice' (2010, pp.4-5). While attendance at professional development events is of value in terms of providing information and guidance to ensure the maintenance and administration of programmes, Timperley argues that, 'The knowledge and skills developed through professional learning must … [be] both practical and … be used to solve teaching and learning challenges encountered in the future' (2011, p.7).

Practitioners need to be equipped for future practice-based challenges and so require support to assist learners effectively. The Children, Young People and Education Committee (March 2019) concluded that many WBQ practitioners 'lacked confidence' in delivering the qualification as the SCC was 'so different' to other qualifications (NAW 2019, p.52). However, Qualifications Wales (2019) considered that practitioners became more confident the longer they taught it, a view shared by Estyn (2012). Nevertheless, as classroom-based situations are ever changing a reliance on professional development alone is insufficient to deal with the emergence of change. In order to deal with change successfully the qualities of adaptability, lateral and divergent thinking are essential (Jones 2017).  Professional learning in its best form should be active, continuing, reflective and evaluative. Similarly, it should be collaborative and not constrained to a linear understanding of future possibilities and ways of working (Jones 2017).

In 2012 the Estyn evaluation stated that the WBQ teaching provision was most successful was where the Head and the SLT were in strong support of the qualification, and where the leadership of the WBC was effective and well-organised. Estyn characterise the WBC as a 'knowledgeable middle or senior leader' who has 'an established ethos of teamwork' and who 'plan[s] and share[s] good practice' (Section 60). Within this 2012 evaluation Estyn considered the role of the WBC pivotal to its overall success in schools. In keeping with this, Hoyle's (1972) original definition of

the extended professional characterises the individual as an effective practitioner who is aware of the wide-ranging dimension of their work, and who works collegiately and in collaboration with others as they 'locate classroom practice within a larger social framework' (Hoyle 2008, p.291). They endeavour to keep colleagues informed while demonstrating a willingness to work with practice-based dilemmas (Elwyn et al. 2015). In contrast, Hoyle's (1972) restricted professional is characterised as being a risk-averse individual 'whose perspective was restricted to the classroom [and who] relied on experience as a guide to success' (Hoyle 2008, p.291). Consequently, their restricted nature limited discussion with others as they engaged little with the wider profession. Instead, they employed strategies which reproduced school-based norms. As such the dichotomy of extended and restricted as presented by Hoyle is useful as a starting point for further discussion and analysis; but not an end in itself. Additionally, Margolis's (2011) definition of a teacher-leader helps to bring further understanding to the WBC role. A teacher-leader is characterised as teaching pupils and 'leading teachers in some capacity' (p.292). The duality of role has risen in importance as Heads now require a teacher-leader 'to assist in providing transformative instructional learning and professional development '(p.292) to their colleagues.

The NAW publication *Bacc to the Future* (2019) argues that the success of the WBQ is premised upon having a designated WBC with a dedicated department: 'It's down to the quality of...... the Welsh Bacc co-ordinator, how much time they've got for ... supporting their members who are doing the qualification with pupils....and whether they've been supported enough' (p.53).

### Enactment of the role

The role of the WBC is an outcome of the universal adoption of the WBQ. While Ball (1994) argues a policy does not tell a practitioner exactly what to do, it does set out a range of practical challenges and choices which have to be thought through. Whilst schools have different capacities for managing a policy and for formulating their 'take' on it (Braun et al. 2010) each response will be unique to the context. This may mean that the policy becomes open to interpretation and/or dispute (Ball 1994; 2008). Of the 185 secondary schools in Wales (WG 2019) some are Welsh medium, bilingual, or faith-based settings, some have higher-than-average (whether compared against the all-Wales or Local Authority figures) pupils who are eligible for free school meals (eFSM), pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) and pupils who have Additional Learning Needs (ALN) within their cohorts. These differing contexts are recognised by NAW (2019) who acknowledge that 'the variation in approach to the WB can be attributed to a range of [such] factors' (p.22).

Policy enactment involves a creative process of interpretation and translation of the policy text. This re-contextualisation is dependent upon whether the policy itself is mandated, strongly recommended or suggested (Wallace 1991). Through a policy of universal adoption, the WBQ has

had a significant impact on the curriculum, timetable and the TLR structure of the school. Moore and Clarke (2016) sought to examine if tensions existed within a teacher's practice before and after the introduction of a mandated government policy. Similar to the findings of Day et al. (2005) Moore and Clarke found there to be no substantial difference between the teachers' own preferred classroom practices and those embedded within the 'new' central policy directive. However, tensions relating to curriculum content were acknowledged within the revised pedagogical approach posited. From their study they argued that a continuum of viewpoints exists where some teachers were broadly supportive of the central policy, some rejected or resisted certain aspects of the policy, while others were unhappy but felt they had no option other than to go along with it. This they did even when they felt it was unfair, misguided or potentially harmful. Zhu (2010), Villegas Reimas (2003) and Avalos (2006) argue reform of the curriculum will never be fully accomplished unless teachers actively participate in the process. They believe this is central to the success of the policy reform.

The universal adoption of the WBQ has diminished the learner's choice of elective subjects (NAW 2019) and has displaced subjects within the curriculum. Coupled with its inclusion in revised performance measures and its skills-based pedagogy the role of the WBC has been challenging in some contexts and opportunistic in others. This study will focus upon the contextual experiences of the WBC.

## Summary of Chapters

Chapter 2: The review of literature considers theories of agency. It examines the sociological perspectives of Giddens and Archer before reflecting upon Dewey's (1938) Transactional theory and how it provides insight into the structure/agency debate. An analysis of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) Ecological theory is then presented along with subsequent agentic theories developed by Biesta and Tedder (2006) and Priestley et al. (2015). The review then considers the power and use of narrative to understand the practice of teachers.

Chapter 3: The methodology chapter considers the epistemological and ontological assumptions which inform the approach to this study. The rationale for adopting Three-Dimensional Space approach (Clandinin and Connelly 2000), Story line analysis (Gergen and Gergen 1986; 1988) and Critical Incident Technique (CIT) (Chell 2004) and narrative are considered prior to their inclusion in the interview schedule. Details relating to the sample and ethical issues are provided before the data is presented as a series on mini-vignettes. The chapter concludes with a reflection.

Chapter 4: The analysis of data began with the re-production of story lines (Gergen 1988), an analysis of transcripts using Three-Dimensional Space Model (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) and CIT approach (Chell 2004). A series of twelve mini-vignettes were used to discuss the emergence of particular ecologies and practices which emerge from those ecologies. Institutional influences and the influence of talk practices were considered significant in the achievement or not of agency.

Chapter 5: This study concludes by discussing why the conditions necessary for encouraging agency should be re-shaped and who should re-shape them. Finally, limitations are discussed and a review of the research questions is undertaken.

# CHAPTER TWO

## Review of Literature

Of emerging significance in the enactment of curriculum policy is the (re)acknowledgment of 'the importance of teacher agency – that is their active contribution to shaping their work and its conditions for the overall quality of education' (Biesta et al. 2015, p.621). This (re)focus on practitioner agency is important as Biesta (2010) argues that agency has been limited and constrained by the introduction of specific curricula policies. In Wales such curricula policies have included the introduction of the literacy and numeracy framework in Years 3-9 and accountability measures of testing and performativity (e.g., the L2 measure in English and Maths at KS4) amongst others (Egan 2017).

Biesta et al. (2015) argue that practitioners now have 'explicit permission to exert high[er] degrees of agency' (p.621) within their school-based setting and that it is now seen as an essential facet of their professionalism. This review of literature considers how agency can be best understood and how a practitioner can be encouraged or supported to enact agency within their professional practice. This review is divided into two sections. It begins with an overview of the theories of agency. Firstly, it considers the sociological perspectives of agency as provided by Giddens and Archer before Dewey's (1938) Transactional theory is examined to afford an insight into the structure/agency debate. An analysis of Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) Ecological theory of agency is then presented along with subsequent agentic theories developed by Biesta and Tedder (2006) and Priestley et al. (2015). The review then shifts in focus to consider the power of narrative to reveal the agentic practice of teachers.

## Theories of agency

### The sociological perspective

Giddens's (1984) theory of structuration and Archer's (1995) seminal realist social theory are considered a pertinent place to begin to conceptualise theories of agency from a sociological point of view.

### The Social theory of Giddens

Giddens's approach to agency draws upon on the social interactionist perspective (Ransome 2010). This micro-level mode of analysis which figures prominently in his work attempts to address the limitations of the macro-level and general Systems Theory approach of Parsons. Giddens sought to develop social theory which was grounded in the analysis of everyday life and to the decisions individuals have to make (Giddens 1976/1993). He believed these were determined by common sense instead of prioritising "the social structure". The social theory of Giddens sought to

discover new ways which would accommodate differences between the macro and the micro and between social structure and individual agency (Ransome 2010).

Giddens' concern was that individuals are restricted in what they can do by the social institutions and/or social practices which surround them. Remaining unconvinced of the structuralist view of structure as something which entirely restricts an individual's range of actions, Giddens believed that society did restrict some actions.  He began to consider how structures could have influence over individuals and how structures or forces could change. He argued that if structures really do restrict action, then it would be difficult to see how anything could ever change unless the change came from inside the structures. This he argued would suggest that the structures were less stable than previously was thought or if change was to come from outside then the presence of some external-to-the-structure force would to be the cause.

In a reconsideration of what constitutes "structure" Giddens posited that if change can come from within the domain of existing institutional practices, then a reshaping of the relations between the individual and their social structures should be possible. Within this revised strategy the separation of the two domains (the inner and outer) became displaced encapsulated within the notion of duality. For Giddens duality described the effect and outcome of the interaction of these two forces, the inner and outer. This he set out in his duality of structure or Structuration Theory (Giddens 1984) within which he defines structures as "rules-and-resources". This suggests that they enable rather than restrain action.

For Giddens the ingredients of social change and the means by which it takes place must be present in the rules-and-resources that currently exist. This is contrary to the general structuralist view. His theory further illustrates the capacity individuals have for drawing upon these rule-and-resources are still bound together by the various rules-and-resources at their disposal. Giddens believes that individuals have power over social structures as they have at their disposal an extensive knowledge-base which determines how to behave and act. Such a capacity or power enables individuals not only to act (a capacity which Giddens terms agency) but to act in deliberate and intentional ways which can be seen as transformative (Giddens 1990; 1991). However, the extent to which they may be able to change the world around them is dependent upon the resources they have and the amount of power they as individuals have over the structures they seek to change or challenge.

Drawing upon a more nuanced dualistic and interactive understanding of the relationship between action and structure, Giddens posits the idea of reflexivity as a response (Giddens 1991). He argues that as individuals become affected by the conditions in which they act they are simultaneously enabled to bring about changes in those conditions. The concept of reflexivity or

reflexively organised practice begins to explain in agentic terms how individuals monitor their own behaviour as they adjust the boundaries between structure and action (Giddens 1990). As such Giddens begins to theorise ways in which an individual can navigate and respond to events and/or experiences in practical terms. However, his understanding of "structure" is not comparable with other social theorists and most structuralists. His terminology can be traced back to an organising and systematising set of forces which lie under the surface of which he provides little explanation. As such his way of using the concept of structure has been strongly challenged by his own contemporaries and leading this challenge is Archer.

### Archer's morphogenesis versus structuration debate

Archer's morphogenesis versus structuration debate (1982) argued that in attempting to combine (or 'conflate') the separate and distinguishable categories of "structure" and "agency" structuration theory was unhelpful as it did not explain the relationship which exists between these two types of phenomena. It was Archer's belief that by "collapsing" structure into agency structuration theory rendered some of the most potent analytical tools of social theory redundant. For Archer the collapse appeared to advance the agency part of the duality at the expense of the macro-level social structures (that of the social system discussed by Giddens in structuration theory) which determines context.

Archer's morphogenic approach perceives agency and structure as being simultaneously intertwined yet analytically separate: 'Morphogenesis is therefore about change in the form of the relation and its consequences, not whether or not a relation exists. Ontologically, structure and agency are necessarily related; analytically they must be distinguished to establish what the relation is' (Parker 2000, p.72). Thus, morphogenesis contends that agent/structure interactions constantly change the contexts of action and this change continues as the relationship between agency/structure unfolds. Archer argues that the principal task is to understand how the new structures arise and how this shapes social action: 'Analytically speaking, the relation between agency and structure is one of historical alternation between the conditioning of agents by structure and the elaboration of structure by interacting agents. Given time, systems can be both cause and caused, as can agency. Analytical dualism depends on temporality' (Archer 1995, p.694; Parker 2000, pp.74–5).

For Archer (2000a) agency can be viewed as a form of autonomy which contributes to successful outcomes for the individual.  This view infers an overly individualistic view of agency underpinned by psychological views of human capacity and while many writers have taken such a view, others have criticised it as it does not sufficiently explain the influence that cultural or societal structures may have on agency (Usher and Edwards 1994). The individualistic view of agency believes an

individual to be a 'self-motivated, self-directing, rational subject, capable of exercising individual agency' (Usher and Edwards 1994, p.2).

For Archer (1998) this position reflects an individual's ability to act unhindered by social constraints. She describes this as being 'simultaneously free and constrained [but with] some awareness of it' (Archer 1995, p.2). The issue of freedom and constraint is viewed as universal as are the social conditions which frame and constrain an individual's agency (Archer 1995). Thus, as the individual comes into contact with structural factors which constrain and/or enable their intentions they reflexively consider which course of action they feel they should follow. This process of reflexive deliberation arises as a form of inner conversation which the individual has with themselves, where they 'literally talk to themselves (and sometimes others) about their needs, concerns, and the things that might constrain or enable them' (Fleetwood 2008, p.184). Archer agues for the existence of an authentic interior, an inner private domain which enables an individual to articulate a course of action to address the issue at hand. The process of reflexive deliberation carried out via a form of internal conversation becomes the means by which structure and agency connect for Archer (Fleetwood 2008). This contrasts with Giddens understanding of reflexivity. For Giddens reflexivity is a dual two-way process by which an individual becomes influenced by their environment while simultaneously causing changes in those conditions. Thus, when an individual encounters change, they respond accordingly and become increasingly aware of their capacity for generating change.

In summary, Archer's morphogenic approach argues that structure and agency while remaining analytically distinct remain intertwined and bound together. Giddens, however, moves from the dualist approach to the removal of previous categorical distinctions. His re-defined theory of structure-with-action, or structuration considers the relationship as one. Accordingly, structure is redefined as "rules-and-resources" and not as a fixed entity which serve to dominates human agency, while agency is redefined as the capacity an individual may have to make use of "rules and-resources".

These broad sociological approaches have presented a dilemma - that of the on-going structure/agency debate. This review of literature now considers the Transactional theory of Dewey and Mead's perspective of Symbolic Interactionalism as a means to shed light upon this dilemma by bringing a nuanced understanding to agency from the pragmatist approach.

## The Transactional theory of Dewey

Within this theory "experience" is the most important concept for Dewey. The term "experience" refers to the transaction of living organisms and their environment, and what is distinctive about these transactions is that it is a 'double' relationship (Dewey 1917, p.7).

'The organism act in accordance with its own structure, simple or complex, upon its surroundings. As a consequence, the changes produced in the environment react upon the organism and its activities. The living creature undergoes, suffers, the consequences of its own behaviour. This close connection between doing and suffering or undergoing forms of what we call experience' (Dewey 1920, p.129).

While experience refers to the transactions of all living organisms and their environment, the difference between the experience 'of an oyster or a growing bean vine' (Dewey 1916b, p.321) and the human being is that human experience is always mediated by culture. Human experience is what it is because 'humans are subject to the influence of culture' (Dewey 1939b, p.15) which is the product of human action and interaction – which includes language in its spoken and written forms. Language gets its meaning from the role it plays in co-ordinated human activity, that is, in and by the 'conjoint community of functional use' made of it (Dewey 1938a, p.52).

Within the Transactional theory the principles of Continuity, Transaction and Situation are of equal significance. The principle of continuity relates to each and every experience of an individual and how they modify the experience and how this modification affects, whether intentionally or not, the quality of successive experiences. Dewey argues that as the individual changes with each experience they live through these changes affect all the subsequent experiences the individual may contend with in the future.  However, the change which materialises is not simply an outcome of the bi-directional interaction but the result of the interconnected transactions between the individual (the organism) and the environment they encounter. This has been defined as a 'mutually manipulating process where the "doing" and the "undergoing" are observed not as dual, alternately assumed roles, but rather as perpetually simultaneous throughout all phases of organismic-environmental transaction' (Roth 1998, p.44). Dewey conceives an experience as something quite specific; the experience is not only the stored-up product of the past, or the immediacy of the here-and-now, or the acknowledgment of the environmental impact of a passive recipient. Rather, 'experience is continuous from past through to present to future; it is not static but dynamic, moving, in process. It is not unilateral but, for Dewey it is "transactional" for the experient [and] is modified by his environment and the environment by the experient in a constant reciprocal relationship' (Garforth 1966, p.13).

Of equal significance is the principle of transaction which relates to an interaction between the individual and their environment as 'An experience is always what is it because of a transaction taking place between the individual and, what at the time, constitutes the environment' (Dewey 1938/1997, p.43). Within his idea of transaction Dewey (1938/1997) refers to matters of trying and undergoing whereby an individual tries to make an impression upon the environment, where trying refers to an individual's intention to act demonstrating their purposeful engagement with their

environment. For Dewey this process is bi-directional, dynamic and impactful, while other aspect of the transition, undergoing, is characterised by the resulting impact of the experience upon the individual:

> 'When we experience something, we act upon it, we do something; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return: such is the peculiar combination. The connection of these two phases of experience measures the fruitfulness of experience. Mere activity does not constitute experience' (Dewey 1916/2007, p.104).

The word interaction used in the previous paragraph denotes a means for interpreting an experience. This involves assigning equal rights to both factors in an experience – that of objective and internal conditions. An experience is an interplay of these two sets of conditions which when taken together or in an interaction create a situation. When considering the organism – environment transaction situation is 'the word' (Biesta and Burbles 2003, p.59) Dewey uses to refer to this transaction. However, Dewey argues that too much attention has been paid to the external conditions which influence the experience and too little attention to the internal factors which also determine what kind of experience is had. The principle of situation refers to the way an individual lives their lives within a concrete world and in a series of situations. The meaning of "in" then refers to and describes the 'interaction [which] is going on between and individual and objects and other people' (Dewey 1938, p.43). It follows then that the concepts of situations and interaction are inseparable as experience is always what it is because of a transaction between an individual and what constitutes his environment at that moment in time; 'A situation always denotes the transaction of organism and environment' (Biesta and Burbles 2003, p.59). This implies that similar external conditions do not necessarily lead to similar 'situations', but remains unclear is what may be unclear or confusing for one person is not necessarily unclear or confusing for another. It all seems to depend on the relationship between the environing conditions and the individual which include not only the others an individual may be talking with regarding some topic but also the topic of conversation itself.  The environment is thus comprised of whatever interacts with the individual.

Dewey considers the principles of continuity and interaction are not separate from each other. Through their active union they form a lateral flow of experience where differing situations succeed each another as the principle of continuity ensures that aspects of earlier situations are carried over to form the later ones. Therefore, the situation in which the interaction takes place is significant as it reflects not only the materials with which the individual interacts but the total social set-up of the situations within which the individual is engaged. The idea of experience and reflection becoming intertwined is understood by Dewey and considered necessary: 'No

experience having a meaning is possible without having some element of thought' (Dewey 1916/2007, p.107).

For Dewey the meaning ascribed to present experiences must be seen in light of past experiences and with regards to those of the future. This idea is integral to Dewey's notion of transaction (1916/2007; 1938/1997) as all experience falls within the context of the continual adaption of the individual to and within their environment. 'Every experience is a moving force; its values can be judged on the grounds of what it moves towards and into' (Dewey 1938/1997, p.38). Dewey refers to this as his continuity principle which he argues also relates to experiences which may be construed as 'mis-educative'. These experiences may affect other experience by 'arresting or distorting the growth of further experience' and consequently 'engender callousness [or a] lack of sensitivity and responsiveness......[so that] the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted' (Dewey 1939, p.25).

## Mead's perspective of Symbolic Interactionism

Within Mead's theoretical perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, the sociological focus on the self considers how the self is interpreted in and thorough social interactions with others. Mead's insights which relate to pragmatism emphasise the practical conditions under which action occurs, and the practical consequences which follow the undertaking of these actions. Mead's core argument was that as the self emerges it is simultaneously influenced by the practical conduct of social interactions with others (Mead 1913).

Mead with Morris (1934) argue that the self is a reflective and thinking self which is active and always engaged reflexively in processing what is going around and about them. By characterising this as 'an ongoing internal conversation' (Dillon 2010, p.258) with ourselves Mead describes how these two aspects of the self (the 'I' and the 'Me') establish a kind of internal dialogue, which enables the individual to develop a capacity to monitor and evaluate the self and become self-reflective. This allows the individual to analyse the 'I' against the differing versions of the 'me' that they pick up from social interactions with others (family, friends, colleagues ....) and from which the 'I' develops the capacity for self-monitoring and self-control. Mead argues that the individual can simultaneously process what others are saying to them and what should be considered in terms of what was said or what was meant, and what their response should be. As such Mead argues a sense of Me (that is my-self as an object) is socially created within an ongoing inter-action with others (Mead and Morris 1934).

This review of literature will now consider the phenomenon of agency and how an individual becomes able to exercise control over their lives. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) have argued the notion of agency has rarely been systematically analysed. Consequently, they claim 'in the

struggle to demonstrate the interpenetration of agency and structure, many theorists have failed to distinguish agency as an analytical category in its own right' (pp.962-963), as in the case of Archer for example.

## The ecological approach

Building upon the pragmatism of Dewey Emirbayer and Mische (1998) present a detailed theorisation of how an individual's ability and contextual factors interact to shape agency. Their conceptualisation of agency seeks to overcome the one-sidedness of extant literature which has emphasised routine, purpose, or judgement.

## Their theoretical underpinnings

The underpinnings of Emirbayer and Mische's theory are drawn from the pragmatist theories of Dewey and Mead. In particular, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) cite Mead's ideas about 'time as constituted through emergent events' (p.968) and 'the concept of human consciousness as constituted through sociality' (p.968) and further draw upon Mead's ideas when they consider how an individual responds to changes within their environment. This would mean the individual would re-form or re-fashion their view of the past so that they could begin to understand the conditions which have bearing on their present. In using this understanding from the past, the individual would become able to control and shape their responses which arise in the future. Mead refers to this as the 'deliberative attitude' which is the capacity to 'get hold of the conditions of future conduct as these are found in the organized responses we have formed, and so construct our pasts in anticipation of that future' (Mead 1932, p.76) quoted in Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.969).

Accordingly, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) define agency as,

> '...the temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments – the temporal-relational contexts of action – which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations' (p.970)

This definition embodies Mead's notions 'of the positioning of human actors within temporal passage, involving the continual reconstruction of their orientations toward past and future in response to emergent events' (p.971). For Emirbayer and Mische (1998) agency also embodies Mead's belief that agency involves the capacity for 'imaginative distancing, as well as for communicative evaluation, in relation to habitual patterns of social engagement that drives the development of the reflective intelligence' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.971). This notion of 'reflective intelligence' (Mead 1939, p.165) Emirbayer and Mische argue enables individuals 'to critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations' (1998, p.971). Agency then is

concerned with the individual's ability to adjust their temporal orientations and subsequently their relationship to structures. In summary, the definition of agency relating to Emirbayer and Mische is concerned with the actions an individual undertakes to overcome problematic situations, or in terms of their pragmatist stance how an individual contends with indeterminate actor-context transactions.

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) theorise that the achievement of agency is understood as the sum total of influences of the past, orientations towards the future and engagement within the present. They argue for a conception of agency which focuses upon the dynamic interplay between the three dimensions and how the interplay within differing structural contexts of activity varies over time for the individual. These three dimensions, of the past, present, and future characterise the 'Chordal Triad' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.970) whereby agency is portrayed

> '...as a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)' (p.963).

This is consistent with Dewey's notion of continuity and the experiential continuum wherein every experience enacted brings a change to the individual in some way and additionally affects the quality of all subsequent experiences.

The principle of continuity of experience 'means that every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after' (Dewey 1938, p.35). Therefore, in drawing upon Dewey's idea Emirbayer and Mische (1998) further argue that for agency to be fully understood within social action it will have to be 'analytically situated with the flow of time' whereby 'structural contexts of action are themselves temporal' (pp.963-964) constructed by individuals through the 'the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement' (p.970).

### The Chordal Triad of agency

As agency is defined as 'the temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments—the temporal-relational contexts of action—which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgment, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations' (1998, p.970) Emirbayer and Mische are able to distinguish the different dimensions of agency from each other. They propose the chordal traid of agency is comprised of the iterational, the practical-evaluative and the projective dimensions (Figure 4). Figure 4 illustrates the three dimensions or 'analytical aspect of agency' where 'one temporal orientation is the dominant tone' which shapes the way in which

individuals respond to the 'other two dimensions of time' (p.972). While this internal structure is notionally a heuristic devise it does illustrate how this "chordal composition" can vary as individuals respond to differing and emerging environments. It affords further opportunity to analyse variations and changes in the composition of agentic orientations.

### The Iterational

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that agency must come from somewhere and for them it comes from the iterational domain of the past. It's most resonant tone refers to, 'The selective reactivation by actors of past patterns of thought and action, routinely incorporated in practical activity, thereby giving stability and order to social universes and helping to sustain identities, interactions, and institutions over time' (p.971).

The iterational dimension of the chordal triad is founded on the 'schematization of social experience' (p.975) and is revealed in the individual's capability to recollect, choose and employ by and large tacit and assumed schemas of action which have been acquired through past experiences. This dimension does not exist just by owning such schemas but in how the individual orientates themselves towards their schemas, specifically, how an individual selectively detects, determines and applies particular schemas within their ongoing activities. However, the individual does not always act from habit following routinised patterns of behaviour as the three differing procedures by which an individual orientates themselves towards the past (via selective attention, recognition of types and categorical location) is affixed to the 'subtone' of 'manoeuvre among repertoires'. This most closely resembles the practical-evaluative dimension along while 'expectation maintenance' most closely resembles the projective dimension. Therefore, an individual with a rich repertoire of experience may be expected to be able to draw from a more expansive range of options for the future than maybe the case for an individual with less experiences.

### The Projective

This ecological approach of agency of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) acknowledges that agency can become motivated in an attempt to make the future different from the past or present. The overriding feature of this dimension is that individuals are able to challenge, reconsider and reformulate their schemas; that they do not replicate routines of the past but become 'inventors' (p.983) of different ways of thinking and taking action. It encompasses, 'The imaginative generation by actors of possible future trajectories of action, in which received structures of thought and action may be creatively reconfigured in relation to actors' hopes, fears, and desires for the future' (pp.979-980).

Engagement with an imagining of the future allows an individual to distance themselves, in an exploratory sense, from past conventions and practises which may restrict them. This may take

place in the moment or may even occur at some other time as with Archer's form of inner dialogue (Archer 2000a). However, in defining this capability Emirbayer and Mische (1998) posit a sub -set of words describing the intensely purposeful goal, plan and objective, to explain a more ephemeral form of language of dreams, yearnings, reservations and ambitions. This understanding of projectivity is of a process which is culturally rooted and by which an individual considers their path toward the future, having received the impulse to do so from the challenges within their social life. This process of imagination affords the individual opportunity to reconstruct a future by 'draw[ing] upon past experiences in order to clarify motives, goals and intentions, to locate possible future constraints and to identify morally and practically appropriate courses of action' (p.989). The implication here is that those with such imaginings can form expansive projections and may achieve greater levels of agency that those whose aspirations more limited.

| | Past | Present | Future |
|---|---|---|---|
| Iterational | **Selective attention** <br> **Recognition of types** <br> **Categorial location** | Manoeuvring amongst repertoires | Expectation maintenance |
| Practical-evaluative | Characteristics | **Problematization** <br> **Decision** <br> **Execution** | Deliberation |
| Projective | Anticipatory identification | Experimental enactment | **Narrative reconstruction** <br> **Symbolic-composition** <br> **Hypothetical resolution** |

Figure 4: A representation of the Chordal Triad of Agency of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) with dominant tones in **bold**

### The Practical-evaluative

The practical-evaluative is related to the present. It involves individuals being able 'make practical and normative judgements among alternative possible trajectories of action, in response to the emerging demands, dilemmas, and ambiguities of presently evolving situations' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.971). Within this dimension the individual responds to the requirements and possibilities of the present, as even routine inclinations need to adapt to the demands of emerging situations. However, decisions often have to be made in situations of uncertainty, insecurity, or disagreement, where unintended consequences may necessitate a change in strategy or direction. The enactment of a response may require a reflective and interpretive response, the use of practical wisdom, discretion, improvisation or intelligence etc. Judgements made are both practical shaped by affordances and the constraints of the context and evaluative by judging/evaluating the risk factor in any given situation.

What emerges from the approach of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) is an understanding of agency in terms of problem solving, where the act of solving a problem is located within pragmatism and its transactional framework (Biesta and Burbles 2003). Thus, an individual lives by means of their environment and in it and to this end the actions undertaken by the individual are concerned with the re-establishing forms of (trans)actions which help stabilise the environment. While the practical-evaluative dimension is concerned with the individual re-establishing the transaction with the environment in 'real time', the iterational dimension is more concerned with how the individual calls upon past and previously acquired patterns of action, with the projective dimension concerned with orientating towards the future which is standing close by in all (trans)action. In all social action each of the three dimensions work in concert as they are analytic distinctions within a 'unified whole' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998). Accordingly, the chordal triad 'resonate[s] as separate but not always harmonious tones' (p.972).

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that the ways in which an individual understands his/her own relations to their past, future, and present can make a difference to the actions they take. In this sense, if there are changes to their 'conceptions of agentic possibility in relation to structural contexts [this can] profoundly influence how actors in different periods and places see their worlds as more or less responsive to human imagination, purpose and effort' (p.972). Accordingly, then an individual's sense of agency, how they are able to talk about their orientations towards their past, future and present is of equal importance in their agency. The social and relational aspects of agency significant as Emirbayer and Mische believe it 'centres around the engagement (and disengagement) by actors of the different contextual environments that constitute their own structured yet flexible social universe' (1998, p.973). When agency is perceived internally it 'entails different ways of experiencing the world'; and when perceived externally it 'entails actual interactions with its contexts' (p.972). For this reason, agency is always seen as 'a dialogical process by and through which actors immersed in temporal passage engage with others within collectively organized contexts of action' (p.974).

This notion of engagement with others is prominent within Dewey's Transactional theory and his principle of situation. He refers to the ways individuals live their lives in a series of situations or in the interactions which happen between 'individuals and objects and other people' (Dewey 1938, p.43). The outcome of this Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue is that 'actors move within and among these different and unfolding contexts, they switch between (or 'recompose') their temporal orientations – and thus are capable of changing their relationship to structure' (p.974) which they infer is the 'key to grasping the dynamic possibilities of human agency is to view it as composed of variable and changing orientations within the flow of time' (p.974). Of significance Emirbayer and Mische (1998) infer that structures exists and are sufficiently stable to provide a reference point for

agency to engage with and work on or around. Similarly, this underpins the possibility that the 'structural environments of action are both dynamically sustained by and also altered through human agency – by actors capable of formulating projects for the future and realizing them, even if only in small part, and with unforeseen outcomes, in the present' (p.974).

## The approach of Biesta and Tedder (2006)

In drawing upon the work of Emirbayer and Mische Biesta and Tedder's (2007) view of agency similarly suggests that agency is achieved under particular ecological conditions and even when an individual does have some kind of capacities their achievement of agency depends on the interaction of these capacities and the ecological conditions. As such agency is not viewed as a capacity or a possession which resides within the individual but is understood to be the outcome of the ecological conditions through which it is enacted. Within an ecological view agency is positioned as a relational effect. It occurs when the personal capacity to act is combined with the contingencies of the environment or setting within which these actions occur. Biesta and Tedder (2007) argue an individual may exercise more or less agency at different times and in various contextual settings, as

> '[T]his concept of agency highlights that actors always act by means of their environment rather than simply in their environment . . . the achievement of agency will always result in the interplay of individual efforts, available resources and contextual and structural factors as they come together in particular and, in a sense, always unique situations' (p.137).

Viewing agency ecologically helps comprehend how individuals are able to be reflexive and creative how they act to counter societal constraints and also how they are enabled and constrained by their social and material environments. Therefore, through the process of reflexivity individuals are influenced by, but not determined by society (Archer 2000a). By using a form of inner dialogue (Archer 2000a) an individual becomes enabled to 'manoeuvre amongst repertoires' (Biesta and Tedder 2006, p.11; Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.980) and thereby reconfigure their relationship with others in society. This links the temporal theme to agency further to the work of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) who posit that agency while being informed by the past is oriented toward the future but is acted out in the present, while embedded in a process of social interaction.

Biesta and Tedder contend that the composition of agency needs to be analysed in addition to the 'different temporal-relational contexts within which individuals act' (2007, p.137). This would then begin to explain how agency can be experienced differently depending on context and time, and that agency may develop over time as the individual continues to interact with their social, cultural and structural worlds. Through this process of engagement an individual's potential for agency can be developed positively and/or negatively as their material, structural and social conditions evolve.

This resultant outcome reflects further the work of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) who characterise the process as a practical-evaluative activity where our emerging sense of self is continually influenced by forms of social interaction.

Biesta and Tedder (2006) contend that an individual achieves agency in concrete settings and in and through certain ecological circumstances to 'critically shape their responses to problematic situations' (p.11). They view agency as an outcome of a transaction between the individual and their setting. While this explicitly draws upon their understanding of Dewey (1938) they view agency as temporal (that it should be viewed from the perspectives of the past, of the present and the future) and that is should viewed spatially. Accordingly, by using the analytical dualism the capacity of an individual may be considered while at another time the influence of the contextual/ecological factors may be examined. This analytical dualism provides a methodology where the factors within a setting may be separated for the particular analytical purpose at hand.

## The approach of Priestley et al. (2015)

The concept of teacher agency has received limited attention (Vongalis-Macrow 2007) and when it has been it has been encapsulated within the broader debate of agency per se, or within existing literature relating to educational change. In these cases, it remains under-emphasised and miscomprehended (Leander and Osborne 2008).

Priestley et al.'s (2015) view of agency concentrates upon how it is achieved in concrete settings and by identifying which ecological circumstances and conditions are conducive for it to develop. Their ecological understanding of agency has its origins not within sociological approaches but within action–theoretical approaches, which relate to the pragmatist philosophy of Dewey's (1938) Transactional theory and Mead's theoretical perspective of Symbolic Interactionism (1934). Priestley et al.'s (2015a) view is grounded in a theoretical understanding within which the temporal dimension of experiences is central. Inspired by Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) ecological theory they argue agency is also understood to be socially and historically situated, that is the present involves a capacity of learning from past events while simultaneously offering the potential to express ideas and visions for the future time (Ribaeus et al. 2022)

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) built their conception of agency around the dynamic interplay between the three dimensions of the chordal triad and take into consideration 'how this interplay [of the three dimensions] varies within different structural contexts of action' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.963). Drawing upon the Chordal Traid of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) Priestley et al. (2015) develop an understanding that depicts the Iterational domain of past experiences which are orientated to the future as a combination of longer or shorter-term goals within the Projective

domain, while being enacted in the present-day (Figure 5). Within the Practical-evaluative three distinct aspects this dimension exist which comprise cultural, material and structural factors.
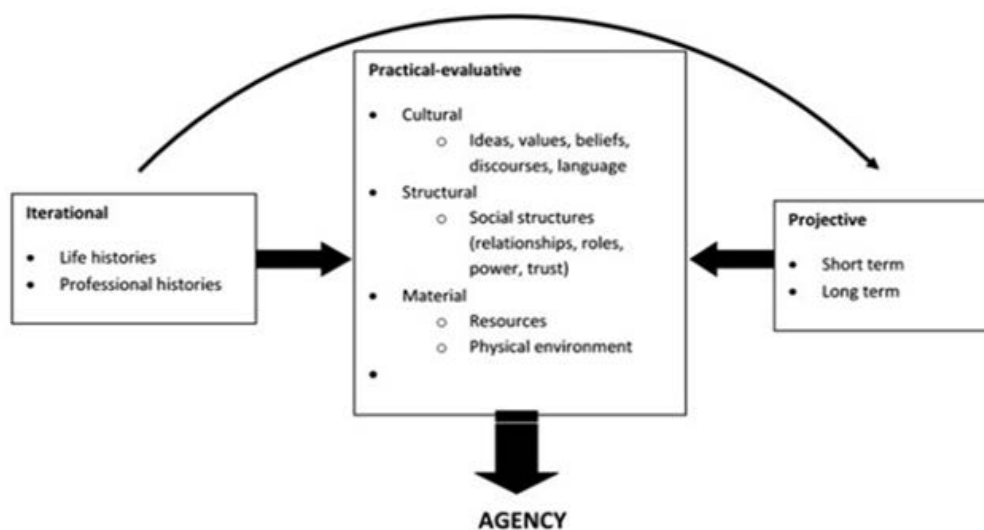


*Figure 5: Priestley et al.'s model for understanding agency (2015, p.30)*

Priestley et al. identify the cultural factors as ideas, values, beliefs, aspirations discourses, and language (p.30) an individual may employ as part of the transaction they have with others within the setting. Language, in particular, they characterise as forms of speaking, thinking and understanding and include forms of talk, that is inner and outer forms of dialogue. The inner dialogue, that is the conversation an individual has with themselves is reminiscent of Archer's inner dialogue (Archer 2000a) whereby an individual becomes enabled to 'manoeuvre amongst repertoires' (Biesta and Tedder 2006, p.11). An individual then enacts these forms of talk when deciding how to respond to others in the setting, as outer forms of dialogue which reflect those public conversation held with others. Priestley et al.'s material factors relate to the wider physical or built environment of the setting and may include the condition, quality or quantity of the physical resources available at the time, while structural factors relate to the social and relational structures and the ways relationships and roles are formed within the setting.

In summary, Priestley et al.'s (2015) view of agency illustrates that agency can be constrained and/or supported by discursive, material and relational resources of the present day. However, while the model explains each factor little reference is made to the cumulative effect of the factors, whether one factor can influence another or whether one factor alone can determine agency.

## The importance of practitioner agency in curriculum enactment

This study is concerned with a practitioner's achievement of agency and what can hinder or help them. Biesta et al. (2014) argue of a tension within education which seeks to limit the opportunities for teachers to exert judgement and control over their own work. However, given the complexities

of practice (Goodson 2003; Nieveen 2011; Priestley 2011) contend that agency is a necessary component 'for the overall quality of education' (Biesta et al. 2014, p.624). This imperative requires a [re]focus on agency so that teachers can be afforded 'explicit permission' (p.624) to employ agency within their practice and to see it as an essential facet of their professionalism.

Nevertheless, Priestley et al. (2015) argue that teacher agency is too easily linked to school improvement agendas and has been narrowly interpreted as 'change agentry' (Fullan 2003). In this vein a practitioner is viewed as a facilitator of the reform initiated by someone else and against this backdrop the concept of teacher agency has been used to explain how a practitioner may engage with policy reform in their daily practice (e.g., Ketelaar et al. 2012; Priestley et al 2013). Priestley et al. (2015) argue that as a consequence agency is only ever framed positively, but it seems reasonable to assume that agency could be enacted for less beneficial purposes (Priestley 2011) and therefore it would be unwise to perceive it so narrowly (Leander and Osborne 2008).

Priestley et al. (2015) argue agency contributes to the overall quality of education. Drawing on the work of Dewey they contend that the contribution of agency within classrooms makes the practice of teachers more 'intelligent' (p.147). Similarly, Emirbayer and Mische argue agency is best understood when linked to an individual's shifting temporal orientations and contexts which then become 'subject to re-evaluation and reconstruction on the part of the reflective intelligence' (pp.967-968) of each individual. However, for Priestley et al. (2015) systems like education and classroom practices which are not intelligent, that is are not able to change through reflection, are not capable of making appropriate responses to problematic situations as they unfold. They contend that these systems only operate successfully because of the intelligence, intelligent practices and 'reflective intelligence' (Mead 1934, p.165; Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.967-968) undertaken by teachers when enacting agency.

In Wales many reforms were introduced to ameliorate issues of under and/or poor performance at a systemic level (Egan 2017). These policies were introduced to change the way in which the system operates by changing ways in which systems were monitored, measured and managed. At a system-level this included policies which defined what education should be about and what it should comprise. In Wales this meant a greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy and included the redesign of GCSE English and Maths. At the same time policies were introduced which defined what the educational outputs should be through the process of outcome steering, and in Wales this led to the introduction, amongst others, of a programme of national testing in Literacy and Numeracy and the performance measures based around the Level 2 Threshold in English and Maths (L2 E+M). Within a systems level approach, Priestley et al. (2015) argue that the actions of an individual practitioner had become supplanted which meant whatever action they did take did 'not really matter' (p.148). This they argued constrained practitioner agency and their 'space for

agency' (p.148) causing many to become disillusioned. Therefore, tensions remain within education between policies which would seek, intentionally or not, to limit opportunities for practitioners to exercise judgement over their practice and those policies which would strive endorse it (Biesta et al. 2015).

In summary, some believe teacher agency weakens the operation of a school and have replaced it with evidence-based and data-driven approaches to bring about the improvements in outcomes they seek, while others maintain that given the complexities within schools teacher agency is a necessary component of a meaningful education (Biesta et al. 2015). However, of importance within this study is the argument of Priestley et al. (2015) who to endorse this latter view state it 'requires more from teachers rather than less, just as *it requires more from those who have the responsibility for shaping the conditions of teachers' agency:* the material conditions, the cultural conditions, the structural and relational conditions and the discursive and normative conditions' (p.149, *my emphasis*).

### How agency can influence practice

Many factors have the potential to influence a teachers' practice and sense of agency. Within the context of teaching agency is the interaction between the individual and the structural aspects of their social settings which includes physical and material resources, school culture and policy mandates (Lasky 2005). Biesta and Tedder (2007) argue that to understand agency you must understand the ecological environment of a practitioner as there may be forces at work which influence its achievement. These may include - institutional reasons (Young 1998), the ecology or particular school setting, the status of a subject (McGregor 2004), a teacher's biography (Goodson 2003), their beliefs (Wallace and Kang 2004) in addition to their subjectivity and identity (Goodson and Marsh 1996). All these factors may be significant when considering how the practitioner is positioned regards the policy, their colleagues, pupils, and wider school community (Leander and Osborne 2008).  How each individual makes sense of a new policy is achieved in varying measure by an enabling or constraining framework. This suggests that a more nuanced theory of agency would help our understanding of the dynamics through which innovatory or conservative practises occur within a school-based context and how they impact upon agency.

Oolbekkink-Marchand et al. (2017) argue that practitioners can interpret the signs and the symbolic constructions of their work place by using their own knowledge and experience to exercise forms of control (Wills et al. 2009) over their practice. This manifestation of teacher agency (Biesta et al. 2015) infers the teachers' active participation in formulating and constructing their practice (Van der Heijden et al. 2015) which seems to suggest that agency is relational and something that emerges out of an ecology.

The concept of agency and a practitioner's use of their professional space is defined by Oolbekkink-Marchand et al. (2017) as the figurative and/or literal 'amount of say' (p.38) they have over their own practice. Arguing that teacher agency is founded on an understanding an individual does not just respond to emerging events by replicating them they claim a teacher can step outside of the rules and regulations of their setting and pursue their own goals. This idea clearly resonates with the projective dimension of Emirbayer and Mische's Chordal Traid of agency. However, how this is perceived by others and they then influence others and their institution may, of course, differ (Evans 2014; Priestley et al. 2015).

While agency is believed to positively influence a practitioner's professional development the SLT have a role to play (Toom et al. 2015). They can, 'Reorganise teachers' work .... allocate resources to promote teachers' initiatives concerning pedagogical innovations.... restructure everyday work...hence provide or restrict teachers' professional agency' (p.616). Therefore, while practitioner agency is situated within complex institutional contexts the SLT can encourage whilst conversely exerting explicit control requiring practitioner adherence to mandated policy (Honingh et al. 2017). Simultaneously, parents can exert a (indirect) form of control as they have their own expectations (Noordegraaf et al. 2015). Therefore, given the range of stakeholder expectations Oolbekkink-Marchand et al. (2017) argue a practitioner needs to establish the parameters of their agentic space and formulate the 'amount of say' (p.38) they have regarding the expectations of others (Honingh et al. 2017).

Oolbekkink-Marchand et al. (2017) further argue that some practitioners experience a gradual increase in their achievement of agency while others experience 'bumpy moments' (p.42), for which they cite negative and/or positive contextual factors as causal factors (e.g., increased responsibilities, inflexible organisational factors, conflicts with colleagues, or conversely, working co-operatively with colleagues and a supportive SLT). Therefore, when seeking to encourage a school-wide climate where a practitioner can enact agency Carson et al (2007) argue the SLT perform an essential role in resolving uncertainty and tensions or not. In this vein Oolbekkink-Marchand et al. (2017) cite how some practitioners were denied agency within the setting and had sought agency externally 'to enrich or stretch' their practice.

In summary, the actions of the SLT may influence the sense of agency a practitioner perceives within the setting. Molla and Nolan (2020) argue that if a practitioner is to be successful professionally, they should be enabled to pursue what they value in their practice, 'make choices, take principled action, and enact change' (Anderson 2010, p.541). Becoming agentic, then, is not only relational but is social because its realisation and implementation is dependent on others (Ingram 2018).

Underpinning this study is Biesta et al.'s (2015) claim that teacher agency is of increasing importance within the enactment of curriculum policy. Maguire et al. (2015) argue that 'different 'types' of policies call-up different forms of enactments' (p.485) and that policies are influenced by the school culture and specific school factors (Braun et al. 2011). These factors are conceptualised as situated (e.g., school intake, history, staffing, school ethos and culture), material (e.g., buildings, resources and budgets) and factors relating to the professional contexts and/or external environment of the setting (p.585).

Within this study agency is understood through the ecological framework of Priestley et al. (2015) and as an outcome which emerges through the interaction of an individual within their environment. This view highlights that the achievement of agency is the result of the interplay between an individual's effort, the availability of resources, whatever contextual and/or structural factors exist in a particular time, and situation (Biesta and Tedder 2007). Viewing agency ecologically conceptualises how an individual achieves agency through continuous interaction with the environment and through the continuous transaction with others within the environment. It is the quality of such interactions which leads to the achievement (or not) of agency as the individual responds to a variety of practice-based demands. As such Priestley et al. (2015) argue agency is a situated achievement, which results from the interplay of professional and/or life histories (i.e., the iterative dimension), the short and long-term consequences of action (i.e., the projective dimension) and, the influences of cultural, material and structural factors (i.e., the practical-evaluative dimension).

Biesta et al.'s (2015b) ecological approach also contends that agency is situated as it deals with relationships, structures and cultures, and it is an important part of teachers' 'possibilities' to practice. Relationships with others are key in the achievement of agency which includes practitioner networks which are vertical as well as horizontal. 'Agency is not seen as a capacity of individuals but as an achievement that is the outcome of the interaction of individual capacity with environing conditions" (p.17). This means that even if teachers have the skills and knowledge to act in a certain situation, they may not always have the 'possibility' to accomplish what they intend to do (Ribaeus et al. 2022).

Priestley et al. (2015) argue it is essential to comprehend teacher agency from an ecological point of view along with the environmental conditions which lead to its achievement and shape its various manifestations. They argue that if agency is achieved ecologically and is not only wholly dependent upon the capacity of an individual, then it follows that the significance of context should be considered more seriously by policymakers. If not, then the context may serve to disable individuals who would otherwise have a high agentic capacity. These individuals, while equipped

with the requisite skills and knowledge, may find it too difficult or too risky to enact the forms of innovation which reflect their otherwise substantial capacity to act and strong educational aspirations. As such they argue more attention needs to be paid to the cultural and structural factors which frame and have influence over practice.

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that often what might be considered to be agentic action may not necessarily be so. They argue that an individual who appears to be achieving agency may instead be reproducing social routines or following habitual behaviours, while others may simply lack a sense agency required to act when faced with surmountable problems. In this vein, Priestley (2011b) characterises some individuals as those who swim against the tide, who despite being situated within a difficult environment are able to stay true to their deeply held principles, while in contrast, other individuals may 'feel creative and deliberative while in the flow of unproblematic trajectories' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.1008). These Priestley (2011b) suggests may not be achieving high levels of agency but are merely going with the flow. This contrast is significant especially when considering the difference between autonomy and agency. For some autonomy is seen as a means of freeing up schools to enabling change, but for Priestley et al. (2015) autonomy is more about the comparative absence of regulation. It does not therefore equate to agency. In this sense a practitioner who is granted autonomy may still fail to achieve agency as they may continue to just reproduce past patterns of behaviour or that they lack cognitive and relational resources to so. Alternatively, agency can be shaped and enhanced by policy when goals and processes are well defined. This may serve to enhance the capability of practitioners to manoeuvre between their past repertoires, make decisions in the here and now and frame future actions (Drew and Priestley 2014).

The significance of an individual being able to make choices to affect their practice is argued by Schwab (1969). The intent expressed within the *Practical* (Schwab 1969) calls for 'a totally new and extensive pattern of empirical classroom action and reaction.... a basis for beginning to know what we are doing, what we are not doing and to what effect - what changes are needed' (p.16). So that a practitioner can comprehend their actions Schwab recommends that a form of a reflective study of action and reaction be undertaken. Within the *Practical* actions are undertaken to identify any potential 'frictions and failures...... inadequacies [and] shortcomings' (p.16) which may exist within the curriculum. In this light, Schwab argues for a wide-ranging form of enquiry which is capable of providing alternate solutions to issues which present themselves within the curriculum. He argues that issues cannot be addressed with familiar solutions which are 'drawn from old habits of mind' (p.18), and that problems need to be attended to 'with new modes of attack' (p.18) and then reflected upon.

# Theories of narrative

## A mode of attack

The adoption a narrative approach provides a 'mode of attack' (Schwab 1969, p.18) by which we can begin to understand the lives of teachers and address potential issues within the curriculum. Amongst the many qualitative approaches which could be adopted the narrative approach can provide solutions to curriculum issues by listening to the voices of teachers.  For this to happen new means of enabling talk and deliberation will need to be considered and then enacted. Goodson's (1991) reconceptualised educational research rationale argues that the importance of voice in articulating teachers' lives is a first step to understanding their practice. In this inquiry, the voices of WBCs will be used to challenge the listener to heed the significance of their stories (Grummet, 1990).

The conceptualisation of agency of Biesta and Tedder (2006) suggests an approach almost exclusively in terms of problem solving. In this sense agency is related to remedying practical matters, where talk is encouraged to allow choices to be negotiated and opportunities are made available for actions to be decided upon. The *Practical* articulated by Schwab summarises these issues of 'choice and action' (p.103).

All individuals concerned with curriculum issues need to be heard if the endeavour is to shape the 'intelligent consensus' (p.116) of the choices to be considered and actions agreed. Within the *Practical* choices appear from which individuals can choose the most appropriate form of action. Schwab characterises this as 'choice and action' (p.2) or perhaps more fittingly choice in or for action. Eteläpelto et al. (2014) has argued that professional agency is enabled when practitioners are permitted to make choices and become able to act in ways which impact their work. The *Practical* of Schwab (1969) provides a theoretical direction for them to do so. Consequently, when an individual is able to truly enact agency, they become empowered to act and have a voice. This review now considers how experiences of practice can become known and how an understanding of agency can be elicited from stories of professional practice.

## How can experiences of practice become known?

Four streams of autobiographical and biographical research are advanced by Pinar et al. (2008). They include:

- Teachers' collaborative knowledge – Butt and Raymond (1987; 1988; 1992)

- Teacher lore – Schubert and Ayres (1992)

- The study of teachers' lives – Goodson (1991)

- Personal practical knowledge – Clandinin and Connelly (1985; 1988)

The work of Butt (1983; 1989; 1991) is a notable attempt to understand teacher thinking through an autographical and biographical approach (Pinar et al. 2008). Butt's work relates to Connelly and Clandinin (1987) on issues pertaining to Personal Practical Knowledge but with some differences (Elbaz 1991). Firstly, Butt endeavours to realise biography and autobiography as an educational process (Pinar et al. 2008) by paying attention to personal experiences in schools and, secondly by writing about these experiences prior to sharing with others. Collaboration is considered imperative by Butt (1983) and is distinguished from the Personal Practical Knowledge of Connelly and Clandinin (1987) through the notion of breadth (Pinar et al. 2008). Butt et al. (1988) argue 'It is out of the whole cultural, ecological breadth of context .... that each teacher's unique knowledge is expressed in the present' (p.102).

Butt and Raymond (1987) argue for the use of biography, an account told to the researcher by the individual, as a way of understanding how practitioners' 'think, feel and act' (Pinar et al. 2008, p.554) and as a way of understanding an individual's 'thoughts and action in light of his or her past' (Berk 1980 cited in Butt and Raymond 1987, p.63). However, within this approach there is a search for a unity of experience, as Butt and Raymond (1987) contend that all that the individual has experienced 'becomes reduced' in research on Personal Practical Knowledge. They argue that, while at work, a unity occurs 'in the present as a person brings past experiences to bear to make present action meaningful (Elbaz 1991, p.4). Consequently, Butt believes the focus should be on the Practical Knowledge more so than on the 'personal' (Pinar et al. 2008, p.556).

Teacher Lore seeks to understand what a practitioner can learn from their classroom experiences by uncovering stories of practical experiences to further inform their teaching. It is defined as 'The study of knowledge, ideas, perspectives and understandings of teachers.... the inquiry into beliefs, values and images that guide teachers' work' (Schubert 1991, p.207). As such, it closely resembles the Personal Practical knowledge which Clandinin and Connelly describe, but differs through its use of the reflective conversations with teachers which requires them to analyse their processes of knowing.

Goodson promoted the use of life history and narrative as a means to study schools. He advocated the use of 'teacher voice' and for it to be 'heard loudly' (1991, p.139) as he considered it essential to understanding teachers' practice. For Goodson the life history approach contrasts with Clandinin and Connelly's Personal Practical Knowledge; his view was that the inclusion of the personal in the study of Professional Knowledge points to the importance of the biographical perspective but with a proviso; that as it is assumed a '[T]he teacher is his or her practice.... [and] I am saying it does not follow logically that in order to improve practice we must.... focus on practice' (p.141). Consequently, Goodson argues for an opposing point of view, one where practice is not located at the heart of research. Instead, he considered 'a more valuable and less

vulnerable entry point would be to examine teachers' work in the context of teachers' lives' (p.141). The focus then is to view the teacher as a person rather than concentrating directly on their practice (Goodson and Walker 1991).

Of the four streams of autobiographical and biographical research as advanced by Pinar et al., (2008), the Personal Practical Knowledge of Connelly and Clandinin is of most interest here. It assumes teachers routinely enact theories of teaching and learning daily in classroom practice which comprises their 'personal practical knowledge' (Pinar et al. 2008, p.557). This is conceived as a combination of theory and practical knowledge born out of an individual's lived practical experiences. Britzman (1991) depicts this knowledge as 'contextual, affective, situated, flexible and fluid, aesthetic' (p.50) while Clandinin (1985) contends that knowledge comprises 'The body of convictions, conscious or unconscious, which have arisen from experience....and which are expressed in a person's actions.... both professionally and personally' (Clandinin 1985 p.362).

## Why use narrative?

For Cohler (1979) and Kohli (1981) narrative is seen to offer a sense of coherence and directionality to the story-teller as it connects the life events of an individual as it becomes a primary means of them understanding the varied events they experience. The whole narrative becomes imbued with significance and consequently has the ability to present, question, and interpret our experiences (Rosen 1988). DeWaele and Harre (1979) argue life events are then made intelligible when located in a sequence or an unfolding process, which Connelly and Clandinin (1990) encourage be written chronologically. This they consider to be more manageable as writing, 'a full-fledged autobiography or narrative ......can be baffling and discouraging' (p.9).

Gergen (1988) contends that events included within narratives are presumed to have some significance to the lives of the characters and to those who hear and tell the story. The narrative, defined as 'the making of meaning from personal experience...in which storytelling is the key element' (Connelly and Clandinin 1988, p.16), is seen as a vital conduit to allow the individual to understand themselves, their lives past and present and their futures (Sarbin 1986). The core argument of Mead is that as the self emerges it is simultaneously influenced by the practical conduct of social interactions with others. As such for Mead (1934) the self is reflective and actively engaged reflexively in processing what is happening. By characterising this as 'an ongoing internal conversation' (Dillon 2010, p.258) with ourselves Mead describes how these two aspects of the self (the 'I' and the 'Me') establish a kind of internal dialogue, which enables the individual to develop a capacity to monitor and evaluate the self and become self-reflective in an attempt to understand ourselves better. For Dewey this is best understood by the active union of the principles of continuity and interaction which provide a measure of the 'significance and value of an experience' (Dewey 1938, p.44-45). While Dewey argues that 'experience is a moving force' (p.

38) which does not occur simply within the individual but every experience has an 'active side which changes to some degree the objective condition under which experience are had' (p. 39).

Narrative accounts portray how teachers come to understand their classroom lives: how they come to understand and make sense of their world. Therefore, within narrative the "story" is prevalent as it requires the telling of "stories". Narrative inquiry enables an individual to present their lives by the use of a story, to interpret their past to make it more meaningful as a principal way of thinking about their experiences (Connelly and Clandinin 2006). As such it is the study of an individual's experience, presented as a storied event, in which, 'lives are lived, told, retold, and relived in storied ways on storied landscapes' (Clandinin and Murphy 2006, p.598). Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) argue that narrative accounts are grounded in Dewey's theory of experience (1938: 1997). In drawing upon Dewey's experiential continuum, they consider experience as a developing stream, where an individual's personal, social and material environment are in constant interaction with their conscious mind in an attempt to 'make possible a new way of dealing with them' (Dewey 1981 p.175). In this respect experience for Dewey consists of a transaction between the individual and whatever at that time constitutes their environment, and consequently the experience forms new relations between the individual their environment, life, and community. As the individual passes from one situation to another his world and his environment expands or contracts. In summary narrative is not an idealist account, nor a retelling of history as an idea, but rather it is the retelling of the experience.

The three features of Dewey's ontology of experience that comprise the principles of Continuity, Transaction and Situation are each relevant here as they comprise the prominence of the social dimension via an interaction (or transaction) with others, the temporality of knowledge and the continuity of the experience. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) contend that narrative allows a researcher to explore the stories that individuals live and tell, as the story represents a fusion of their influences – be they social, environmental and life-history. The underpinning Dewey's theory highlights the importance of telling stories so that through the act of speaking the practitioner tells of their continuation of experience or their 'the experiential continuum' (1938, p.33) within their setting. In a comparable manner the ecological theory of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) encourages individuals through story-telling to relate their experiences of practice via the chordal triad which draws upon the iterational (past), the projective (future imaginings) and the practical-evaluative (present) dimensions. Through the use of these dimensions insights can be made regarding the 'tone' of an individual's experience at various times of their lives. However, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) do not only require the configuration of agency to be acknowledged but it also requires a recognition of the varied temporal-relational contexts of an individual.

Conceptualising agency helps to explain how an individual's agentic orientation can differ between contexts and times.

## The theoretical power of narrative

The theoretical power of the narrative is derived from its ability to aid our understanding of experiences within educational settings (Connelly and Clandinin 1990). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue that humans are story-telling organisms who 'individually and socially lead 'storied lives'' (p.2). The study of narrative considers the ways in which an individual experiences the world and where individual teachers are story-tellers and characters in their own stories and the stories of others.

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) development of narrative is strongly influenced by Dewey. His writing on the nature of experience became their 'imaginative backdrop' (p.2) and a key term employed in their studies. For Clandinin and Connelly (2000) Dewey's development of the term 'experience' provided a fitting means to understand educational life as he understood 'experience' to be both social and personal and simultaneously present, always connected and always within a social context. An important criterion of experience that Dewey embraced was that of continuity, the idea that experiences 'grow out of other experiences' (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, p.2) which had found further significance in their work.

Within their Three-Dimensional Space theory (2000) they posit the dimension of Continuum which considers the past by looking backwards to remembered experiences and stories, the present by looking at current experiences and stories, and to the future by looking forward to possible experiences and plot (timelines). Correspondingly, the ecological theory of agency of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) posit a similar dimension by suggesting that agency should be viewed as a 'configuration of influences from the past, orientations towards the future and engagement with the present' (p.972). They refer to these three dimensions as the iterational, the projective and the practical– evaluative dimension, which each play a part in concrete but the extent to which they contribute to the achievements of agency varies.

Therefore, when an individual is positioned along Dewey's continuum of experiences the imagined now, the imagined past and the imagined future at each point along the continuum has a past experiential base which points to an experiential future.  For Clandinin and Connelly (2000) this too has significance within their theory of Personal Practical Knowledge as they explain that this theory it is similarly located within the individual's 'past experience.... present mind and body, and .... future plans and actions' (p.25) and that it is used by an individual to help them re-construct their past intentions plan for the future while they contend with demands of the present situation. They argue that through a life there is always a 'history' which is always changing and is always

going somewhere, and that given the constraints or practicalities of the issue at hand one particular aspect of the 'history' may come into focus more readily to lead the subsequent action. However, drawing upon Dewey, they argue the individual moves back and forth between the personal and social simultaneously thinking about the past, the present and future in an expanding social environment prior to determining the act. In this sense, for Connelly and Clandinin (1988) narrative is a 'circular understanding of an individual which is flexible and fluid' (pp.25-26). Narrative recognises that individuals say and do different things in different circumstances, and that different circumstance bring different aspects of their (past) experience to bear on the situation at hand (pp.25-26). Of consequence this acknowledges how narrative links to the ecological theories of agency. The Transactional theory of Dewey provides both a theoretical framework (i.e., ecological model of agency) and a methodology for exploring it (i.e., narrative research).

### The power of the Three-Dimensional Space approach

The Three-Dimensional Space approach of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) is underpinned by Dewey's Transactional theory. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) approach comprises the Interactional, the Continuum and the Situation.

The Interactional dimension relates to their personal and social interactions with others. Within the Transactional theory Dewey argues a transaction takes place between the individual and his environment which includes others the individuals may be talking to or resources or material using or whatever he interacts with. For Dewey 'Everything depends upon the quality of the experience' (1938, p.27) and the 'agreeableness or disagreeableness' (p.27) of that experience. This outcome will influence all subsequent experiences. The Continuum dimension relates to the past, present and future which reflects Dewey's principle of continuity of experience - that 'every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after' (p.35). In this sense the quality of subsequent experiences had by an individual will become modified in some way. For Dewey when continuity and interaction unite or intercept, they determine the quality, measure and value of the experience. The third dimension of Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) is that of Situation or place within which these experiences are located. For Dewey an individual lives 'in' a series of situations. A situation is created when the individual interacts with others, and whatever at the time constitutes the environment to bring about the experience.

Their focus on experience draws upon the philosophical thoughts of Dewey, who contends an individual's experience remains a central lens for understanding an individual, and that experience should be viewed as continuous whereby one experience leads to and informs another. Dewey's premise has become the basis for their approach. They argue that to understand individuals an

examination of their personal experiences and their interactions with others should be considered. Additionally, attention should be paid to the continuity of these experiences and how experiences are generated by other experiences which in turn lead to further experiences.

Of significance the Three-Dimensional Space approach of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) closely correlates with the ecological theory and of the Chordal traid of agency as formulated by Emirbayer and Mische (1998). Here the achievement of agency is understood as the sum total of influences of the past (the iterational), orientations towards the future (the projective) and engagement within the present (the practical-evaluative). Correspondingly, as Biesta and Tedder (2006) and Priestley et al. (2015) have drawn upon the Chordal Triad when developing their own agentic thinking. Thus, the Three-Dimensional Space approach of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) draws together narrative with agency in a consistent and coherently conceptual manner, which is in turn drawn from Dewey's Transactional theory.

Within narrative approach and the ecological theory of agency what an individual says and does is of equal significance. Narrative approach clearly relies upon an individual telling and re-telling their stories. Cochran-Smith and Lyle (1990) argue that 'What is missing from the knowledge base for teaching.... are the voices of teachers themselves, the questions teachers ask, the ways teachers use writing and intentional talk in their work lives, and the interpretive frames teachers use to understand and improve their own classroom practice' (p.2). The narrative provides a means to capture talk which allows the practitioner to 'speak of life-in-the -moment' (Welty 1979, p.164) of 'frictions and failures...... inadequacies [and] shortcomings' (Schwab 1969, p.16) etc via 'new modes of attack' which are not reliant upon 'old habits of mind' (Schwab 1969, p.18).

Correspondingly, within the practical-evaluative domain of an ecological understanding of agency several cultural factors are identified which when further analysed include forms of talk. In particular, the talk is characterised by inner forms of dialogue, that is the conversation an individual has with themselves, and outer forms of dialogue, that is the conversation an individual has with others within the setting. The inner form of talk corresponds to Archer's understanding of an inner dialogue (Archer, 2000a), where an individual through the process of reflexive deliberation 'literally talks to themselves .... about ... things that might constrain or enable them' (Fleetwood 2008, p.184).

Narrative is seen an essential feature of teachers' thought (Connelly and Clandinin 1990) and whereas initially it seems to be more of a personal matter it becomes increasingly more social in nature and more impactful as a consequence. While the story may be told for many reasons Elbaz argues it has an 'impact on its audience which reverberates out in many direction' (1992, p.423). This effect of 'narrative echoing' occurs when one teacher's story resonates so that a connection

or an 'emotional link' is made (Conle et al. 1991, p.8). Therefore, the 'catalyst' (Goodson 2003) of narrative aids understanding of the life of a teacher, which should not only be narrated but be 'located....to a wider contextualised mode' (p.25). While the content of narrative has been embraced with ease Goodson (2003) argues that the context of narrative has not been 'sufficiently developed' (p.27). Narrative has the potential to move us into the terrain of the social, as 'stories are pre-eminently ways of relating individual and events to social contexts" (Armstrong 1987, p.14), and it provides a 'breathing space' (p.31) to stop and look to understand their practice.

## In summary

This review of literature has considered theories of agency and has recognised agency as a contested concept. It began by considering the origins of agency by examining Giddens's (1984) theory of structuration and Archer's (1995) seminal realist social theory, to further the debate of the importance of 'structure' and 'agency' before examining Dewey's (1938) Transactional theory and Mead's theoretical perspective of Symbolic Interactionism (1934).

A detailed theorisation of how an individual's ability and their contextual factors interact to shape their sense of agency was then considered (Emirbayer and Mische 1998) prior to an examination of the ecological view of agency posited by Biesta and Tedder (2007) and the theory of teacher agency by Priestley et al. (2015). The Transactional theory of Dewey was shown to significantly inform the ecological approach of Emirbayer and Mische, who drew upon his idea of the experiential continuum to argue that for agency to be fully understood it will have to be 'analytically situated with the flow of time' (pp.963-964). In turn their ecological interpretation of agency has been drawn upon by Priestley et al. to demonstrate that certain material, cultural and/or structural factors can be identified as factors which serve to constrain and/or enable agency in practice.

This review then considered the theoretical power of narrative and established how the *Practical* (Schwab 1969) can assist individuals to make choices regarding curriculum issues. This literature was considered impactful in responding to Goodson's (1989) request that 'We need....to know more about teachers' lives' (p.138) and while acknowledging this applies to the profession generally it remains pertinent for those at the forefront of curriculum reform to better understand their 'storied lives' (Connelly and Clandinin 1990, p.2). However, of emerging significance is the (re)acknowledgment of 'the importance of teacher agency' (Biesta et al. 2015, p.621) yet this re-emphasis raises a fundamental question, that is how can practitioners exercise forms of agency. As this research aims to understand the practice of those positioned at the front line of curriculum development two research questions will be addressed:

1. What kinds of factors constrain and/or enable agency?

2. How might schools act to create more positive opportunities and outcomes for agency?

# CHAPTER THREE

## Methodology

This chapter begins with an outline of the epistemological and ontological assumptions that informed my approach to this study. The adoption of narrative and in particular the Three-Dimensional Space approach (Clandinin and Connelly 2000), Story lines analysis (Gergen and Gergen 1986; 1988) and Critical Incident Technique (Chell 2004) were used to inform the questions of the semi-structured interview which was chosen to elicit responses from the WBCs. Details of how the sample was decided upon and the recruitment methods used are explained prior to a review of ethical considerations undertaken before, during and after the data gathering process (Watt 1995). As a researcher with near experience (Mannay 2010) I discuss my positionality prior to explaining how I analysed the data. I conclude this chapter with a reflection.

### The overall approach

To understand why I adopted a particular methodology I have considered the epistemological and ontological assumptions that informed my approached to this study. My beliefs determine how I view the world, understand it and act within it, as I am, 'bound with a net of epistemological and ontological premises which - regardless of ultimate truth or falsity – become partially self-validating' (Bateson 1972, p.34). Whilst my epistemological assumptions refer to how I purport to know something, Bateson (1972) contends they are my attempts to identify how I simultaneously 'think and decide' (Keeney 1983, p.13) when constructing my theories of knowledge. My related, yet separate, ontological assumptions refer to how I perceive reality but how we know and what we know go hand in hand and 'cannot be separated' (Bateson 1972, p.34).

As a former teacher my thoughts about knowledge and reality have been influenced by positivist discourses in education but in undertaking this study, I have become persuaded by more naturalist discourses of knowing and being. These have led me, epistemologically speaking, to adopt an interpretivist stance and ontologically a constructivist position. My role as Deputy Head of a secondary school had become more objective and process driven, as performativity and accountability measures led my practice. They became aligned with a positivist approach during the second stage of policymaking in education in Wales (Egan 2017).  However, this research has followed a qualitative approach within a naturalism tradition (Gubrium and Holstein 1997) to understand social reality with the intention of providing richer descriptions of individuals and 'interpretations in natural settings' (Bryman 2008, p.366). This paradigm has provided me with a 'basic set of beliefs' to guide my actions (Guba 1990, p.17). Of the interpretive paradigm structures posited by Denzin and Lincoln (2018) this research has followed a constructivist-interpretivist approach.

As my epistemological orientation has been interpretivist, I argue that individuals continually construct aspects of their social reality and that it varies accordingly to circumstance and situation and consequently the constructs which are 'socially and experientially based' are formed and are determined by the individual who owns them (Guba 1990, p.27). Similarly, Guba (1990) contends, 'our individual personal reality, the way we think life is and the part we are to play in it, is self-created…[as] we put together our own personal reality' (p.73). From this basis my contention has been that knowledge and that of the WBC is constructed through lived experiences and interactions with others. My interpretive stance asserts knowledge is subjective and constructed by individuals, based on their experiences, knowledge and emotion. As I undertook this research within my own profession it was particularly important that I recognised my impact on the research process, for example, through the act of interpretation. Within my ethics application (Appendix 8) I have acknowledged the potential for power asymmetry (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009) which suggests qualitative research interviews can become a one-way discourse in which the researcher has a specific agenda which they pursue at all costs.

## A qualitative approach

The undisputed value of qualitative research is its ability to 'make the world more visible' through range of 'interpretive and material practices' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p.3) which enables individuals make sense of phenomena to elicit meaning. This research has adopted a qualitative approach and from the five approaches considered by Creswell (2007) which include the phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, case study and narrative, narrative was chosen. This term is ascribed to a text or discourse which has a particular emphasis on the stories shared by individuals (Polkinghorne 1995). It provides a way of analysing and understanding stories as 'narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event action or series …...chronologically connected' (Czarniawska 2004, p.17).

Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) suggest narratives are considered to be equally the method and phenomenon of the research whereby as a method it concentrates on the experiences of lived and recounted stories. In determining whether the research question best fits narrative research Creswell (2007) argues it is best employed when seeking to capture 'detailed stories of … a small number of individuals' (p.55) and through their reporting of individual experiences chronologically ordered to give meaning to those experiences. When 'configure[d] into a story using a plot line' (p.54) by the researcher Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue they offer clarity.

## Data collection methods
### Recruiting the sample
Of the 185 secondary schools (WG 2019) in Wales some are Welsh medium, bilingual, or faith based, some have higher than average pupils who are eFSM (eligible for free school meals), EAL

(English as an additional language) and/or ALN (an additional learning need) (Appendix 7) and some have a primary provision but not all have a post 16 provision. The variation of WBC experience and practice may be 'attributed to a range of factors' (NAW 2019, p.22), and the issue of variability is a 'known issue' to WG' (p.23).

Within the research I used purposive sampling as my participants needed to be WBC. In addition, I used convenience sampling which is appropriate 'by virtue its accessibility' (Bryman 2008, p.183) and snowballing (Creswell 2007; Miles and Huberman 1994) a form of convenience sampling used to establish more contacts. I used my former secondary school colleagues who now work in schools across South Wales to generate leads. They were a valuable starting point. This experience mirrors that of Becker (1963); 'My first interviewees were with people I had met in …. I asked them to put me in contact with others who would be willing to discuss their experiences with me' (pp.45-46). However, this sample may not be representative as all were employed in secondary schools in south Wales.

| WBC alias | Years in teaching | Previous roles | Age range of school | Medium of school | Capped 9 score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lewis | 14 | Head Art / WBC | 11-16 | English | 342 |
| David | 4 | Head PE | 11-18 | English | 368 |
| Michael | 19 | Head ICT | 11-18 | English | 430 |
| Josephine | 24 | Head PSE and Year | 3-16 | English | 352 |
| Bettsi | 25 | Head Business / ICT | 11-16 | English | 334 |
| Andrea | 8 | Geography | 11-18 | Welsh | 331 |
| Laura | 25 | Reception / RE | 11-18 | English | 389 |
| Ria | 25 | Head RE | 11-18 | English | 348 |
| Nia | 10 | History | 11-18 | English | 409 |
| Jez | 15 | Music | 11-18 | English | 359 |
| Denise | 16 | Head Business / WBC | 11-18 | English | 367 |
| Chloe | 14 | Head Business | 11-18 | English | 395 |
| Cath | 24 | Head PE | 11-18 | English | 379 |
| Glyn | 15 | Head Drama | 11-18 | English | 375 |
| Carol | 10 | Head Drama | 11-18 | Welsh | 387 |

*Figure 6: The sample*

Figure 6 (Appendix 7) summarises the sample. It provides details of the WBCs, their given pseudonym, how many years they had been in teaching and what previous roles they had held. Additionally, it provides a contextual overview of their school, e.g., the age range, whether they are an English or Welsh Medium school and what their average Capped 9 score is calculated to be. Within this sample the WBCs had taught from between 4 and 25 years and some had previous TLRs. Additionally, two taught through the medium of Welsh, one had a KS1 and 2 provisions, while twelve had a KS5 provision. The variation of WBC experience and practice may be 'attributed to a range of factors' (NAW 2019, p.22). Figure 6 also illustrates which are the highest

and lowest preforming school, while Appendix 7 provides additional contextual data for each school.

Rowley (2012) argues potential participants are busy people and if they do consent to give of their time they will not want to be inconvenienced, embarrassed, or expected to reveal something confidential. In essence, securing interest concerns the willingness and availability of the participants. I used my former colleagues to broker the initial introductions and when each WBC gave their initial agreement to participate. I contacted their Head Teacher to gain their consent and provided them with an overview of the project and its aims. I was aware that I may have known some of the Head Teachers but it was unlikely that I would have known the WBC.

When considering how many interviews would be beneficial and the length of each, I considered Rowley's 'theoretical' approach (2012, p.263). I estimated how long the interview would take, how many I would need, and how many questions should be included. In particular, I considered the nature of my research questions, my choice of using a semi-structured interview and the requirement of participants to construct and annotate a story-line. In contrast, within Rowley's 'pragmatic approach' (2012, p.263) I took into account both the length of time each WBC was likely to make available for the interview, and the number of willing participants. However, I had to remain cognisant that the interviews generated sufficient data and that I must be prepared to adapt to unforeseen circumstances– e.g., participant being late, interruptions etc.  I allowed additional time to conduct further interviews, or follow-up interviews to clarify or extend data I gathered from initial interviews.

### Narrative analysis

While seeking to define narrative analysis various models from across research domains have been posited (Cortazzi, 1993). Lieblich et al.'s (1998) four-classification schema identifies four approaches: holistic-content, holistic-form, categorical-content, and categorical-form.

Categorical-content analysis involves studying categories of the topic and extracting excerpts from the text before classifying and gathering them into categories; e.g., the introduction of the 2015 WB iteration, which would be quite narrow. The categorical-form approach focuses on discrete stylistic or linguistic characteristics of specified parts of the narrative; e.g., the use of metaphors. The categorical-content and the categorical-form approach were not considered to be the most suitable for this study. Conversely, the holistic-content appeared to be the most suitable for this study as it provides a means to understand an individual's story and similarly so did the holistic-form approach. It examines the plot or structure within a complete life story and looks for positive or negative experience and whether an epiphany or a turning point materialises.

The holistic-content and holistic-form involve reading the transcript and analysing the story before applying one of three possible approaches: the Sequence approach of Riessman (1993), the Problem-Solution approach of Yussen and Ozcan (1997) and the Three-Dimensional Space approach (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Reissman's first person account of experience analyses how individuals order the course of their experience and make sense of events through five levels of representation: attending; telling; transcribing; analysing and reading. In contrast, Yussen and Ozcan (1997) employ narrative thought as a theoretical perspective which requires the researcher to undertake some form of cognitive activity e.g., listen, talk, read, write or imagine an activity in a particular setting for a particular purpose, prior to analysing the data in terms of plot structure [that of Characters; Setting; Problem; Actions and Resolution]. However, Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) advise that when narrative research is to be undertaken the broader holistic format of the three-dimensional approach is most appropriate as it aims to provide a chronology of events and relies on a process of (re)reading data to acknowledge the interaction, the continuity and the situation of the individual.

### Three-Dimensional Space approach (Clandinin and Connelly 2000).

A strength of this approach, deemed important within this study is that it is concerned with matters relating to an individual's interactions, both at a personal and social level. Further, it identifies the continuum of their experiences as it considers their past, present and future experiences. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue people are story-telling beings who 'individually and socially lead storied lives' (p.2). The Three-Dimensional Space approach also acknowledges the importance of the situation or place within which the storied lives are located.

### Story lines (Gergen 1986; 1988)

The work of Gergen (1986; 1988) used narrative structures as stories. This theoretical analysis of the narrative sees the narrative plot being converted to a linear form and 'These linear forms are called story lines' (1988, p.99). This framework has been used in Beijaard et al.'s (1999) research of teacher experiences to provide insight into what teachers do and think when making sense of their practice, and their management of critical incidents as they occur. Oobekkind-Marchand et al. (2017) inspired by Beijaard et al. (1999) used story lines to provide insights into the temporal aspects of teacher agency as story line provides a graphic representation via 'inclines and declines within the story lines' (p.40) to represent a teacher's experiences. Story lines enable the individual to subjectively consider their life events which can be illustrated visually to 'reveal peaks and valleys in people's lives and their relative impact on the narrator [they] draw attention to certain critical events in the person's life' (Gergen 1988, p.111)

While narrative is derived from an experience and is structured chronologically by events (Jalongo and Isenberg 1995) social constructivists' challenge the established wisdom from a theoretical

perspective arguing that the data they provide via their story should not be viewed as absolute truth but as a temporal construction. In this light it may be more or less dramatic than what actually occurred. The social constructivist assumes narratives are social products or temporary constructions and are not representations of the 'real self' underlying the story. This can be considered a disadvantage but Gergen (1988) posits that narrative is socially constructed through continuous interaction and subsequent adjustment.

### Critical Incident Technique (Chell 2004)

Critical incident technique (CIT hereafter) is a practical methodology which can assist in the identification of problematic situations to reveal the practitioner's engagement with varying degrees of agency. As such it encourages the individual to tell their story of memorable events. Its inductive stance allows for 'freedom of expression' (Cox et al. 1993) by obtaining a recounted story of a lived event (Sharoff 2008). By isolating certain happenings, the individual is enabled to reveal a happening, to study 'turning points' (Woolsey 1986, p.251) with the intent of viewing the experience 'differently' (Jalongo and Isenberg 1995, p.192).

Within education, Tripp (1993), Woods (1993) and Sikes (1985) have used CIT to analyse factors relating to the practice of teachers. Tripp (1993) uses CIT to support teachers' identification and articulation of 'their professional awareness' (p.18) by developing their understanding of practice, particularly within the area of classroom-based routines. Woods (1993), however, contends that periodically practice becomes marred by critical incidents or 'highly charged moments' (p.230) which bring radical change and the potential for growth and development. While, Sikes (1985) concludes the issue of critical phases' or 'periods of strain' (Strauss and Rainwater 1962, p.105) is an area of importance which become significant in transformations of identity (Strauss 1959). Sikes considered such moments to be pivotal 'turning points' (p.67) prompting particular kinds of action and describes them as revelatory 'flashbulb' (1985, p.57) moments which govern the most important choices in a practitioner's life, e.g., how they maintain their image as an authoritative figure.

### Interviews

While the writings of Bryman and Bell (2003) and Saunders et al. (2009) offer a basic grounding in data collection methods, others pay particular attention to qualitative methods e.g., ethnography and case study (Cresswell 2008; Silverman, 2010), while others concentrate upon the interview (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008; Roulston, 2010).

The interview with its 'flexible and dialogic form' (Brinkman 2018, p.577) has played an increasing role within contemporary and educational research (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Luft et al. 2011). Interviews are used when insights into or understanding of 'facts…. opinions.... stories of any particularly negative or positive experiences are sought (Rowley 2012, p.261).  Whilst the

interview appears commonplace its perceived simplicity can be misleading (Brown and Danaher 2019). Unforeseen and unintended difficulties can arise: e.g., communication restrictions (Roulston 2014) or the imbalance of power between interviewer and interviewee (Jacobsson et al. 2013).

For Maccoby and Maccoby the interview is 'a face-to-face verbal exchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons' (1954, p.449). This definition relates to the structured and unstructured forms of the interviews, which Brinkman (2013) argues should be considered as a continuum where the extremes exist only in theory.  An interview can be categorised by its degree of structure (Rowley 2012). A wholly structured interview would typically be comprised of closed questions (Brown and Danaher 2019) where researchers are tasked to '[R]ead the questions exactly as worded to every respondent and are trained never to provide information beyond that which is scripted in the questionnaire' (Conrad and Schober 2008, p.173). This ensures data can be compared easily and is properly quantified. Utilised in surveys the passive recordings of opinions and attitudes do not take advantage of the dialogical potentials for knowledge production.

Parker (2005) contends a structured interview does not exist. He argues that the interviewee will often speak before the interview begins and will continue even when the interview has ended and that these unplanned comments often provide an insight to understand the responses given to the pre-scheduled questions. A major critique of structured interview is that the interpretive frame does not go beyond the pre-scheduled structure and so the researcher cannot benefit from what is said in the conversation. Similarly, there is no such thing as an unstructured or intensive (Loftland and Loftland 1995) interview because the interviewer will always have an aim about what should happen within the conversation (Brinkman 2018). However, there should be an appropriate level of structure which allows participants to raise questions or concerns (Latour 2000). Within this approach Parker (2005) advises researchers consider how to involve the interviewee actively and how to avoid flooding the conversation. While neither a completely structured nor unstructured interviews are possible it is productive to recognise differences theoretically.

An unstructured interview is based on a number of issues or prompts and seeks to encourage the participant to respond to general topics to produce a 'freely flowing and emergent conversation' (Brown and Danahe 2019, p.77). Accordingly, in their unstructured form they are employed in life story interviews to disclose the 'most important influences, experiences, circumstances, issues, themes and lessons of a lifetime' (Atkinson 2002, p.125).  However, they can be difficult to analyse and interpret. The principal role of the interviewer is to listen and to resist the need to interrupt except when to question or clarify the response given. By comparison, the semi-structured interview (Warren 2002) makes more use of the knowledge producing potential of dialogue. While

positioned somewhere between that which is wholly planned (Madill 2011) and an entirely instinctive conversation it has been chosen to elicit richer forms of data from the WBCs in this approach. This would ensure an active, 'contextual…and pragmatic' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, p.17) conversation.

Interviews, in summary, are conducted to produce knowledge. My interview schedule contained a list of areas to be explored and questions to be asked with a task to be completed. This was to ensure the development of a conversation (Irvine et al. 2013). In Wales there are 185 WBC (Welsh Government 2019). I gathered initial data from fifteen (8% of those practising). I then returned to five participant WBCs to examine their stories of practice in more detail. My interview schedule can be found in Appendix 10.

### The Interview schedule(s)

The Three-Dimensional Space Approach of narrative analysis (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) was employed as a means to record the experiences of the WBC. This was augmented by Storyline Analysis (Gergen 1986; 1988), and Critical Incident Technique (Chell 2004) which helped identify details of significant events. By using an ecological understanding of agency (Emirbayer and Mische 1989; Biesta and Tedder 2007; Priestley et al. 2015) which theoretically connects to these methods it was possible to ascertain whether agency was or was not achieved.

Question 1 (Figure 7a) of the interview schedule required the WBC to explain their background. This question is underpinned by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Interactional (personal) dimension and their Continuity (past) dimension and corresponds to the iterational dimension of Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) Chordal Traid. These dimensions are drawn from Dewey's principle of Continuity which explains how an individual changes with each experience and how these changes affect all the subsequent experiences, either to enrich or restrict (Dewey 1939, p.25) experiences of the future.

Question 2 (Figure 7a) of the schedule required the WBC to focus upon their work with others within their coordinating role. This question is underpinned by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Interactional (social) dimension along with the Situation/ Place dimension and it also reflects Mead's core argument that as self emerges it is simultaneously influenced by the practical conduct of social interactions with others. Similar this question relates to Dewey's idea that all experiences exist within a context of 'continual adaption of the individual to and within their environment' (Dewey 1938/1997, p.38).

*Figure 7a: Questions 1 and 2 of Interview schedule 1*

Question 3 (Figure 7b) of the schedule required the WBC to records their own thoughts on a blank A3 storyline (Gergen 1986 and 1988). The creation of a visual storyline provided each participant with an opportunity to explicate aspects of their story and while it was a task in itself it served as a prompt enabling them to talk about their practice. This question is underpinned by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Interactional (personal and social) dimension, Continuity (past, present and future) and Situation/ Place dimension. It also corresponds to the Chordal Triad of agency (Emirbayer and Mische 1998) and the ecological concept of agency of Biesta and Tedder (2007) and Priestley et al. (2015) and the separate dimensions of Iterational, Practical-evaluative and Projective. These theories in concert draw upon the Transactional theory of Dewey within which the principles of Continuity, Transaction and Situation are of equal importance.

Question 4 (Figure 7c) asked the WBC to articulate the values which underpinned their practice. This question reflects the Chordal Triad (Emirbayer and Mische 1998) and the ecological concept of agency as posited by Biesta and Tedder (2007) and Priestley et al. (2015) as it relates to the three separate dimensions of Iterational, Practical-evaluative and Projective.

**3. Could we construct a storyline,** of highs and lows, over the time you've been **co-ordinator.**

Begin with x axis – time line

Consider events – y axis: Tell / explain / describe – significant/ memorable/ important/ crucial / critical / revelationary / made you turn a corner events by annotating

+

0

−

Time
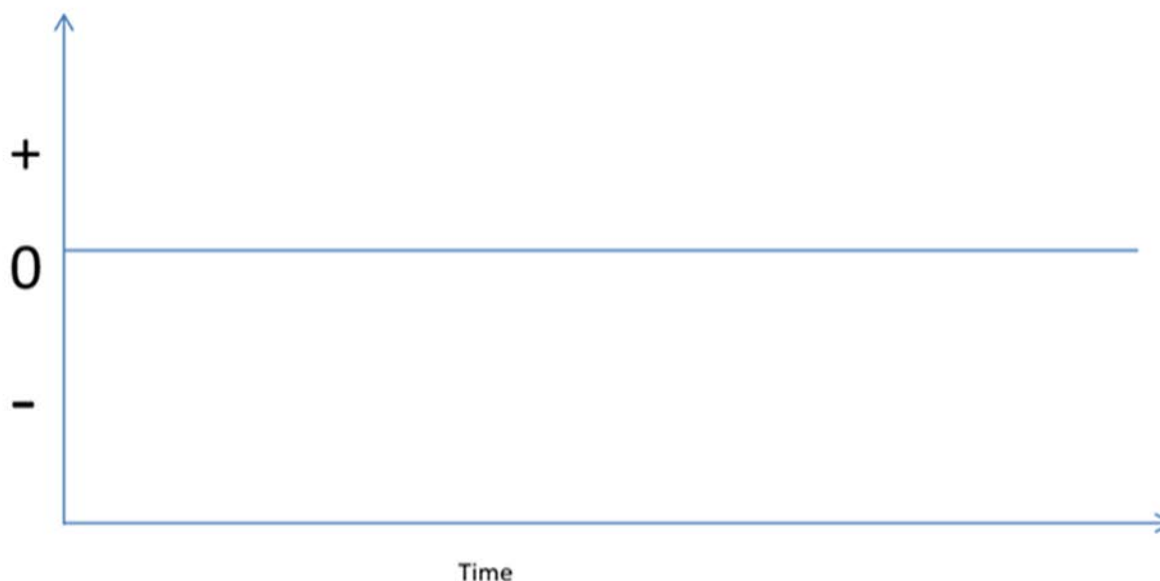
*Figure 7b: Question of Interview schedule 1, printed as A3*

Finally, Question 5 (Figure 7c) asked the WBC to consider the future of the WBQ. These final questions are underpinned by the projective dimension of the Chordal Triad (Emirbayer and Mische 1998) and the ecological concept of agency (of Biesta and Tedder 2007 and Priestley et al. 2015). Similarly, it corresponds to Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Continuity (future) dimension.

4. **Tell me what values underpin your practice as a teacher / as a leader?**

5. **Tell me about the future of WBQ as you see it?**

6. **I think I've covered everything....Is there anything you would like to ask?**

*Figure 7c: Questions 4,5 and 6 of Interview schedule 1*

Prior to Interview 1 I piloted Interview schedule 1 with a former colleague (Sampson 2004; Yin 2003). This was crucial to check for understanding of the question, ability to comprehend, ability to

respond meaningfully, phrasing of questions to estimate the length of the interview and whether additional prompts may be required. It further provided opportunity to test out logistical issues e.g., background noise and my proficiency in recording.

It became clear that the questions did follow a logical path in terms of flow but my participants may answer parts of later questions as they contended with earlier prompts. I noted that I would need to be aware of this. Similarly, there was some repetition within Question 3 as it touched upon Question 1 and 2 particularly. I noted I would need to be cognisant that all questions were answered and that I may need to pass over questions if they had already been addressed. Equally with reference to Question 3, despite advice of Butt et al. (1992), the pilot interviewee preferred to begin from the start of their WB career, along the 'x axis'. I noted I would need to be aware of any particular preference each interviewee may have regarding a starting point. However, starting on the neutral vertical line, along the 'y axis' was beneficial as from which 'highs' and 'lows' could be located more easily.

The schedule for the second and subsequent Interview comprised a re- introduction and a recap regarding the background to the research, the ethical rights and responsibilities etc. It focussed on changes regarding their role or who they had been working with and they were asked to look again at their story lines to provide more detail. Likewise, they were encouraged to consider their values and the future of the WBQ.

*Ethics*

Throughout this study I adhered to BERA (2018) guidelines and followed Denscombe's (2014) 'key principles' (p.343). Denscombe (2018) advises researchers to operate in an open and honest manner (p.346). My overriding responsibility to participants was to act within an ethic of respect for all individuals including myself involved in the study. I endeavoured 'to treat all fairly, sensitively, and with dignity and freedom from prejudice, in recognition of both their rights and of differences arising from age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief or any other significant characteristic.' (BERA 2018, Section 1). In this respect, my intent was to protect participants' interests (Denscombe 2014, p.344) by ensuring no harm would arise to any involved. Accordingly, all names have been assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity and provide anonymity. I felt that using a pseudonym rather than initials would give a stronger sense of their voice in the discussion. My aim was to put participants at their ease and avoid making excessive demands on them and as such I met with participants when and where was convenient for them. I limited the meeting to 60 minutes and assured participants that all data would be anonymised treated confidentially and stored securely. During the data collection phase I was aware that sensitive and/or personal information could be shared with me

regarding the participant, others they work with or their organisation. While I would not and did not seek out such information pro-actively, I was aware that during the course of the interviews such sensitivities may be disclosed. This was the case with the last interview held with Andrea (BERA 2018, Section 34).

At the start of the study, I ensured I had gained voluntary participation based on informed consent from each participant (Denscombe 2014, p.345). I asked former colleagues if they would speak to their WBC on my behalf and inquire whether they would be happy to find out more about my research. If that were so, I asked my colleagues to provide me with an email address so I could make an initial, personal contact. I was mindful of the burden this may bring to former colleagues and had to respect both their decision and that of the WBC if they felt they were unable to help me. When they did feel happy to contribute to the research, I emailed the WBC personally to introduce myself and outline the remit of my research. I did this while I awaited ethical permission to be granted by Cardiff University (Appendix 8). I explained to each participant that I would require their voluntary informed consent in writing and that I would remain open to the possibility that they may wish, for any or no reason at any time, to withdraw their consent from participating within the study (BERA 2018, Section 8). I made sure that each understood they could withdraw at any point without needing to provide an explanation (BERA 2018, Sections 31 and 32).

Throughout the study I reminded participants what was involved in the study, what they would be asked to do, what would happen to the information they provided and how that information would be used. I made sure they understood this and how their data would be retained and shared. I confirmed that no secondary use of their data would be made (BERA 2018, Section 28). My aim was to remain transparent throughout the study (BERA 2018, Section 27).

Once ethical clearance had been given (Appendix 8) I emailed each WBC the following documentation:

- Head Teacher and Participant consent forms (Appendix 9)
- Interview schedule (Appendix 10)

I gathered qualitative data from fifteen WBC from the CSC, summarised in Figure 6. A more detailed version can be found in Appendix 7.

Finally, to ensure I complied with the law (Denscombe 2014, p.349) I took measures to ensure I kept participants' data confidential and anonymous (BERA 2018, section 40). I did this through the use of pseudonyms (BERA section 41) and I complied with the legal requirements regarding the storage and use of personal data. I was guided by the Data Protection Act (1998) and its subsequent replacement (from May 2018) the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This revised regulation entitled participants to know details relating to the storage of their personal data,

its uses and to whom it may be made available (BERA 2018, Section 48). All data was uploaded to the University's secure hard drive.

In summary, I chose not offer an incentive preferring a more transparent and intrinsic approach to my study (BERA Section 33).

## Positionality

As I have taught in secondary schools across south Wales for thirty years I was positioned near to my research. I was reassured by Abajian (2016) who documents how his research was not a dispassionate intellectual exercise as it arose from his own biography. During his research Abajian constantly inquired of himself 'how would another outsider feel' (p.36). By reflecting on the stance of an 'other' he continued to question any preconceptions and through reflection applied a 'crucial corrective to undermine the imbalance' (p.30). This precept underpinned my work.

## Researcher near with experience near

I describe myself as a 'researcher near' (Mannay 2010, p.93) as I was aware that my contemporary experience should not confer an advantage and neither be detrimental. I juxtaposed this with my intention to make this research formal but was reminded of Wolcott's (2009) advice, 'to treat fellow humans as people rather than objects of study to…. conduct research among others rather than on them' (p.17). As researcher I considered the ways I could embody the of role of 'friend, expert, collaborator' (Frost 2016, p.33) and thereby potentially influence the process of research (Partington 2009). Partington suggests a personal interest or a professional 'itch' may determine the choice of a research topic which I accordingly recognised. Further, I was aware that my relationship with the data could have an effect on how I interrogate and interpret my findings. Finally, Partington implies that my personal characteristics could influence the research design and my strategies for data collection, this included; 'My position....my intellectual motivation.... my experience (social capital, academic attainment, aspirations ....my physical presence (how I look, how I sound)' (Richardson 2015, p.157).

Given my subjectivity I positioned myself within the research process and remained cognisant of my personal assumptions and biography by employing the criterion of transparency, trustworthiness and reflexivity (Frost 2016). Similarly, I acknowledged how intrinsic underlying powers interplay between myself and my participants and in doing so endeavoured to 'flatten the hierarchy through processes of self-awareness, interactions with participants and openness in the conduct of reporting the research' (p.11).

The long-standing debate of researcher positionality portrays an insider as one who will render their contemporaries in an idealised, positive light, overshadowed and encompassed by shared beliefs and understandings (Mannay 2010). The insider myth suggests that qualities of impartiality

and emotional detachment reduces an outsider's' ability to understand the real complexities within the lives of the research participants. In contrast, the outsider myths contend that valid research can only be obtained when researcher maintains an objective stance and an emotional detachment from the research field. Such an epistemic stance can be misleading as it creates a false binary which fails to recognise complexities within the research relationship. Song and Parker's (1995) experience of interviewing concluded that their research was characterised by a wide array of research relationships which did not characterise them as being either one or the other. They argued that experience is too complex to conform to a dichotomy of 'insider/outsider' (p.243). While a binary understanding of the researcher is valid being a complete insider or a complete outsider is an under-developed concept. It does however, remain ill-considered to disregard the issue of proximity as the researcher. I endeavoured to remain cognisant of my experience and acknowledge my past.

Within the realm of familiarity operating between myself and the WBC a position emerged: I operated with near experience (Mannay 2010, p.96) and as an insider a 'researcher near' (p.93). The acknowledgement of position caused me to recognise the advantages and disadvantages of this stance. For example, while I was aware of the hierarchical organisation of a high school, the constraints of the timetable, budgets and imperative to improve pupil outcomes and meet achievement targets, I was simultaneously unaware of the particulars of the fifteen settings. I had not taught, for example, in any of the schools where each WBC is employed. Researching within in a familiar field can be advantageous as less cultural and linguistic obstacles are believed to impede the research. This allows participants to become more receptive and approachable and potentially be more willing to share their experiences (Atkinson et al. 2003). Conversely, barriers of perceived detachment and remoteness can be addressed through familiarity which can become problematic during research interviews (Rogan and de Kock 2005). Therefore, the influence of a common identity and experience needs to be recognised and acknowledged.

### Fighting what is familiar

Fighting what is familiar is best summed up by Harker when considering his research practice 'It seems strange to me now…. why couldn't I see it for myself' (Spindler 1982, p.31). His confession highlights the consequences of being too familiar with everyday events because they are commonplace. Becker (1971) reminds researchers to not only notice the obvious things which are in place to be observed but to look beyond what is obviously apparent and to record that which may be taken for granted. Drawing upon the work of Wolcott (1981) I needed to gain a fresh perspective of contemporary secondary school practice. The challenge of making the familiar strange in educational settings is well documented (Delamont and Atkinson 1995) yet a difficult endeavour. Within this interpretive research I needed to utilise techniques 'to make the familiar

strange and interesting again' (Erikson 1986, p.121). Of necessity, I needed to find a method that promoted dialogue which was not too controlled by my predetermined interview schedule to uncover aspects and overlooked elements of the participants' stories of practice. The use of the A3 storyline sheet during Question 3 was employed to help with this. I asked each participant to annotate both the 'x' and 'y' axis and plot significant events of their experiences of practice.

In ensuring taken-for-granted viewpoints are removed Delamont (2005) reasons researchers should leave behind the tried and tested and move towards the unchartered by considering seemingly untested approaches. Accordingly, I chose to use the storyline which draws on the work of Gergen and Gergen (1986; 1988) conceptual framework of narrative structures to serve as visual strategy to fight familiarity (Mannay 2010). This method was selected to specifically address the difficulties of insider research as I recognised; I was also 'experience near' (p.96). By employing this visual approach, I embedded the visual within the wider frame of the narrative and combined both verbal and visual data together and participants were able to reflect without the direction of an intrusive researcher voice. The production of storyline required reflection and contemplation over time as participants had to actively assess their sense of place and self. However, the researcher is never a complete insider or outsider; there will always be an element of familiarity where research can become clouded by presumptions and opportunities for innovation become overshadowed by current knowledge and practice (Geer 1964). Consequently, the use of visual methods become a means to de-familiarise.

## Analysis of Data

All transcriptions of Interview 1 were completed before Interview 2 was undertaken and the five WBCs who took part in Interview 2 had opportunity to review the data prior to Interview 2.

All forms of data analysis were applied to all the data sets which followed the phases of Braun and Clarke (2006, pp.87-97). This was deemed advantageous given its ability to: generate a summary of significant features, propose a 'thick description' of the data, highlight similarities and differences and generate insights. This process was undertaken to identify themes from across the data set and to understand the pattern of responses provided by WBC. This was to ensure the analysis was 'deliberate…. to persuade the reader of the plausibility of an argument' (Foster and Parker 1995, p.204) which would follow. The analysis of data began with the:

1. Re-production of story lines (Gergen 1988) using PowerPoint to aid legibility.

2. Analysis of transcripts using Three-Dimensional Space Model (Clandinin and Connelly 2000)

3. Analysis of transcripts using CIT approach (Chell 2004)

Storylines (Gergen 1988) enable the individual to consider life events via a visual format, as they 'reveal peaks and troughs in people's lives' (p.111). They are useful in highlighting significant events which serve as valuable conversational prompts when conducting interviews.



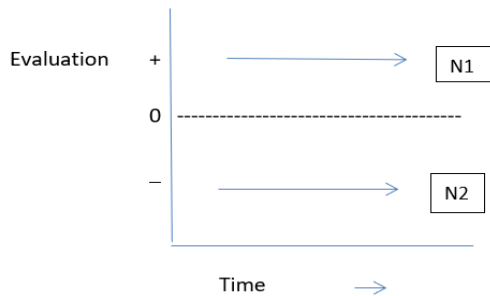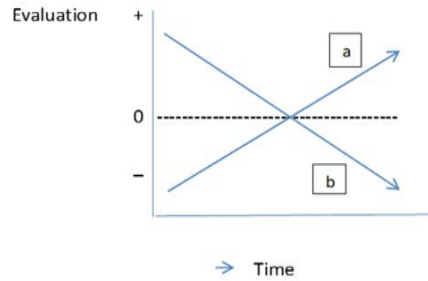*Figure 8: The stability narrative*

*Figure 9: The rudimentary narrative: regressive [b] and progressive [a]*

By conceptualising narratives in this way, it is possible to view the narrative form from the simple to the more complicated. Gergen (1988, p.9) posit the prototypes of the stability narrative (Figure 8) and the regressive and progressive narrative (Figure 9).
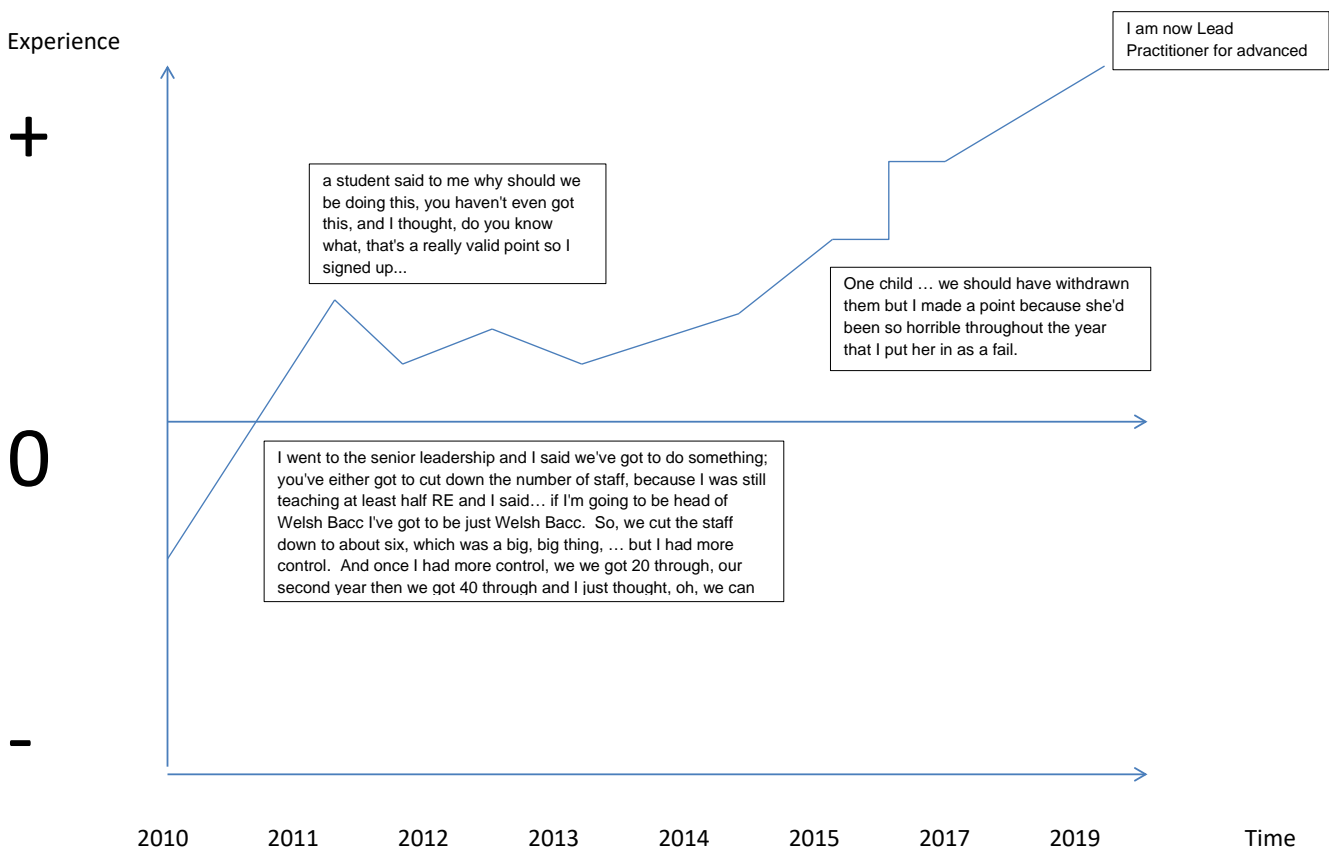


*Figure 10: Laura's story line*

Within Laura's story line her practice became increasingly more positive over time. This is depicted by her story line (Figure 10) which moves steadily upwards to the right from 2010. However, from 2012 to 2013 some fluctuations can be seen. Her story line regressed prior to a particular issue becoming resolved. From 2013 onwards the overall direction of the story line remains positive and progressive. Of importance here is the acceleration of the slope over time which demonstrates the rate of change and how the event was evaluated. Laura's steep slope highlights a higher degree of drama prior to reaching a peak in 2019.

## The Three-Dimensional Space Model

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) describe analysis via this model as a process of (re)reading data to consider the interaction, continuity and situation through the personal practical and professional knowledge landscape of the individual. This was accomplished by systematically colour coding the transcripts (Figure 11).

| Interaction | | Continuity | | | Situation/Place |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Personal | Social | Past | Present | Future | |
| Looks **inwards** to feelings, hopes. | Looks **outwards** to existential conditions with others. | Looks backwards to **remembered** experiences, and stories | Looks at **current** experiences and stories. | Look **forward** to possible experiences and plot lines. | Look at **context, time and place** with **characters'** intentions. |

*Figure 11:  Colour coding of Three-Dimensional Space Model*

This analysis notes matters relating to an individual's Interactions of their personal experiences and those with others; the Continuum of their experiences noting their Past, Present and Future experiences, and by Situation or Place attending to specific experiences upon their landscape. Laura 's journey (Figure 12) revealed an unconventional route into the WB. This extract was re-storied as: Having taught for 25 years, initially as a reception teacher, Laura became involved in WB in 2000. In 2011 Laura became the first teacher in Wales to completed the WB.

| Interaction | Laura |
|---|---|
| Personal | *I started off as a primary teacher...a reception teacher ...my strengths weren't in primary teaching, weren't in RE teaching, it was actually in business... I was the first teacher in Wales to complete the Welsh Baccalaureate. ....I did everything…..all my community hours….. the diaries….. my investigations* |

*Figure 12: Extract of Laura's analysis of Three-Dimensional Space Model*

Chell (2004) requires the individual to focus on specific incidents which challenged their practice, by recounting:

- What happened next [1]

- Why and how did it happen [2]

- With whom did it happen [3] and what did the parties feel [4]

- What were the consequences [5] and how did the respondents cope [6]

- What tactics were used [7]

The process of analysis involved (re)reading the transcript before colour-coding each element, numbered 1-7 above, and organising into a table to form the account of the problem. Laura identified three critical incidents which challenge her practice; the Universal adoption of the WBQ at KS5, having a team of thirteen members of staff and a non-compliant pupil. The incident she chose was related to the pupil who refused to complete any WB challenges (Figure 13).

Laura's re-storied account tells that as the incomplete work did not meet the required standard Laure felt she had no option but to award a fail grade. Other pupils assumed that this pupil had passed because her work had been called for moderation. Laura knew she could not withdraw the pupil nor let her work scrape a pass. She knew that her reputation and that of the award was at risk if she did so.

| 1.What happened next? | As a consequence, the pass rate decreased. <br> *..... we got to 99.4%* |
|---|---|
| 2.Why did it happen? | The work was incomplete, as a point of principle Laura did not withdraw the pupil included her work within the sample sent to WJEC. <br> *.... I made a point because she'd been so horrible … I put her in as a fail.  Most schools would have withdrawn her and gone for the 100% but I didn't want other children to say, …she shouldn't be getting it.* |
| 3.What did the parties feel? | The pupils assumed that she would pass because her work had been called for moderation. <br> *...[the pupils] they were going, "oh, she's been entered, and she's passed", and I just said, "she's been entered and she's been called for moderation, how do you know that she has passed in any way… you'll find out on results day",* |

| 4.How did the respondent cope? | Laura's conversations with the pupil on results day provided an admission. *.... she said, "oh Miss, don't make me say it", and I said, "do you know what, you're just going to have to; just say the words", and she said, "okay"....but it's taken a lot for her to get there.* |
|---|---|

*Figure 13: Extract via CIT approach* (Chell 2004)

<span style="color:#2e74b5">Presentation of Data.</span>

Figure 6 (Appendix 7) summarises the professional histories of the fifteen WBCs along with data relating to their school contexts. This data was obtained from *MyLocalSchool* during the academic year (2018-2019). As previously reported, on pages 43-44, these contexts differ in terms of their pupil profile and the amount of socio-economic challenge each WBC has to contend with. The data gathered from the semi structured interviews, collected during the same academic year, were analysed using Story lines analysis (Gergen 1988), Three-Dimensional Space analysis (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) and via CIT (Chell 2004) to generate fifteen accounts of practice.

On first reading it became clear that these accounts of practice also described distinctive and atypical details pertaining to the setting. These details, amongst others, related to the construction of the timetable, how staff were assigned to teach WBQ, and pupil perceptions of the qualification. In trying to make sense of the data during this first reading the use of the 'ideal-type' concept of Weber (1978, p.21) made it possible to 'succinctly capture essences [and] differences' (Kalberg 2012, p.123) of each setting. Accordingly, the 'ideal-type' has served as an,

> '...exaggerated model[s] or benchmark[s] for comparative studies investigating the similarities and differences of different phenomena .... for the construction of hypotheses' (Olsen 2010, pp.848-849).

While the application of this concept involved a selection process being undertaken at a theoretical level for 'terminological.... classificatory [and].... heuristic purposes' (Weber 1978, p.21), Swedberg (2017) argues the most important purpose of employing an ideal type is heuristic; 'clarity is always important, and classifications are useful...[but] good sociological analysis consists of coming up with new ideas in analysing social reality' (2017, p.184).

Initially the application of this concept began to show how particular types of settings made the enactment of WBQ policy easier or more difficult for the WBC to enact, and how similar and/or different their practice had subsequently become. The accounts of practice of Laura, Lewis, and Glyn, and to some extent Denise, Nia, and Josephine, began to highlight how certain features within their setting seemed to enable their practice to enact policy. While conversely the accounts of Michael, Bettsi, Chloe, and particularly Andrea highlighted certain features which seemed to

constrain their practice. In choosing which accounts of practice, I would focus upon I acknowledge my own subjectivity. Peshkin (1988, p.17) argues that such a selection entails a process of filtering and blocking aspects of data as I shape and construe my choices, and decide which WBCs to include and which not to include. Peshkin (1988) characterises my dilemma as '.... a garment that cannot be removed' (p.17); but is a dilemma I acknowledge.

The narratives of Laura, Denise, Michael and Andrea were selected using the 'ideal-type' concept as they represented similar, distinctive and yet different contextual influences. With reference to the selection of Laura's account, the account of Lewis could have been selected as a practitioner whose setting seemed to enable his practice and enactment of policy; Lewis was able to develop a KS3 version of the WBQ and initiate cross-phase transition work. Similarly, with reference to the selection of Michael's account, the account of Bettsi could have been included to highlight how certain contextual features can constrain practice and enactment of policy; within Bettsi's setting the WBQ was considered more appropriate for Level 1 and ALN pupils, as the WBQ is course worked based. These 'ideal-types' stand at the very beginning of this study conceptually as a heuristic against which the setting and subsequent practice of the WBC can be acknowledged (Segady 2014).

The 'ideal-type' concept has been used to select which accounts of practice would be generated into a series of three mini-vignettes relating to each WBC's. These mini-vignettes would subsequently allow for further analysis and exploration to be undertaken.

### Laura

Laura teaches at an urban 11-19 catholic high school in south Wales. She is a talkative, energetic woman in her 50s. She smiles constantly and as she speaks her speech quickens and she gestures wildly with her hands as she recounts with both humour and wit her experiences as a WBC.

Laura worked in Customs and Excise in London, the DVLA and the press office for Department of Transport, which was one of the '*too many to count admin jobs'* she held before attending university at 24. She became a reception teacher at 28, became redundant four years later and then after securing a second teaching position was made redundant once more at 32. One day over lunch, her sister mentioned her school was in need of a RE teacher. Laura was unsure. She didn't feel secondary teaching was for her. However, as summer began to wane and financial pressures intensified, she reluctantly went '*suited and booted'* to the interview. During the interview she told the panel she wasn't an RE teacher, a revelation she thought would cost her the job, but to her surprise the Head teacher said '*well, you're a practicing Catholic and we are desperate',* and asked if she would temporarily take on the role for six weeks. Two years later

Laura was made permanent. Sometime in 2007, Laura's Headteacher asked her if she would '*do something with*' pupils who were '*dropping out of the system.*' Laura agreed but held real reservations about delivering Key Skills, but she did until the school was chosen to pilot the original WBQ. The Assistant Head*, 'said to me 'look, we've got this new course, we think that it will be quite good, will you give it a go?" So, I said, "oh, I'll start running it", and then I was made head of that'*. Laura enjoyed her new position and the new experiences afforded her by the introduction of the WBQ. Laura feels '*lucky*' that her career moved '*in that direction'*. The following is a series of three mini-vignettes of experiences shared by Laura.

*Mini-vignette 1: Walking a mile in their shoes*
This vignette relates to a time when Laura became co-ordinator of the WBQ in 2008. Things went well as she adjusted to the role, but two years later, the WBQ was made compulsory at A-level, and as Laura says '*that's where the problems started'.*

During the Y12 introductory lesson for an enterprise piece of work Laura was struck by a question from a student (given the pseudonym Jack). He asked Laura '*why should we be doing this; you haven't even got this'.* On that day his question made Laura stop in her tracks! She enjoyed teaching the WBQ, she thought the pupils enjoyed it too and the results were good too. She had never been spoken to by a student in that way before and couldn't remember a time when she ever had to justify herself, not ever! She knew she had to say something but she didn't know how; maybe she'd just ignore him or maybe just tell him off for being disrespectful? But Laura thought she might lose face if she did not reply. One thing she was sure of - she had worked too hard for the WBQ to be called into question. Laura felt flummoxed! What could she say? What could she do? after all '*it's a qualification that nobody trains for'*.

Driving home from school Laura thought to herself *'do you know what, that's a really valid point'.* So, she signed up to do the qualification. Pragmatically she thought he's right it's a reasonable question to ask. Laura worked many hours to complete the award. She said *'I did everything....my community hours and I wrote up all the diaries and I did my investigation'.* Laura searched out a response to Jack's question - a novel and bold response. During the autumn term she says '*I finished...... I was the first teacher in Wales to complete the Welsh Baccalaureate'.*

Laura's actions did not antagonise, or exacerbate the situation. Rather it underpinned her altruistic beliefs as she sought to allay any doubts her students had over the universal adoption of the WBQ. Laura realised that by completing the qualification and experiencing it for herself she could draw on her own learning to support her students when needed. Laura now considers this to be one of the most meaningful things she had done. She feels if gave her '*credibility*' and now felt able to empathise with Jack and others when they complained about the time and effort it took to complete the SCC. She felt able to show them the ropes and that this changed the way Jack,

other pupils and staff perceived the WBQ. Even when pupils began to complain bitterly of '*death by write-up*' she Laura was able to reassure them by recounting her experiences, *[T]they said* "*Oh God, why have we got to write all this stuff about it all the time.... Oh, we haven't got time for this*" *and I'd say, look, I know, but I also know that you can do this in this amount of time*'.

Laura's insider perspective enabled her to reassure her students. She now feels able to support others (staff and pupils alike) because she'd '*been on the other side of it*'. Surprisingly, reacting to Jack's question in this way has put her ahead of the game.

### Mini-vignette 2: Taking a stand.

This second vignette concerns the predicament Laura faced as the universal adoption of the WBQ continued at KS5. Within her Y13 class Laura had spent much time dealing with a '*horrible*' non-compliant pupil (given the pseudonym Britney). Britney was difficult, she was frequently absent from lessons, missed deadlines and would claim her work had '*gone lost*'.

When Laura received the deadline date for sending in the WBQ marks and samples of work to WJEC Laura was unsure what to do about Britney. She met with her team to decide what to do with Britney? Laura knew that if she did send in the work to the WJEC it would fail and the overall pass rate for the WBQ would fall below to 100%. Laura even considered if she should even allow Britany to '*scrape by*' somehow and get a pass. Laura felt conflicted, uncomfortable, she just didn't know what to do! After a sleepless night Laura decided not to withdraw Britney but included her work within the sample sent to WJEC. She felt she had no option. It had to fail. Laura suspected that other schools may have considered withdrawing her to secure themselves a 100% pass rate but she couldn't. She said, '*I made a point because I didn't want other children to say" she shouldn't be getting it". I thought, "I can't do it", for the children who had worked so hard…then I had …" oh, she's been entered, and she's passed", and I just said, "she's been entered and she's been called for moderation, how do you know that she has passed in any way… you'll find out on results day" … "have I ever let you down?", and they said, "No", and I said, "well, just go away then". I'm a great believer in telling the truth to children*'.

Laura lives the WBQ, its value and its potential. She says '*I love Welsh Bacc, I'm like Blackpool rock, I've got it going through the centre of me*'. She speaks passionately about it to others in the hope it will help them understand its potential.

### Mini-vignette 3: The Gamechanger.

This final vignette relates to an extremely challenging time during the first few years of Laura becoming a WBC. She says, '*things were going wrong, wrong, wrong.... every time I would do something WJEC would change it.... it was all go*! Laura felt alone in trying to work out what to do. How was this skills-based qualification ever going to work in practice? She knew she had the

support of her SLT but she really needed '*like-minded*' support from others. She says *'I remember planning for the Welsh Bacc, it was overwhelming, it was so much stuff, like, they [WJEC] try to support you, but oh there was so much things coming from all different angles, it was really hard to just sit down and think, "right, what am I actually going to do here?", and I remember starting to do the planning for \*Global, and I was doing so much and I was thinking, "this can't…", it just felt really overwhelming at the time'.*

Laura began to wonder if other WBC were feeling the same and so that evening, she tentatively emailed three other WBC within her local area. She asked if they wanted to meet up for coffee and a chat. Unsure if she would receive any replies two loud replies 'pinged' in her inbox. The opportunities to talk with likeminded others followed with two colleagues (given the pseudonyms Sian and Mark). The on-going conversations with Sian and Mark '*saved*' her.  She says, *'[T]here were points at which we were all drowning, but when we came together, we said, "oh gosh" … we'd have a moan, and then we'd say, "right, so what are we going to do? …that really made a difference.......in the first couple of meetings we just said, oh my God, what's happening to us'*

Laura sought out new opportunities to discuss, make decisions and consider options with her '*like-minded others*'. She says *'[A]fter about two or three years we had like a layer, like Mark, Sian and myself, it was as if we'd been through every feasible thing that could go wrong, we'd been through it ....and I think that made a difference'.* Laura frustration at getting it '*wrong*' and her desire to get it right created an opportunity for herself and others to work together. Through their regular meetings after school, they talked about many problems and began to think about how best to deliver a quality skills-based qualification. She says, *'[E]ach time when I've come back and I've thought, "right, I'm going to do that differently", so I never not pick things up from it'.*

Managing problems and seeking remedies by talking things through with others has meant Laura was able to meet challenges within her practice. Laura believes in the benefits of talking with others to find a way forward. Her strong belief in the skills-based curriculum enables her to be characterised as positive and active, influential and ahead of the game in helping others come up with reflexive and/or creative responses to situations.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

*[The Global Citizenship Challenge requires students to become ethically informed citizens of Wales by increasing their awareness of global issues, events and perspectives (WJEC 2021, p.21). Further details in Appendix 6.

Denise teaches in an 11-19 city centre high school in south Wales. She is quietly spoken and her tones are soft as she carefully considers her responses and frames her answers. Denise is a woman with in her 30s whose desk is piled high with folders and at times she casts a glance towards them reminding herself that they need to be attended to.

However, there is a seriousness about Denise as she tells of two very different stories of being a WBC – one of achievement and success and another of disappointment and exasperation.

As a child Denise had dreamed of becoming a teacher, '*I really do think teaching chose me',* she says smiling. There are no other teachers in Denise's family indeed she was the first person in her family to go to university. Denise's career trajectory into teaching was uncomplicated: attending school as a pupil before going to university to complete a degree, then undertaking a post-graduate qualification in teaching before returning to school as a teacher. She says, *'I have always been in teaching… I haven't worked in industry.  I went from doing my A-levels to university and then got my first job.  I started as a Business Studies teacher and have done various roles and ended up here as a Welsh Bacc coordinator'.*

Denise was a Business Studies teacher before teaching the WBQ in 2007 and within a few years later Denise was promoted to Head of Department and then applied internally to become a WBC. This was a role with a higher TLR. Two years later Denise became Head of Sixth form but while she enjoyed the pastoral role of working with older pupils but she felt there was something missing. Slowly, she began to realise she had almost no opportunity to be creative in her work. It was after a positive Performance Management meeting that she realised she could make a side-ways move and regain the opportunity to be creative once again. She says, '*it wasn't a plan'* but more of an overwhelming realisation and a desire to be more '*creative*' within her every-day practice. In 2013 Denise moved schools and became a WBC for the second time. She loves the creative element of teaching the WBQ and uses a number of social media platforms including Twitter to develop her practice by talking with other teachers. The following is a series of three mini-vignettes shared by Denise that describe critical incidents in her pedagogical practice.

### *Mini-vignette 1: A difficult move*
It's 2013 and it's the second time Denise has been a WBC. The move to a '*traditional*' school was difficult and the lack of support for the WBQ presented her with several unexpected dilemmas. During an initial team meeting Denise began to appreciate the enormity of the challenge she faced: work was incomplete, lost or incorrectly assessed, and there was limited '*the support of senior management'.* This made the role of co-ordinator '*very difficult'.*
Overwhelmingly, Denise missed the backing of the SLT. Whilst they seemed supportive, she felt overlooked when organisational decisions were being made concerning the timetable. It was then

she began to realise just how lucky she had been to have a '*fantastic and really, really supportive*' line manager at her previous school.  She really missed his level of encouragement and that his door was always open to talk. Denise realised that the WBQ had not played a '*massive role*' and she wondered why this was and how she could resolve this situation?

During a line management meeting she asked if she could choose her WB delivery team. She hoped to get someone from the SLT involved in her team. Disappointingly, she says, '*I haven't got any of the staff I wanted, but hey-ho!'.* She feels her current environment has curtailed her ability to practice successfully as a WBC. Indeed, she describes it as one of the most difficult of times for her since beginning as a teacher. She has found her daily practice a trial but tries to put right many issues which present themselves on a regular basis. She talks through the gaps in students' work, encourages them when they feel overwhelmed and helps her colleagues re-mark work. While she finds this a challenging and a lonely experience Denise sought support from outside her setting to help support her practice. She says this helps her to maintain focussed. She believes that the WBQ skills-based curriculum can enable a teacher's creative and imaginative practice to excel but feels unsupported by her SLT to help her tell others in her setting. She feels that they don't want to hear what she has to say.

### Mini-vignette 2: Finding an ally

This second vignette relates to the introduction of the 2015 iteration of the WBQ.  Denise says, '*The new model came in, and when I looked at it, I just thought this is completely different'*. When Denise first became a WBC in 2009 the legacy WBQ was well-established.  She remembers how the training seemed a lot more organised and had real focus; this gave her and her delivery team confidence in their practice as they knew what they had to do.  Now, Denise feels less satisfied with co-ordinating a '*new*' and '*different*' qualification and feels frustrated with an indifferent team in a school that is unsupportive of the qualification: '*When the new system came out, I had just moved schools as Welsh Bacc coordinator for the second time, I was obviously expected to pick things up but I found that quite hard'.*

In the January of 2015 Denise found herself at a WJEC training event. She was desperate for help and advice to move her department forward. She was disappointed by the presentations comprising statistics and trends and considered leaving early but it was just coming up to lunch and the teacher sat next to her (given the pseudonym Gemma) suggested she stay for lunch. Standing in the lunch queue the teacher in front of them started to talk about a local network which she attended every half term. Denise pricked up her ears, listened and realised through this conversation that '*everybody seems to have the same problem'.* Gemma suggested they both go to the next meeting. Denise realised she had nothing to lose by doing this and now says '*[T]he network I go to has been my biggest support... training from WJEC has been in varying quality….  but it's been the network that has supported me'.*

Through her attendance at the network Denise was able to talk with others particularly and now does not feel so isolated. She says, *'everyone is in the same boat and we're all feeling it and when you have that common ground it suddenly makes you think, well, actually, I can work my way through this'*. She had found a place to talk through her concerns '*it's been invaluable.... It isn't necessarily about sharing resources, although that is part of it, it's a major part of it, it's more about how do we get through this problem'.*

Denise had enjoyed success teaching the WBQ in her first school which should have enabled her to succeed within a different school. However, the contextual differences she has experienced have constrained and restricted her practice but now she has found an ally in Gemma and has located a source of support, someone to talk to when no one else seems interested. Her day-to-day practice continues to be guided by her shared network-initiated conversations which support her practically in lieu of any positive or enabling influences at her school.

*Mini-vignette 3: Winning hearts and minds.*

This final vignette relates to Denise's trials in building a team when she became a WBC for the second time.  At times, Denise wondered she would ever be able to do this as her team appeared '*very resistant*' to changes in their practice and each appeared to be in need of real support. She said, *'Although we've got some really dedicated staff, they are very traditional and have always taught within their department and I think they just find it very difficult to teach out of that department'.* Denise felt they lacked direction that they didn't understand the qualification. In an attempt to allay their anxieties, she offered an '*open door'* and began to meet with her team when and where they were able. She said, *'I just think you've got to feed that energy. And it is hard. And some days it's like "oh God" but you can't let them see that. Because you've got to be upfront and sparkling'.*

Denise continued to hold meetings but would become frustrated when only one or two would turn up or turn up really late. Slowly she began to recognise that some members of staff were beginning to welcome the training. In her second year at the school her team was reduced to six through a combination of some buy-in, some enforcement, and some persuasion from the SLT. Denise was all too aware that some of her team had '*had a tough time'.* One NQT from Bristol knew nothing of the WBQ and had real difficulty in '*getting her head around it, and was .... permanently, you know, saying "sit with me, explain it to me"'.*

For Denise the transition to her new role and school has been lonely, demanding and uncomfortable. She recognises that many of her team are really '*nervous'* but that some have shown interest and have adopted new ways of working. She continues to work mostly alone and is lonely but makes herself available to talk to her team. Denise's success of teaching and coordinating the WBQ in her first school should have enabled her to succeed in another school, but the contextual differences had brought several challenges. However, with the support of like-

minded others her resolve to develop a quality WBQ provision has not diminished despite several institutional challenges she faces.


## Michael

Michael worked in the IT industry for eleven years. His friendly demeanour and informal approach are welcoming in the bustling open plan Learning Zone where he is based. Michael seems at ease in this environment as he scans the room, smiling and acknowledging pupils who settle to work nearby. Yet when he begins to recount his experiences as a WBC, he speaks with candour about the role he has undertaken for the last five years. His story is one of contention and debate. Michael's father didn't want him to become a teacher insisting he have a '*proper job'*. After graduating as a computer programmer Michael got a job with IBM and when a series of promotions followed, he felt set in this career. He and his wife travelled extensively for his work and prospects were good! After the arrival of their third child, he and his family returned to Wales to enjoy a more settled family life. It was then Michael decided to enrol on a PGCE course in ICT.

Michael teaches in a 11-19 school in an affluent area in south Wales. He says, '*This is the only school I've taught in.....19 years now.... I did my placement here too'.* Within a few years Michael gained promotion. As Head of ICT at the school he and his department delivered a range of ICT qualifications: Computer Science and Information Technology courses at 'A' and GCSE level. He and his departmental colleagues worked hard and their results were very good. Michael gained respect as a middle leader, a specialist in his field, particularly when employing his industry- based knowledge. Michael taught the IT component for the legacy WBQ. He says he was happy to do that but '*I wasn't really familiar kind of, with, um, the bigger picture, I suppose.  I'd just done my little bit'.* However, Michael did not know what was coming. The WBQ he knew would end in 2015 and a new iteration consisting of a number of individual skill challenges (SCCs) would take its place. At Michael's school this meant IT was now integrated within the award and Michael was no longer required to teach the discrete IT component. The following is a series of three mini-vignettes shared by Michael that describe critical incidents in his pedagogical practice.

### *Mini-vignette 1: A sea change*

This first vignette relates to the time when Michael realised the 'revised and more rigorous' (NAW 2015, p.1) WBQ did not require IT to be taught discretely. It came as quite a shock and Michael was uncertain of what it would mean for him. He says '*I was head of ICT and really enjoying it'* and then one day he was called in to the Head Teacher's office. Michael had never been "called" in to the office before and he began to wonder why? He was taken aback to discover that '*IT stopped being part… a requirement for the advanced Welsh Bacc'* and that his department had '*too many members of staff'*. In a heart-beat he felt his world begin to fall apart. His Head Teacher said '*the*

*new Intermediate Welsh Bacc is coming along'* and explained to Michael that it could take up the surplus hours in ICT if he would co-ordinate the qualification. She said if Michael would agree to this then no member of staff in his department would be made '*redundant*'.

Michael felt hard pressed to refuse this request by the SLT. Was it really an option for him to decline? He thought not! That night sleep did not come easy to Michael. He spoke at length to his wife but choose not to speak with other members of his department. He reasoned why upset them. All night he thought about it but he knew he would accept. The following morning, back in the Head's office he agreed. He felt there was no real way out and so he became a WBC which he said was '*for my sins'*. Throughout his teaching career Michael had always employed his industrial experiences within his teaching of IT but he had not expected to become a WBC and really knew little about it. This, he felt was something not wholly within his control. It was not a role he would have chosen for himself.

### *Mini-vignette 2: Putting on a front.*

This vignette relates to a continuing issue within Michael's department where pupils who '*should be level two and are only achieving level one'*. This lack of progress became a serious concern for the SLT. Michael was "called" to the Head Teacher's office for a second time. Michael was told that a skills-based curriculum was to be introduced into Year 9 pupils that he was to co-ordinate the programme. It was a case of deja-vu for Michael! He felt himself agreeing with the request as he wondered once again if it would be held against him if he do so. During this meeting he heard himself saying '*year 10 should be a lot easier because they've had all the skills building'*. However, Michael now admits that *'the unease is not just in year 9… It's in year 10 and 11 as well...we get pupils who are very demotivated by the time they get to year 11 and* with many of the pupils *it's a real struggle to sort of keep them on board'.*

Michael feels that the pupils *'don't really like it at all'* and that even in Y9 pupils are '*obviously... far more interested in their maths and science and English, etc.'*. Michael decided to speak to another Head of Department one break-time about her 'catch-up' lunchtime sessions being run for the under-achieving pupils. Michael hoped this strategy would work; he says *'we have to try to get them through'.* However, despite their best efforts to engage with the pupils few achieved the Level 2 award. Michael said, *'[W]e try to put on a brave face and all but [......] pupils know their rights and they know their… what they want to do and they… several times, say how is this going to help me if I'm going to be a doctor? So, it's an awkward question we've got to answer'.* Michael apportions blame on the pupils and their lack of motivation and interest in the SCC which he believes has caused their lack of progress. Michael believes the future of the qualification could be in jeopardy and that the '*engagement from the pupils is just going to go down'* and that '*it's difficult for us to try to justify'*.

The final vignette relates to a time when Michael became frustrated with the unsupportive and contradictory stance of the WJEC examination board. Michael regularly attents the WJEC annual meetings and always heeded the Subject Officer's advice.

When Michael received his WJEC Moderation Report he felt disappointed. The WJEC has criticised the use of templates within pupils' work. Michael felt the exam board were '*down on having a structured way of doing things'* and was aggrieved by the comments made.  He said '*nobody in the real world would just come up with their own templates for meetings, minutes and all that'* rather an organisation would have a standard way of recording business decisions. Michael felt one way to remedy future situations such as this would be for the WJEC to produce a '*textbook'.* He had spoken to the exam board as he felt it was a reasonable request but the exam board were not in favour of his suggestion. Michael felt a text book would help teachers understand what is and what is not acceptable in terms of evidence for each SCC. He was disappointed. He said '*it would just make it so much easier for teachers not having to reinvent the wheel all the time'.*

Michael holds a dichotomy of feelings towards the WJEC he has tried to follow their advice and guidelines but felt unsupported when it stopped short of granting his request and when he has tried to draw upon his industrial experiences has been criticised for doing so. Michael's professional learning has been limited to attendance at WJEC events, he does not attend any network meetings and nor does he have regular communications with other WBCs in his local area. To help remedy situations of practice Michael tends to draw exclusively upon his department, his own previous practice and from other department heads at the school. This insular approach to solving practice-based problems does not always deliver the anticipated outcomes required to meet his current challenges.  Michael remains dissatisfied.

## Andrea

Andrea is the youngest teacher to share her story. She is a bright, intelligent twenty-something whose first language is Welsh. There is an energy within her classroom. It appears to be a busy colourful place brightly adorned with examples of pupils' work and with excitement and pride as she tells of how she became a WBC a middle leader position with opportunity to teach KS5. Hers is a story of division.

Andrea spent her early years living on a farm and loved the outdoor life. She took a hands-on approach at home, caring for the animals. She and her family had always travelled and it was no real surprise that she would study Geography at University but what was a revelation was her decision to undertake a PGCE qualification to become a secondary school teacher. Her older siblings were also at university but studying Veterinary Science and her parents thought she would

follow them there! Teaching was a first choice of career for Andrea; she does not regret going into teaching. She teaches in a Welsh medium school in south Wales. She says '*I came ... as a literature teacher I had a mixture of Welsh, I had some geography, had some Welsh Bacc, my timetable was a bit varied and just numerous different subjects'.*

Andrea graduated nine years ago. She has taught WBQ since she was an NQT and accepted a temporary position as WBC covering maternity leave for a colleague during. This was during her fourth year of teaching. When the incumbent Head of department resigned Andrea was told by the SLT '*to carry on'.* Andrea feels her SLT don't understand the WBQ well enough to help or support her.  She says that she hasn't had the same line manager over this time and finds it disheartening that *'none of them really know what's going on'.* Andrea believes the WBQ is a misunderstood qualification. The following is a series of three mini-vignettes shared by Andrea that describe critical incidents in her pedagogical practice.

*Mini-vignette 1: Moving in a different direction*
Andrea has been involved in teaching the WBQ since her first days as an NQT. She said initially she didn't mind because at least '*I had some geography'.* When it looked less likely that the current WBC would return from maternity leave Andrea's Head Teacher asked her to take on more WBQ. She says she was '*kind of pushed kind of towards it'.*
When Andrea was formally asked to take on the role she wondered if she should accept the permanent position as Geography was her first love. Her Head Teacher said that it would be good for her, a way of her '*developing professionally and getting a head of department'.* Andrea was in two minds what to do. That weekend she drove home and spoke to her parents about the job offer. Her mother listened intently before bringing-up another consideration for Andrea to bear in mind. Wouldn't this role give her opportunity to work with sixth form pupils? Her mother said that if she stayed within her subject area of geography there would be little chance to develop professionally certainly within the foreseeable future.
So, despite feeling '*pushed*' into the role Andrea believed she would benefit in the longer-term if she accepted the position. Andrea admits that while she was happy to accept the role it has become much '*harder*' because of her increased workload. Andrea's only experience of teaching and co-ordinating the WBQ has been within this school and with limited support from her Head of Department who went on maternity leave shortly after her appointment.
She believes that becoming a WBC was not necessarily a role she would have chosen for herself but one the SLT chose for her. However, she appears sanguine as it has brought with it the unexpected consequence of early promotion and an opportunity to work with Y12 and Y13. Andrea's workload has increased and at times she has found it '*hard'* to manage the demands of the job. She readily admits this has had a negative impact on her life and well-being at times.

Andrea hopes the situation will change when the SLT begin to understand more about the value of the WBQ and the skills-based curriculum. She feels that this will be difficult as they are '*so busy doing different stuff*' but crucially for Andrea it is the uncertainty that surrounds the WBQ that will affect their judgement and understanding. She says, '*They [the SLT] just need a figure, you know, they just need kids to pass an additional three in A\* to C, they don't care which... subjects they come from.... they don't really want to know what's going in geography or PE it's just that they get the grades ...sometimes that's what it is'*.

*Mini-vignette 2: The cause of division*

This second vignette relates to how Andrea has continued to co-ordinate the WBQ at KS4 through two delivery models which causes great '*frustration*' to others at her school. Andrea has never understood why the top sets have a different curriculum offer to the bottom sets. She says '*three classes in year 10 and three classes in year 11 haven't got Welsh Bacc lessons, they're the top sets because they're doing an hour of French a week instead'* and their WBQ is delivered by having half termly '*drop-down days'* as part of a collapsed timetable.

Since becoming WBC Andrea has had to manage the dual delivery of the WBQ at KS4. She says she doesn't like working with an asymmetrical timetable because it '*angers*' both the staff and the pupils and has led to some heated conversations. She says that during these drop-down days staff get '*frustrated because we take these pupils out of their lessons*' and a great deal of antagonism and negativity is caused. Equally she feels aggrieved that her usual timetabled classes have to be covered and that she loses teaching time with them. She says, '*[W]hen we're off timetable as teachers we've obviously got to prepare lessons for the pupils for our lessons so, yeah, that makes life pretty hard at times...it's just the amount of work'*.

Andrea knows that the KS4 curriculum will not be changed mid-way through an academic year. She is aware that a new curriculum model will need to be agreed by the Governing Body level before any changes can be made. On a more positive note, Andrea feels a change may be possible as no member of staff likes this present set-up and so their discontentment may hasten the SLT to re-think the provision.

As a TLR holder Andrea is mindful that it is her responsibility to implement the universal adoption of the WBQ albeit by two differing models. She feels the dual model is unfair and that it puts too much pressure on her and the staff do not like it. Andrea continues to plan and prepare for future drop-down days but knows that this level of discontent will continue for some time into the future. Andrea worries about the longer-term effects of the lack of staff engagement and non-acceptance of the WBQ.

*Mini-vignette 3:  Untenable - a step too far*

This final vignette relates to this current academic year which has been a very busy time for Andrea! A member of staff in her department went on long-term sickness absence and the SLT

could not find a teacher to cover the classes. She says *'[T]here is no supply that does Welsh Bacc; you cannot get a Welsh Bacc teacher on supply, and I've yet to have anybody come in and deliver what I want, as I want it'*.

Irritated by this situation Andrea felt that there were many days when some classes weren't being taught. She said '*you can leave them work, but it's never done properly, you know'*. Andrea complained to her line manager she told him *'Somebody would come in for a week, and then I'd sit down with them, I'd explain to them...what they needed to do and then they'd leave...and nobody had told us...and then somebody else would turn up... it was extremely, extremely challenging'*.

Andrea became so discouraged with supply teachers coming and going, never staying longer than a few days. She said '*I nearly went spare'* and I ended up swapping some of my classes with the supply teacher's class. I taught their lesson instead and of course '*there's no supply for post 16, so they didn't get taught.*' The workload got so great that Andrea had to admit - she couldn't keep up! She told her SLT she was struggling and needed support. She said '*I explained all the extra work I was doing'* but she was told that because she wasn't coping, she would need to *'go on an action plan',* a school-based monitoring programme administered by her line manager until the matter was resolved. Eventually, Andrea completed the action plan successfully but remembers being told by her SLT *'I failed I would then **start capability. It was frustrating at the time, but it's done now.'*

However, during the autumn term Andrea was called in again to meet with her line manager. She felt great despair, disappointment and disbelief as she was put on an '*informal informal stage before capability'* [repetition in original]. She said '*after 11 years I am on my first sickness absence. Things went downhill again all based around last year…. I got called into a meeting'*. Andrea could not believe it!

She has now been signed off work by her GP with stress until the new year. While she had always felt her biggest challenge was to get other members of staff and the SLT to understand the value of the WBQ she now feels that this challenge is too great.

For Andrea the job has become too big, complex and unmanageable. The combination of '*drop-down days'* at KS4, a lack of supply cover at KS4 and no supply cover at KS5, the '*negativity*' of

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**[A capability procedure specifies the steps to be followed when the head teacher believes that an employee is failing consistently to perform their duties to a professionally acceptable standard. The primary objective is to ensure maximum support through guidance, counselling, and training in order that the employee's performance improves, and the problem is resolved. (National Union of Teachers 2023)]

staff and a lack of understanding of the '*busy*' SLT has led to Andrea withdrawing from teaching for the sake of her health. She says she may not return to the role. She has struggled to deliver the qualification within the timetabling confines of her school. She has felt alone in this struggle and overwhelmed by the enormity of the job.

*A reflection*

Edward's (2015) move to re- identify reflection from a two-dimensional process of reflection-in and reflection-on-action to a four-dimensional process of reflection-before, reflection-in, reflection-on and reflection-beyond-action informs this summary.

Reflection-before-action Edwards' (2015) is a pre-reflection phrase within which an individual acknowledges their thoughts and feelings regarding similar experiences before entering the new situation (Alden and Durham 2012). During this phase my position as 'researcher near' (Mannay 2010) became clear and helped me to foster a sense of personal awareness regarding my conduct. I became aware that my position would not be static but transient and fluid (Freshwater, 2008) and that I had to remain true to my ethical stance which was informed by BERA guidelines (2018) throughout the duration of the research.

In contrast, reflection-in-action enables an individual to connect elements of theoretical and practical action together to develop a more focused approach (Schön (1991). Through this study I sought to generate conditions of trust which would enable the telling of a story. Wilkinson's (1988) approach to reflexive practice helped me acknowledge the many identities I would adopt and how the balance of power may foster or hinder the data gathering process (Frost 2016). It was imperative that I remained cognisant of the potential for power asymmetry (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009) and/or the danger of slipping into a one-way discourse with each participant. To address this, I chose a semi-structured approach and asked participants to complete their own A3 story-line.

According to Edwards (2013) reflection-on-action accounts of practice often become 'after-the-fact' accounts of the experience which do not offer any critical consideration of how the individual developed as a consequence of the experience. While I agree I part with Edwards I did critically consider how I acted while gathering the data to ensure I maintained my ethical stance during the planning stage, during data collection and when analysing and writing up the findings (Watt 1995). I remained cognisant of the personal and confidential information participants shared and was aware of my duty of care to them and also to myself. I made sure that each participant was happy to provide on-going consent and for their data to be used within the study. This was particularly relevant in the case of Andrea whose personal and professional experiences of practice were

particularly heartfelt. Given the sensitive nature of her data I felt conflicted regarding its inclusion (and still do) but Andrea has continued to provide on-going consent.

In order to develop a critical stance within reflection-on-action accounts Edwards proposes a broader approach to reflection through the use of stories (Edwards 2015). With reflection-beyond-action Edwards (2013: 2014) argues that the use of stories should be incorporated to develop practice to make reflection a more meaningful tool. She argues stories can facilitate the sharing of practice in a way that reflection alone cannot.

### *The importance of stories*

It had been my intent to elicit stories of practice and not practitioner accounts of reflection-on-action. The use of stories remains the first step to help understand practice (Goodson 1991) because stories are a human tendency, they create meaning, they are a source of learning, they give voice and expose actions (Grummet 1990). The function of storytelling within this study is to generate new understandings which can improve practice (Connelly and Clandinin 1990) during times of curriculum enactment. Listening to stories can illuminate the complexities of what it means to educate in new and emerging circumstances.

Coles (1989) argues how stories encourage individuals to reflect on experiences which have influenced action as the story helps the individual to understand their behaviours, feelings, and motives from their 'reservoirs of wisdom' (p. xii). Similarly, for Bruner (1988) stories are means of organising experiences uniting the present while pointing to the future, connecting how it was and how it has been interpreted, told and retold. In this vein they assist the individual to conceptualise meaning from the experiences they have already lived and provide a means to anticipate future steps forward while allowing the end to be viewed from the beginning (Barthes 1975).

Teachers' stories are ways talking about significant issues about what it means to teach (Schon 1983). The term 'voice' emphasises the need for teachers to talk using their own words (Butt and Raymond 1987) to authenticate the particular opportunities and challenges they encounter during times of (curriculum) change. Stories give form and meaning to practice as they enable teachers to put into words what they already know (White 1980) by placing those (emerging) events encountered during (curriculum) enactment into a particular story or narrative (Tappan and Brown 1991). The act of telling a story and of talking about experiences contributes to the construction of knowledge. Connecting the life events from a number of individuals becomes a primary means of understanding diverse range of experiences as they become an intelligible whole which then becomes imbued with significance (Bruner 1986; Coles 1989).

Goodson (2003) argues that 'understanding teacher agency is a vital part of educational research and one that we ignore at our peril' (p.57) but the professional agency of teachers still remains an

under-researched topic (Biesta et al. 2015). The use of narrative is considered by Goodson a means by which the voice of an individual can be captured as they engage in talk practices to tell stories of practice. The neoliberal approach of recent educational reforms (Egan 2017) has focused solely on the performativity of teachers; it has shown little regard for their professional agency.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## Analysis and Discussion

This research has been about finding meaning and understanding in context. It has been achieved by undertaking an active process of (re)reading, analysing and reflecting upon twelve mini-vignettes. The subsequent inductive or 'bottom-up' analysis (Frith and Gleeson 2004) involved an examination of the mini-vignettes following the quality criteria generated by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.96) and the steps for presenting qualitative data by Attride-Stirling (2001, pp.385-403).

Within the mini-vignettes themes were identified by intensive rounds of (re)reading. Many descriptive words and phrases were noted which served to describe a 'fragment' of the data (Goodrich and Rogers 2015, p.565). This step although rudimentary needed explicit boundary definitions to ensure no overlap and that the codes assigned were not 'interchangeable or redundant…. limited in scope' (Attride-Stirling 2001, p.7). This was undertaken to ensure a sense of coherency and consistency was maintained (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Through this process pertinent quotations and illustrations were identified and extracted and grouped into tentative basic themes, which involved assigning labels to the text to descriptively capture what the WBCs were talking about. This 'data reduction process' (Goodrick and Rogers 2015, p.577) allowed the data to be classified into smaller more refined sets. Once a number of *basic* themes were derived the beginnings of a pattern of significant topics emerged which were *organised* and then summarised into *global* themes. The *global* themes encapsulated the main claim or argument arising from the text (Attride-Stirling 2001). Figure 14 illustrates the organising themes and the resultant *global* themes of Risk, Acceptance and Change.
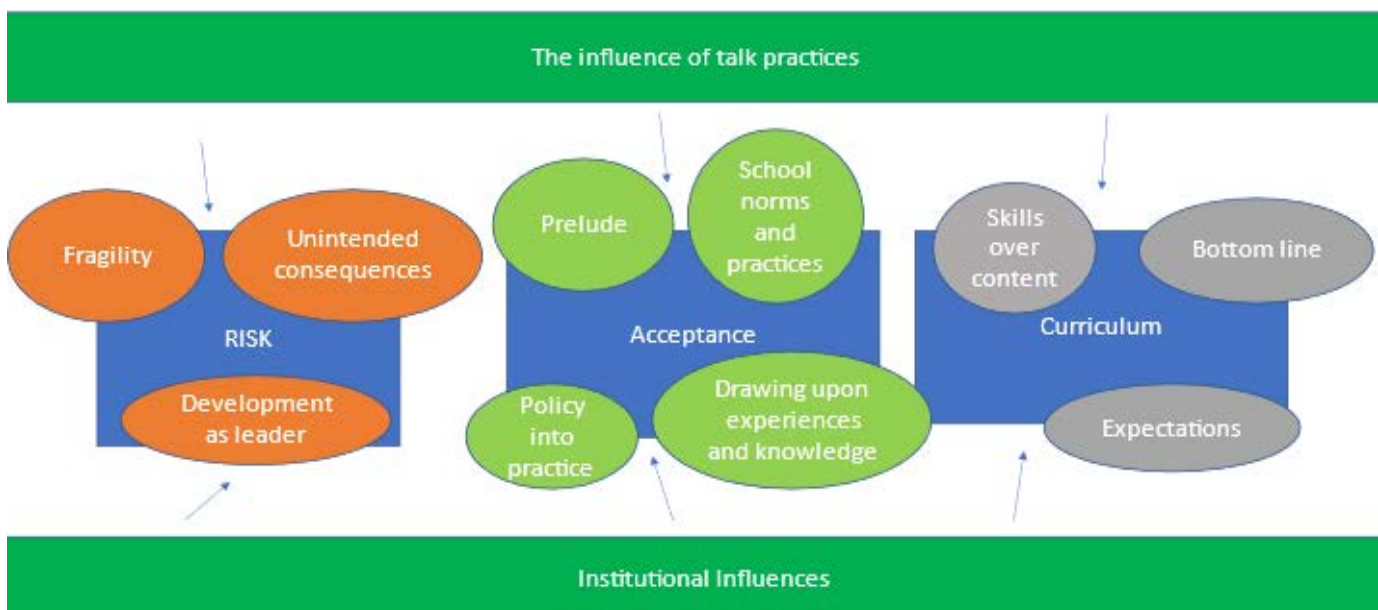


*Figure 14: The development of themes*

In this analysis, the reflective process continued to generate two latent themes by examining the underlying meanings from the data and to present a more constructivist account of practice. This interpretive stance ensured the latent themes were more clearly connected to the data (Patton 1990) and was taken to an interpretive level to demonstrate and theorise the importance, implications and wider meaning of the themes (Patten 1990).  This would provide opportunity to link the data to the previous literature considered (Frith and Gleeson 2004). Through the adoption of an interpretive approach themes began to build and assemble. The generation of the latent themes, rooted within the constructionist tradition (Burr 1995) served to provide a greater insight and depth into the practice of the WBCs, and to provide details richer than those drawn from their storified description of practices.

This qualitative study has had 'several purposes' (Cohen et al. 2017, p.545) to describe, explain and report WBC actions and intentions, and to provide an understanding of their actions. The nature of data collected and the analysis undertaken is based upon their subjective accounts and interpreted through the lens of my positionality. Peshkin (1988) suggests my personal qualities have the capacity to 'filter, skew, shape, block, transform, construe and misconstrue.... like a garment that cannot be removed' (p.17). While he does not suggest that subjectivity is something which the researcher can be free from, he argues it is something to be acknowledged.

From the data two latent themes of Institutional Influences and the Influence of Talk were identified at a 'sub-textual' level (Garrison and Anderson 2003). The twelve mini-vignettes were grouped into a two-by-two matrix based on the following types of settings or environments which led to the generation of a particular ecology (Figure 15) which comprised:

- Settings which were shaped by institutional influences and which appeared to be more positive or negative regarding the nature and value of the WBQ's skills-based curriculum.
- Settings which were shaped by the influence of talk and which appeared to be more active or passive with regard to a change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum.


This categorisation of each type of environment or setting is significant because,

- It is the place where the individual locates their practice.
- It is the place where the individual and all that is within the environment interact.
- It is the place where these interactions shape the individual's experience(s).
- It is from these interactions within the setting that an ecology emerges.
- It is from the emergence of a particular type of ecology that the nature of practice and agentic practice of the individual is determined.

- Just as the environment is susceptible to change as contextual factors vary, so is the ecology as it generated as an outcome of the interaction of the individual in and within their environment.

This categorisation of an ecology reflects the Transactional theory of Dewey (1939) whereby the term experience refers to the transaction between an individual and their environment. Dewey (1939) contends that experience becomes mediated by 'the influence of culture' (1939b, p.15) which is the product of human action and interaction and includes language in its spoken and written forms (1938a, p.52).

## The emergence of an ecology

Within this study four different types of ecologies were created: Transformative, Restrictive, Submissive and Repressive (Figure 15: Types of an ecology). Each type of ecology emerged from the interaction of the individual WBC interacting in and with their environment, that is their school.
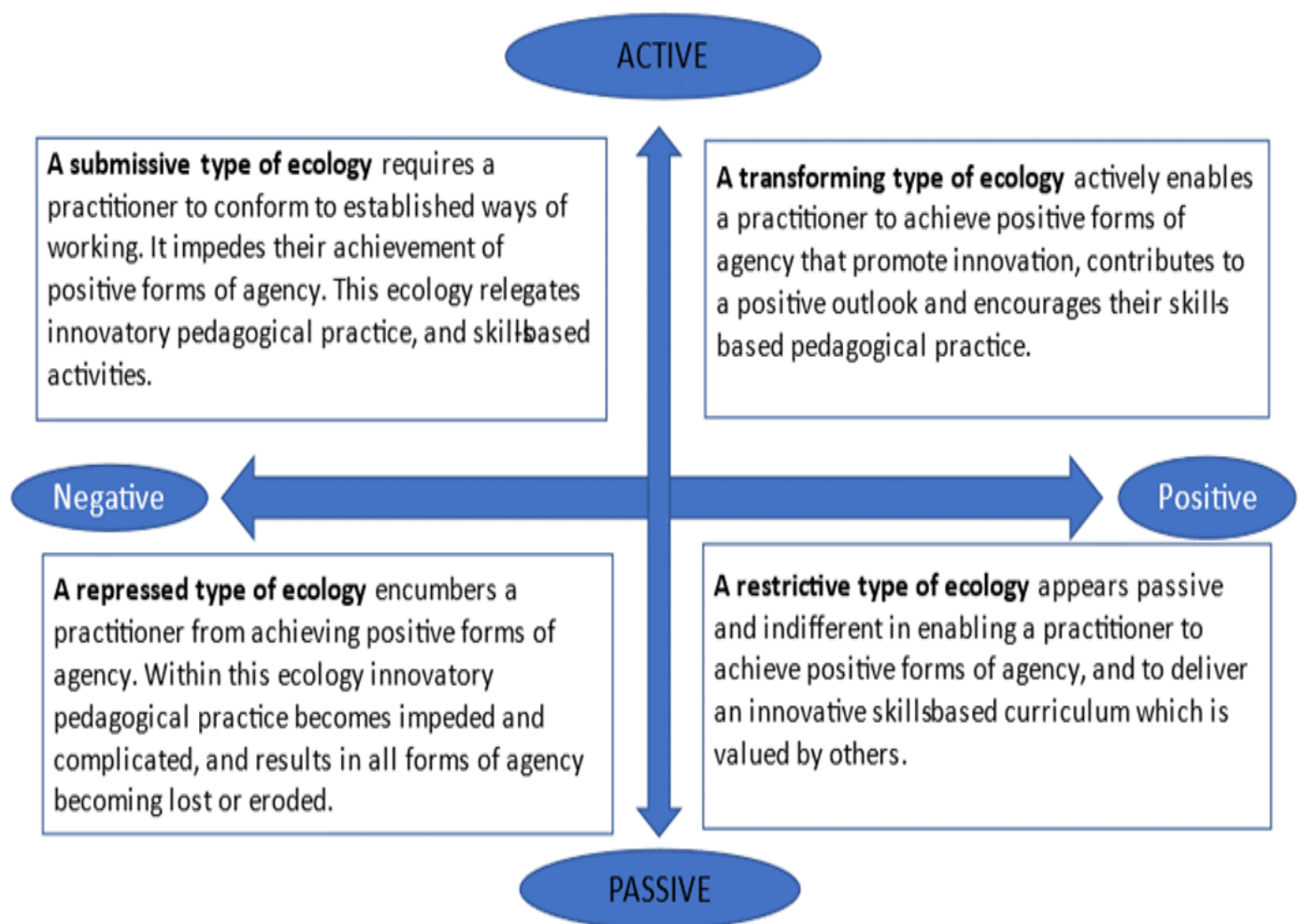


**ACTIVE**

**A submissive type of ecology** requires a practitioner to conform to established ways of working. It impedes their achievement of positive forms of agency. This ecology relegates innovatory pedagogical practice, and skill-based activities.

**A transforming type of ecology** actively enables a practitioner to achieve positive forms of agency that promote innovation, contributes to a positive outlook and encourages their skills based pedagogical practice.

**Negative**

**Positive**

**A repressed type of ecology** encumbers a practitioner from achieving positive forms of agency. Within this ecology innovatory pedagogical practice becomes impeded and complicated, and results in all forms of agency becoming lost or eroded.

**A restrictive type of ecology** appears passive and indifferent in enabling a practitioner to achieve positive forms of agency, and to deliver an innovative skillsbased curriculum which is valued by others.

**PASSIVE**

*Figure 15: Types of an ecology*

## A transforming type of ecology

A transforming type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment when institutional influences appear to be more positive regarding the nature and value of the

WBQ's skills-based curriculum. Within this type of ecology, the practitioner identified themselves as '*lucky*' as they were able to achieve positive forms of agency. For Laura this became apparent when,

> '*Welsh Bacc was really in its infancy and our assistant head, who's now our Head, said, look, we've got this new course, we think that it will be quite good, will you give it a go? So, I said, oh, I'll start running it and then I was made head of that......they made it compulsory at A-level in our school and we were the first school to actually make it compulsory....in probably 2009. So, I ran it*'

When interacting with and within her environment which was shaped by positive institutional influences regarding the nature and value of the WBQ Laura was afforded opportunities to innovate and develop a positive skills-based pedagogic practice.

> '*I went to the senior leadership.... were always very, very supportive and I said we've got to do something; you've either got to cut down the number of staff, because I was still teaching at least half RE then and a bit of Bacc, and key skills ...and I said, look, I need… if I'm going to be head of Welsh Bacc I've got to be just Welsh Bacc and they had the trust in me to go with that.*

> '*When we came to our new school, which was in ... maybe 2012… we were one of the first schools to put it compulsory then at Key Stage 4 as well ......we just said, look, let's just do it.... if we go into make mistakes let's make mistakes before it becomes the measure so we just went in, we went all guns blazing. And we had a real buy-in from our students*'.

A transforming type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment which is shaped positively by the influence of talk. Within her setting this has become apparent for Laura in terms of her talk with her learners as well as with her team. Laura was the first teacher in Wales to complete the WBQ which she felt gave her credibility.

> '*[I]t changed the way our students valued Welsh Bacc because when they said… we haven't got time for this and I'd say, look, I know, but I also know that you can do this in this amount of time. ... I just thought that it was important because I can say to them, "I know this can be done", because I had to do it, do you know what I mean, so I'm able to do say that to them*'

The influence of talk was similarly apparent within her active and positive conversations with staff with regard to a change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum.

*'I just to have people who would buy in..... they'd come into Welsh Bacc and they'd see how things had to be managed and then they were going on then to gain promotions elsewhere... one of my first member of staff is now quite senior within the school.... she's running interventions and things around the school.... it's actually giving them the skills......to see my other staff picking up promotions and TLRs, taking kind of leadership roles, I think that's a really important thing as a mentor for them'*

However, such enablers to actively achieve positive forms of agency within her setting was dependent upon her SLT allowing her opportunity to talk with others, outside of the school. Laura valued this opportunity greatly.

*'[I]n the beginning it was just a time to come together and I think the first couple of meetings we just said, oh my God, what's happening to us. Every time we would do something WJEC might change it.... it was all go'.*

Within the Dewey's Transactional theory, the principle of Continuity relates to the experience of Laura. It appears that each and every positive experience she had modified her experiences in some way and that this modification subsequently affected the quality of her successive experiences. Thus, Laura's experience is seen as being continuous from her past through to present and to future, and while it is transactional for her as the 'experient' she becomes modified by her environment and her environment by her as she remains influenced within and by it within 'a constant reciprocal relationship' (Garforth 1966, p.13).

For Dewey the principles of continuity and interaction are inter-related and because of their active connection a lateral stream of experience forms within which differing situations follow on from each other. In this sense the principle of continuity ensures that features of Laura's previous situations are passed on to create successive ones for her. Consequently, the situation in which the interaction takes place is significant as it reflects not only the materials with which the Laura interacts but the total social set-up of the situations within which she is engaged. This idea of experience and reflection becoming intertwined is understood to be significant by Dewey as he argues that no experience has meaning unless there is some element of thought attached to it (Dewey 1916/2007).

### Restrictive type of ecology

A restrictive type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment when institutional influences appear to be positive regarding the nature and value of the WBQ's skills-based curriculum. Within this type of ecology, the practitioner identified themselves as '*lonely*'. For Denise this became apparent when she told of her experiences at her new school and

realised that during the transition, she had lost some of the institutional support she had once enjoyed.

> *'I think senior staff.... have been quite supportive but I don't think they always understand how lonely a role it can be. I think it's quite a lonely role…. I've always been on my own, like I said, in a very big school… you don't have the… I suppose the benefit of being able to offload'*

> *'I had a fantastic line manager, he was amazing, deputy head of school, and he was really supportive. And the school put their full weight behind it so I was able to train... to get myself trained and to train my staff as well'*

She realised that these current cultural and structural influences were not as positive regarding the nature and value of the WBQ's skills-based curriculum. She said,

> *'Coming here has been quite difficult because I think this is a traditional school and the Welsh Bacc hasn't played a massive role so the school... the staff are very resistant to teach all the Skills Challenge. Although we've got some really dedicated staff, they are very traditional and have always taught within their department and I think they just find it very difficult to teach out of that department'*

A restrictive type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment which have been shaped to some extent by the influence of talk. For Denise it became difficult to support all of the staff and all of their needs. She was aware that many were nervous of the qualification and in need of a great deal of support. Her type of talk was dictated by the needs and current practice of her staff and the changes they needed to adopt within their pedagogy.

> *'Some of them have had a tough time this year teaching, and… you know, and getting their head around it as well. And they're permanently, you know, sit with me, explain it to me'*

> *'It was a new qualification and there was a large team, the school didn't fully understand the qualification.... I came into a department that ...had lost work and, you know, there was a lot of organising'*

Within Denise's environment there appear to be institutional influences of a structural and cultural nature which made any change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum more difficult. While the SLT and the school appeared to support value of the qualification there were longstanding institutional influences which made opportunities to adapt practice less achievable. This type of ecology, therefore, appears more passive and indifferent in enabling practitioners to achieve positive forms of agency and to deliver an innovative skills-based curriculum which is valued by others.

Through the lens of Dewey's Transactional Theory (1939) the concepts of situations and interaction are inseparable as experience is always what it is because of a transaction between an individual and what constitutes his/her environment at that time. Biesta and Burbles (2003) argue 'A situation always denotes the transaction of organism and environment' (p.59) which seems to imply that the experience itself depends on the relationship between the environing conditions and the individual. This is significant in the experience of Denise whose environing conditions changed when she moved schools. Dewey would argue that Denise's environment includes not only those who she may be talking with regarding the WBQ but also the WBQ as the topic of conversation, as the environment is comprised of whatever interacts with the individual and it is this which determines the what type of experience is had, and how the individual values it. For Denise her experience remains challenging.

## Submissive type of ecology

A submissive type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment when institutional influences appear to be less positive regarding the nature and value of the WBQ's skills-based curriculum. For Michael this became apparent when he realised that his pupils were not achieving their potential within their SCCs. Indeed, he characterised his path to becoming a WBC was *'for my sins'.* The institutional influences at play within Michael's setting seemed to have a distracting effect upon his aim to demonstrate to pupils the positive and beneficial opportunities of the WBQ.

> *'we've got pupils who should be level two and are only achieving level one and that involves a lot of lunchtime sessions with sort of fairly recalcitrant sort of pupils to try to get them through because, obviously, they're far more interested in their maths and science and English, etc. etc'.*

Within his school Michael was aware of '*very high tier of.... exceptional students'* who are able to excel but that by the time they get to Year 10 and 11 it was very difficult to keep them engaged and on task. He said,

> *'Unfortunately, the unease is not just in year 9. We get pupils who are very demotivated by the time they get to year 11 and it's a real struggle to sort of keep them on board'.*

A submissive type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment which have been shaped less positively by the influence of talk. For Michael this has meant that his form of talk with pupils had not always been positive, productive or encouraging. He said,

> *'We try to put on a brave face and all but [.......] pupils know their rights and they know their… what they want to do and they… you know, several times, how is this going to help me if I'm going to be a doctor?  So, it's an awkward question we've got to answer'*

According to Dewey's Transactional theory a transaction takes place between the individual (that is Michael) and his environment (his classroom) which includes others (his pupils) who he may be talking to or resources he may be using or whatever he is interacting with. In all transactions Dewey argues 'everything depends upon the quality of the experience' (1938, p.27) and the 'agreeableness or disagreeableness' (p.27) of that experience. For Michael the resultant disagreeable outcome of the transaction according to Dewey, will subsequently influence all future experiences Michael may have.

Within this type of ecology, the practitioner seems to conform more to established and accepted ways of working with regard to their pedagogical practice. They have become passive to a change in practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum. This becomes apparent in the practice of Michael with his explanation of how he co-ordinates the qualification which seems to relegate innovative forms of teaching and learning in favour of more traditional ways of working.

> *'Going back to the textbook again, but it would just make it so much easier for teachers not having to reinvent the wheel all the time'*

> *'[W]hat I tend to do is have like a PowerPoint, teach a PowerPoint which has pretty much everything in it'*

> *'Exam Board seem to be very down on having a structured way of doing things.  Like, we're quite often criticised for having templates and stuff like this'*

Within Michael's environment there are many institutional influences of a cultural and structural nature which have made any change in pedagogy difficult. The school and the SLT while appearing to support the policy of universal adoption and the value of the skills-based curriculum have seemingly overwhelmed Michael's intent to develop the award so that it is unable to gain a parity of esteem with the more traditional subjects. His enablers to actively achieve positive forms of agency appear limited and limiting as are his option to talk positively talk with others, either insider or outside of his setting.

### Repressed type of ecology

A repressed type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment where institutional influences appear to be less positive regarding the nature and value of the WBQ's skills-based curriculum. In the experiences of Andrea this seemed to stem from the development of an asymmetrical timetable introduced at KS4. At KS4 the more-able cohort of pupils studied WBQ during a drop-down day every half-term. This arrangement was made so that they could study French as an additional subject as part of their weekly timetable. The remainder of the cohort studied WBQ during these timetabled slots. Andrea characterised her practice by

saying *'life gets pretty hard at times'* as very few staff were in favour of such an arrangement. She explained,

> *'With year 10 I think that's like 31/33% of the year, which are the highest in the year, they don't have Welsh Bacc lessons, this [class] has drop-out days, which also angers and frustrates everyone because we take these pupils out of their lessons'.*

> *'[I]t's not easy for us either because we've got to kind of fit everything in .... we've obviously got to prepare lessons for our pupils to cover their lessons, so, yeah, that makes life pretty hard at times'.*

Through the lens of the Transactional theory of Dewey the transactions which has taken place between Andrea and her environment (which includes other staff members) have mediated 'the quality of [her] experience' (1938, p.27) and will taint all her subsequent experiences. The 'disagreeableness' (p.27) of her experiences will intentionally or not determine the quality of all her successive experiences within her environment.

For Andrea the support she was offered by the SLT was limited. While she regularly met with her line manager, they tended to be replaced throughout the year and so there was limited opportunity to build up any form of rapport or understanding regarding the challenges she faced.

> *'[T]he support isn't quite there but, then again it doesn't... seem as important as core subjects ... the deputies and the heads and [staff] might not have full knowledge of the Welsh Bacc so they don't know enough to kind of help.... they need to understand a bit more about the Welsh Bacc'*

A repressed type of ecology emerges from the interaction of an individual within an environment which have been shaped negatively by the influence of talk. For Andrea this became apparent with a few teachers initially who chose not to understand the WBQ rationale and how it differs in terms of its pedagogy from more traditional subjects. She said,

> *'"they're missing our lessons again" .... they're not happy to understand... they don't want to understand, they just find it easier just to blame'*

Similarly, Andrea found that other members of her team were not always prepared to take enough responsibility to adapt and change their pedagogic practice to deliver a skills-based curriculum.

> *'[A] few teachers .... don't take quite enough responsibility of it because they teach other subjects so they're not really committed ... you know, it just appears in the timetable'*

> *'[T]hey don't know anything about the qualifications, they literally came in and said, "is it going to be loads of marking?", and I was like, "well, yeah, at certain points"*

Consequently, this type of ecology appears to be passive and negative with regard to a change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum. A repressed ecology therefore encumbers a practitioner from achieving positive forms of agency as any form of innovatory pedagogic practice becomes impeded and caught up differences of opinion regarding what is studied, how it is studied and when it is studied. The end point, however, is that agency becomes eroded or lost.

## The emergence of practice

Within this study four different ecologies were generated as an outcome of the individual WBC interacting in and within the environment, their school setting. The data generated by this study illustrates that within each type of ecology certain practices were allowed or constrained, made more easy or difficult to enact (Figure 16). These practices were seen to influence their agentic practice and their talk practice.

This reasoned categorisation of ecologies is significant because,

- These ecologies are differentiated by particular environmental constraints and enablers which represent the availability of options or the lack thereof which were accessible to the WBC at that time.
- From the generation of these ecologies differing practices which influence their agentic practice and their talk practice are enabled, allowed, constrained or relegated.
- These types of ecologies mediate and determine the present and future courses of action and the sense of agency the practitioner experiences.
- These practices are temporal, situational and relational in nature.

The particular ecology within which the WBC works is illustrated in Figure 15 while Figure 16 continues to theorise how the outcome of these types of temporal-relational ecological spaces impede or assist specific agentic orientations of WBCs and their subsequent practice. Figure 16 illustrates the how the emergence of practice differs within the four types of ecologies as the practitioner interacted with others within the environment. Within this matrix similarities and differences of practice were identified along with distinctive and/or atypical details of practice. The 'ideal-type' concept of Weber applied to WBC accounts of practice provides a means to 'succinctly capture essences [and] differences' (1967, p.123) of ecologies which have been used to further explicate ecological outcomes determined by the interaction. This matrix illustrates how the influence of different temporal-relational contexts serve to restrict or assist specific agentic practices. It does this by identifying types of social, structural and cultural contexts which maybe 'more conducive to developing the different modalities of agency' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.1005).
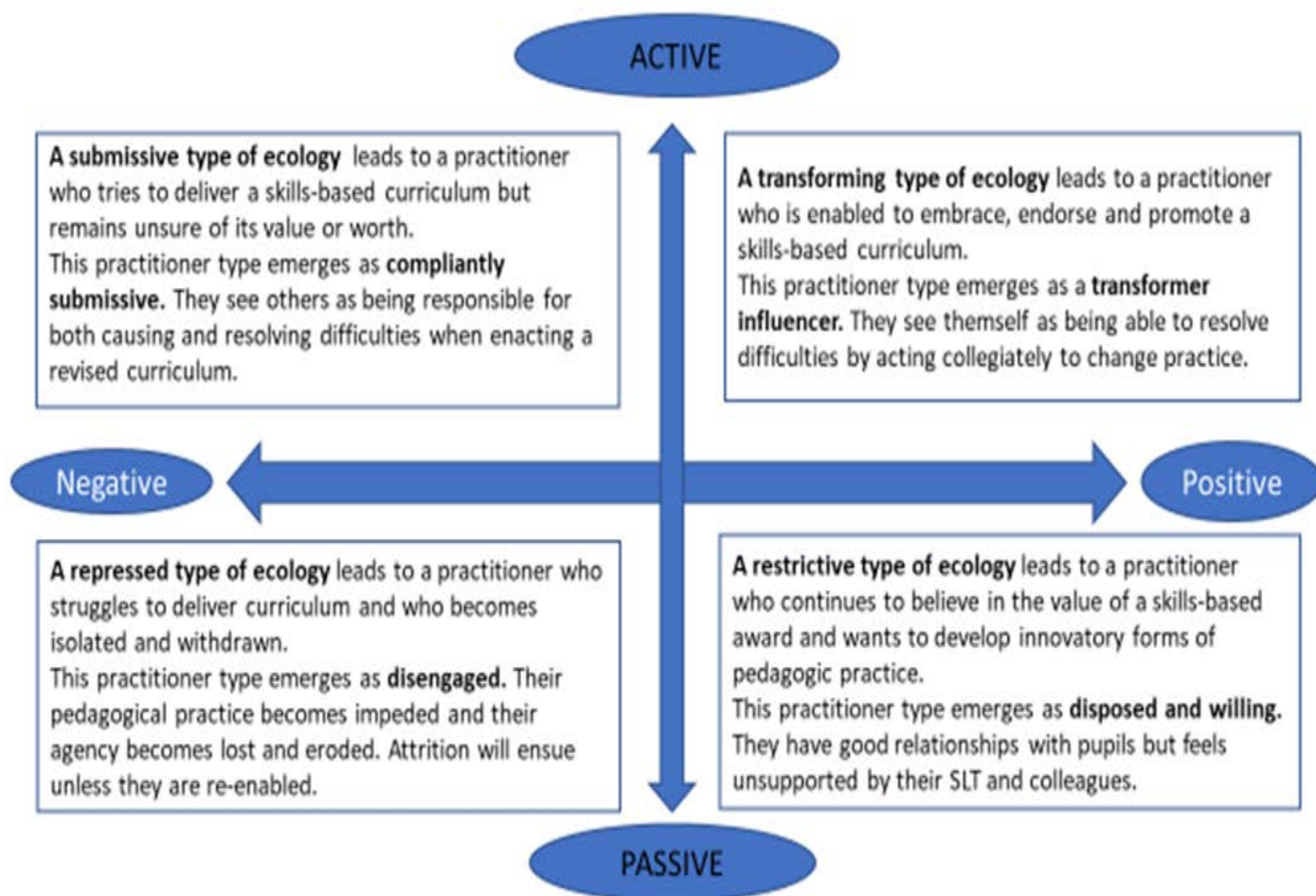
*Figure 16: The emergence of practice generated within an ecology*

Within his Transactional theory Dewey uses the term experience to refer to the transaction of living organisms and their environment. Characterising this as a 'double' relationship (Dewey 1917, p,7) he argues that the 'organism act in accordance with its own structure.... upon its surroundings' and subsequently any changes produced in the environment influence the organism and subsequent actions. Importantly, Dewey distinguishes the difference between the experience 'of an oyster or a growing bean vine' (1916b, p.321) and that of an individual and contends human experience is what it is because 'humans are subject to the influence of culture' (Dewey 1939b, p.15). Culture, he argues, is comprised although not exclusively of language in its spoken and written forms, and thar language gets its meaning from the role it plays in human activity and through shared usage (Dewey 1938a, p.52).

For Dewey the principles of continuity and interaction are intertwined to create a flow of experience where different situations replace each other and features of earlier situations become subsumed within successive ones. The situation in which the interaction takes place is significant, as it reflects not only the materials with which the individual interacts but the total social set-up of the situations within which the individual is engaged. The idea of experience and reflection

becoming intertwined is understood by Dewey and considered necessary as 'No experience having a meaning is possible without having some element of thought' (Dewey 1916/2007, p.107).

## Practice generated within a transforming ecology

Within this type of ecology, a WBC is enabled to embrace, endorse and promote a skills-based curriculum. This WBC practitioner a transformer and an influencer see themself as being able to resolve difficulties by acting collegiately to adapt practice. The transformer influencer is innovative, positive and active. They have been able, due to the interaction of factors within their setting, to exploit their previous experiences to generate a form of agency that is encouraged by the cultural, material and structural factors within their environment. In this vein the 'agreeableness' (Dewey 1938, p.27) and perceived positiveness of these experiences have influenced all subsequent experiences.

This outcome underpins the dual aspect of this ecological theory of agency which posits that the personal capacities of an individual interact with the resources, affordances and constraints of their environment as compared to the one-sidedness of theories which just concentrate upon the capabilities of an individual to view agency as an attribute or possession. This particular WBC practitioner viewed in this way has been able to develop a powerful inner dialogue which has revealed new ways of thinking and talking which have transformed their professional practice. They have been given opportunity to work with many others and to adopt a resilient and resourceful outlook as they locate their practice within a transforming type of ecology. From this position they have been encouraged to adopt the role of a team builder and a team player as they develop a powerful outer dialogue which they employ within their wider social structures and professional relationships. The transformer influencer has been able to share new ways of thinking and talking with others to influence and transform their practice as they have realised, they have 'explicit permission' (Biesta 2010, p.624) to do so and to exert higher degrees of professional judgement within their school setting. For them it has become a 'key dimension of their professionalism' (Priestley et al. 2015, p.2). Their ability to influence, inspire and guide others has developed both inside and outside of their setting to engender a reciprocal form of trust between themselves and like-minded others. Consequently, this has provided further opportunities and possible options for them to consider as they continue to seek out spaces where they can foster positive forms of agency, promote innovation and explicate the positives of their skills-based pedagogical practice. They identified themselves as 'lucky' to be able to practice within such a space.

## Practice generated within a restrictive ecology

Within this type of ecology, a WBC continues to believe in the value of a skills-based award and wants to develop innovatory forms of pedagogic practice but feels unsupported and undervalued

within their setting. This disposed and willing WBC is characterised as a reflective practitioner who experiences structural and cultural challenges within their environment and a lack of space to develop and enact forms of professional judgement.

These impediments have limited the availability and accessibility of options required for them to become innovatory within their pedagogic practice and as they endeavour to develop the skills-based award. Identifying themselves as '*lonely*', '*isolated*', '*challenged*'. The disposed and willing WBCs feel they 'swim against the tide' as they contend with a series of cultural and structural factors which undermine the value of the WBQ. The space they operate within has become restricted by the cultural factors despite SLT's policy intentions to do otherwise.

While this also depends on the individual's actions regarding how they enact such cultures it also raises the possibility of whether there are individual or collective influences at work and whether the WBC is capable of being as active within their own work as they would wish to be. It may be that their intentions have been eroded as a result of structures and cultures which have served to restrain rather than enable. The practice of the disposed and willing is characterised as having more productive interactions with pupils than with staff at school as only there does their inner dialogue align with the outer dialogue with others. While the pupils welcome the creativity and innovatory changes to pedagogic practice the hierarchical influence of the department and the subject constrains the outer dialogue with staff and to some extent begins to disable the robustness of the WBCs inner dialogue. For the disposed and willing the development of their outer dialogue where they can freely innovative and practice new ways of speaking, thinking and understanding was only accessible within spaces external to their setting.

For Dewey the meaning ascribe to present experiences must be seen in light of past experiences and with regards to those of the future. This idea is integral to Dewey's notion of transaction (1916/2007: 1938/1997) as all experience falls within the context of the continual adaption of the individual to and within their environment. 'Every experience is a moving force; its values can be judged on the grounds of what it moves towards and into' (Dewey 1938/1997, p.38).  In the case of Denise, she assumed that her experiences within her second school would be similar to those in her new school. However, they were not similar and within Dewey continuity principle he argues how some experiences may be perceived as 'mis-educative', that they may influence other experience by 'arresting or distorting the growth of further experience' and consequently 'engender callousness [or a] lack of sensitivity and responsiveness......[so that] the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted' (Dewey 1939, p.25). For Denise the transition to her new school was not what she had expected; it has been extremely challenging.

Within this type of ecology, a WBC tries to deliver a skills-based curriculum but remains unsure of its value or worth. The compliantly submissive is characterised as a more traditional practitioner who continues to experience systemic cultural and structural challenges within their environment. Their practice appears burdened by expectations of their SLT and wider school community and with limited opportunity for professional development or learning to reverse this effect.

Within Dewey's Transactional theory Michael has changed with each experience. His mini-vignettes catalogue how these changes have and will continue to affect all his subsequent experiences. Dewey argues that the continuity principle relates equally to experiences which may be considered to be 'mis-educative' where an experience has had a negative effect and will continue to influence a shape 'the growth of further experience' and consequently 'the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted' (Dewey 1939, p.25). This seems to have been the case for Michael as he has only taught in this environment.

This type of ecology relegates any innovatory practice the WBC may try to engage with in favour of established and existing ways of working. Neither within the environment or the ecological outcome of the interaction between the WBC and their environment is there any perceived value in a skills-based approach pedagogy. Within this type of ecology, the potential for agency and change within practice are inhibited by risk-averse ways of thinking, speaking and understanding which make some options unacceptable within structures which are highly organised and hierarchical.

However, as the WBC practitioner comes to a situation equipped with requisite capacities (skills and knowledge) it may prove too difficult or risky to enact and what is a possible and feasible course of action to undertake would also need to be evaluated. This decision would relate not only to the individual WBC but also to the availability of resources and options which may be cultural, material or structural. Within a submissive ecology, strong vertical structures and limited horizontal relationships (Coburn and Russell 2008) prevent the development of strategies which encourage relationships when making sense of new policies. By supporting the formation of relationships which engender trust and which extend beyond the school would serve to break cycles of inward-looking practices and develop new ways of thinking, talking and understanding. Within the practice of the compliantly submissive the potency of the outer dialogue with others constricts their more impassive inner dialogue as they conform to established ways of working within the setting. The dearth of opportunity to talk innovatively restricts both their outer and inner dialogue and their overall sense of agency. With limited opportunities for dialogue, the compliantly submissive WBC appears happy to make use of those which are available within official spaces but this often left

the WBC feeling confused and frustrated. Within a submissive type of ecology, the compliantly submissive identified themselves as '*under-resourced*' and '*brave faced*'.

## Practice generated within a repressed ecology

Within this type of ecology, a WBC makes great effort to deliver curriculum but becomes increasingly isolated and withdrawn as a result of the interplay of contextual factors (material, cultural and structural). In this vein the 'disagreeableness' (Dewey 1938, p.27) of Andrea's experiences have tainted all her subsequent experiences with detrimental effect. These factors have impeded her pedagogical practice to enact a skills-based curriculum and she emerges as dis-engaged. The relational and social aspect of her interaction with others within the setting has become contentious and fractious as staff members continued to apportion blame regarding the demands and requirements of the skills-based curriculum.

In the case of the construction of an asymmetrical timetable many staff voiced the belief that she was culpable in the removal of pupils from their lessons which they believed triggered lower rates of attainment in their subject areas. Part of this problem seems to lie in the mixed and contradictory discourses encountered in secondary schools and in the practitioners' limited understanding of such discourses. These discourses may consist of an assortment of competing and vague ideas concerning pedagogical issues such as, personalised learning, pupil ownership and voice where opportunities for making systemic sense of such issues are limited. The universal adoption of the WBQ is a consequence arising from an externally imposed curriculum change which has altered the dynamics within the secondary school environment. This may have happened with limited communication of a clear philosophy or rationale offered to staff to underpin the change in question. Consequently, the tone and potency of the negative outer conversation with others began to overwhelm the inner conversation she had with self. These negative cultural constraints within the setting further eroded the possible value and benefit of a skills-based qualification. As a consequence, the practice of this WBC was hampered as she contended with many obstacles. She identified herself as '*pushed*', '*struggling*' and '*scaling back*' as a consequence of contending with a hostile environment and dissenting voices.

These four types of ecological settings each with distinct characteristics illustrate how agency can be understood as a 'temporary embedded process of social engagement' (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.963) which is 'something that people do in social practice' (Lipponen and Kumpulaimnet 2011, p.813) as it is shaped by the practitioner and their environment (Ketelaar et al. 2012). While some contextual influences can be considered more tangible and would potentially influence most individuals within the school (e.g., the impact of Estyn imposing Special Measures upon the setting) other influences may be discerned more subtly and nuanced and would influence agentic practice predominantly at and individual level (e.g., disputes with colleagues). The dual aspect of

the ecological theory posits that the individual is not just in the environment but interacts with it and that how the individual's characteristics which contribute to the interaction are drawn from their past achievements, understandings, and patterns of action. As a consequence, the interaction between the individual and environment is informed by these antecedents while being 'acted out in the present', where decisions are made with the future in mind (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.963). As agentic practice materialises from the ecology when the type or quality of social engagement the individual has with the environment changes differing forms of practice (agentic practice) will emerge: it is not fixed. The transient phenomenon of agency was best illustrated by one WBC who taught in two settings and where the interplay led to the emergence of contrasting types of ecologies (transformative and restrictive) and agentic practice being generated.

This conception of ecological types (Figure 15) highlights the continuous and interactive elements of how different types of practice can emerge as an outcome of the interaction between the individual and contextual factors within the environment.  However, the ecology is more than just the environment: the type of ecology results from the interaction between individual practitioners within it and between the individuals and their environment. This ecological conceptualisation of agency has a dual aspect as it is the interaction between the individual's capacities and their environmental conditions that shape the ecology and environs of their work (Biesta and Tedder 2007)

### Institutional influences
The types of ecologies (Figure 15) relate to types of settings in which particular ecological conditions have been created and within which the WBC works. These are temporal, relational and situated spaces which are susceptible to change or variance as contextual factors engage in a push-pull interplay between themselves and a push-pull interplay within themselves.

### The push-pull effect of factors within the environment.
This study illustrates how the interplay of factors within differing environments can lead to differing types of ecologies and ecological outcomes and that it is these outcomes which create a particular climate which impedes or encourages agentic practice. This can be best illustrated within the transforming type of ecology whereby the cultural and structural factors were seen to interact to encourage innovation and collaborative ways of working. The experience of Laura highlights how these two factors interacted to enable the achievement of agency. As the first teacher in Wales to complete the Welsh Baccalaureate she felt it gave her '*credibility'* as she had '*been on both sides'*. Laura spoke of how important that was – to be able to say to her pupils, *"I know this can be done", because I had to do it ...so I'm able to do say that to them, and I think the attitude that I put to it in that first year was very different once I'd kind of gone through it with them'.*

This enabling form of environment allowed Laura to develop a sense of agency by discovering new ways of thinking, speaking and understanding regarding the delivery of a skills-based qualification.

## The push-pull effect between factors

This study suggests that there is a push-pull form of interplay within the practical-evaluative domain whereby the social, material and cultural factors interact with each other and that there is a cumulative effect when they align to inform a particular outcome. Juxtaposed to this are two other potential outcomes. Firstly, one which posits a stance where the force of one factor is so strong that it over-rides the others. This effect is best illustrated within the repressed type of ecology where material factors in this case the construction of an asymmetrical timetable has dominated the cultural and structural factors which were at play within Andrea's environment. The anger and frustration expressed by other members of staff challenged Andrea as they held her culpable for removing pupils from their lessons. She felt that made life '*pretty hard at times'* as her colleagues did not '*want to understand, they just find it easier just to blame'.*

The remaining stance posits an outcome which is unintended. Within the repressed type of ecology, the individual's sense of agency had become eroded, lost and in the case of Andrea attrition ensued.

However, just as the temporal nature of the interplay within the ecology influences the emergence of a type of agency, the ecological factors (material, cultural and structural) within the setting are also simultaneously temporal. They exist and move independently of each other and may at other times cause other outcomes – potentially of defiance or subversion or to positively engage.

## The push-pull effect within factors

Despite Biesta et al.'s (2015) view that agency is of great significance within curriculum enactment some environmental conditions did not enable the WBC to actively shape their work or allow them sufficient opportunity to do so. In addition to the push-pull effect between factors this study suggests that there is a push-pull form of interplay within particular factors.

This effect is best illustrated within the restrictive type of ecology where the interplay between the individual and their environment led to a less positive outcome when enacting the policy as members of staff struggled with the distinctive requirements and assessment procedures (Biesta 2010) of the WBQ. For example, the pedagogical move from a practitioner imparting subject-based knowledge to students to a more skills-based approach appeared would require practitioners, as recounted by Denise, to liaise with entrepreneurs (WJEC 2021, p.16) so that students could present a novel business idea via a Dragons Den styled-event.

In this sense, the inner voice of the cultural factor (that is the conversations the WBC may have with self) and the outer voice (that is those conversations the WBC may have with other practitioners within their delivery team) would engage in an interaction to plan and enact this challenge for the students. The voices of the WBC and the delivery team may cumulatively join in harmony to plan and enact a positive outcome where there is a common purpose and a consensus about the way forward. Conversely, where one form of dialogue, possibly of the outer voice had with other practitioners within the delivery team may become more challenging as others remain resistant and passive to the changes required to enact the plans. This illustrates the push-pull effect within the cultural factor whereby the outer challenging voices of others over-rides the potency of the inner voice the WBC has with self. The outcome of this interaction would constrain and limit the required change in practice within the setting and the outcomes of the students pitch to the audience.

Similarly, the outcome of the interaction between the inner and outer voice may take an unexpected turn. This was best illustrated when a WBC responded to the ambivalent interplay within her setting by developing an anonymised Twitter account. This re-enabled her [Denise] to work with like-minded others albeit external to her school-based setting.

> *'Even though I'd made it my life and I did my MA on it I still set up.......on Twitter.... we would just chat and I would just every week throw different topics and say so how are you teaching global in your school.....it's always nice when people say, oh, I follow you on Twitter or if I see them someone and say you should follow this account, Welsh Bacc Warrior, oh, I follow it, yeah, because I run that, they go, my God, that's quite a nice moment'*

Similarly, another WBC whose inner conversation with self, wholeheartedly believed in the value of a skills-based award and wanted to develop her pedagogic practice undertook the WBQ for herself, and became the first teacher in Wales to do so.

### The Influence of Talk.

Dewey's term 'experience' refers to the transaction of living organism and their environment (1917, p.7) whereby 'The organism act in accordance with its own structure, simple or complex, upon its surroundings. As a consequence, the changes produced in the environment react upon the organism and its activities (Dewey 1920, p.129). However, for human beings the human experience is always subjected to the influence of culture (Dewey 1939b). This is the consequence of humans taking action and taking part in interactions within which language plays a significant part. Language in its various forms whether oral or written derives its importance because of the shared and functional use we all make of it in everyday life (Dewey 1938a).

Within this study cultural factors have influenced the emergence of a particular type of ecology more so than structural or material factors (Priestley et al. 2015). For Priestley et al. (2015) cultural factors are comprised of those which relate to values, beliefs and aspirations, while others, of note here, encompass ways of speaking, thinking and understanding and include forms of inner dialogue (that is within one's own thinking) and outer dialogue (that is conversations had with others within the setting) (Figure 5).

The different ecologies generated as the individual WBC interacted in and within the environment made certain practices more easy or more difficult to enact (Figure 16). These practices were seen to influence their agentic practice and their talk practice. This study foregrounds and theorises the characteristics of positive talk practices. It argues that the place, value and outcomes of talk are most influential during the emergence of certain types of ecologies as is the subsequent generation of practice particularly agentic practice. Talk practices were used by practitioner WBCs as the tools with which they think and does not just focus on what was said but how things were said, to whom, when and how often. This provides a wider dimension when seeking to understand how their talk functions and flows and has afforded an ability to view how each WBC operated and how this led to them making sense of the situations within which they practice.

The ways in which the WBC utilises talk to make sense of their practice maybe viewed as pedestrianly but how they use vocabulary and construct discourses and narratives are important resources for their overall achievement of agency. The value of the talk was perceived differently within each ecology where the WBC located their practice. While in some settings the value of talk was pragmatic to discover the 'what' or 'when' or, something specific regarding an administrative dilemma or procedure in other settings a more discursive and open view was found to discover not only 'how' but 'what if'. For these latter talk practices to take place safe spaces usually those external in nature were sought to locate the discussion of problems and to freely find new ways of thinking about a dilemma and determining an outcome. These spaces were seen to encourage the heuristic nature of talk by enabling ways of speaking with others to prioritise the issue of the day. These supportive spaces were characterised as being '*massively important'* and '*non-judgemental'* as these new risky forms of talk were trialled. Within these new forms of talk narratives were created. For example, they would recount conversations with Estyn Inspectors to validate their change in practice; *"do you believe in it?" I asked him and his reply was 'I do"*. Such narratives were shared and re-shared by others seemingly to illustrate their belief in the value of the qualification so that when back in their substantive setting the creation of a strong narrative would to add strength to their inner conversation. This was done to articulate a clear message, to improve the understanding of others and to rectify any associated myths. It may have included factual information e.g., Percentage who achieved top grades, Number who entered universities

with L3 WBQ etc.  Such narrative affirmations served to support other WBCs and to address the diversity of settings within which they practice.

## Talk practices

Talk practices while present in all of the four types of ecologies were characterised by differing forms of interaction which were affected by cultural circumstances surrounding the interaction of the individual with and within the environment. This meant that certain talk practices were not always positive or active and did not lead to innovative forms of thinking, speaking and understanding between individual and others within that environment at that time. When conceptualising how and what form of agency transpires this study argues how the cultural dimension of agency exerts a powerful influence on how agency can be enacted or not and to what degree. The influence of the interactive dimension underpins that achievement of agency is not a solitary pursuit but relational whereby interpersonal factors enable practitioners to engender support from others while simultaneously offering support (Edwards 2005) within a reciprocal understanding. From this study the form of agency achieved seems to depend on the degree to which an individual engages with talk practices and forms of collaboration and deliberation with others and whether these are viewed as positive, active and innovative, or indeed risky.

For Dewey the meaning that individuals ascribe to experiences must be viewed in respect of past experiences and with regards to those of the future. While he characterises 'Every experience is a moving force; its values can be judged on the grounds of what it moves towards and into' (Dewey 1938/1997, p.38) and can therefore be viewed as positive, ambivalent or negative in nature. This appeared significant for some WBCs who had successive positive experiences and came to almost expects successive experience to be as positive, but when they weren't the contrast was palpable. In similar vein, some experiences could be interpreted as 'mis-educative' or negative as they appeared to continue to affect subsequent experiences by 'arresting or distorting the growth of further experience'. For some WBCs it appeared that the extent of the negativity had tainted and continued to restrict the chance of having a 'richer experience in the future' (Dewey 1939, p.25). Such richer experiences are reflected in Estyn's (2012) expectation and description of a successful WBC (Section 60) as being someone who engages in talk practices. Similarly, these richer experiences figure within Hoyle's (2008) characterisation of an extended professional as someone who seeks 'to improve practice' is 'happily collegial' and who locates 'classroom practice within a larger social framework' (p.291). The talk practices which emanated from a particular type of ecology were responsible for the agentic practice and talk practice that the WBC was able to enact.

Within a transformative ecology transformer influencer is enabled to talk with many other in a positive and pro-active way and within their practice talk is regarded as central and continuous. Through their collegiate dialogue with others, they are able to come up with 'better ideas' and options to remedy situations of the present day but most significantly they are able to 'name -it'. This WBC was able to initiate a conversation about whatever that something is, which is of particular importance and interest to them and their practice at that time. This form of talk was valued highly as it gave them '*strength*'. However, they recognised that it required a continuous investment of time and energy as they depended upon the temporal and relational nature of their interaction with others. While some challenges were considered by the WBC transformer influencer as '*mammoth*' the talk practices they adopted were not always comfortable nor risk-averse. They acknowledged that the interplay, the push-pull within and between the factors, between themselves and their environment did not always guarantee that the '*strength*' of their inner dialogue would be sufficient to embrace, endorse and promote a skills-based curriculum or that it would always be robust enough to counter contextual challenges in the form of indifferent and ambivalent dialogue with others. Those who began to think, speak and understand their practice differently through talk realised that in their dialogue with others they could consider issues such as, '*how am I going to get through this, how am I going to get the time*'. These issues were dominant and even when successive talk was concerned with the same issue their focus remained. They purposefully used their talk to consider issues 'of-the-moment'; '*it was right, what am I actually going to do here?*' and as such these talk practices can be seen as being not only 'in' the moment but also 'of' the moment. They were both practitioner-led and practitioner-initiated. Their practice within these spaces remained dynamic and immersive: *'we were working through it knowing it was going to get better and better'* and as they were able to invoke new ways of thinking, speaking and understanding. Through adopting these talk practices, the transformer influencer has been able to transform self and because of their locale within a transforming ecology they are able to influence others. Thus, as their inner dialogue has become transformative as they located their substantive practice within an enabling ecology, they have been able to support others to actively develop innovative approaches. In this sense their outer dialogue became influential as they supported others to achieve positive forms of agency which in turn contributed to their own positive outlook and robust inner dialogue. The transformer influencer was seen to influence the practice of others and to reenable the belief of these other WBCs in the value of a skills-based pedagogy.

For the disposed and willing practitioner talk is more emotionally challenging yet reflective. Their dialogue with others is not as productive as previously experienced in other settings. Their practice best explains the extent to which practitioners draw upon their experiences and to what extent

these relate to the particular ecologies within which they currently work, that is the culture and structures that shape their present-day context for action. Their current talk is characterised by a restorative and corrective tone to their conversations. This involves sensitively dispelling myths, correcting errors and putting things right. This type of talk can be exhaustive as it draws significantly upon the reserves deposited within the inner conversations of self. The replenishing of these reserves is undertaken by seeking positive opportunities for talk externally and virtually sought. Through experiencing these talk practices, the disposed and willing remains enthusiastic and keen to enact the skills-based curriculum and change pedagogic approaches, but needs others who are equally as disposed, keen and positive to do so. Within the restrictive type of ecology, the reciprocal nature of talk practice was welcomed by the disposed and willing as they sought a form of externally-based self-help when issues arose regarding the change in pedagogic practice. When seeking to resolve the indifference and ambivalence of others they sought talk opportunities outside their main environment to talk and work 'on' the problem while 'in' the problem. Talking about self-initiated issues together with other like-minded colleagues afforded them a greater range of better options within a new space which allowed them to develop new ways of thinking, speaking and understanding. This revised form of talk was made possible as their inner dialogue within this new space aligned with the outer dialogue of these other practitioners. These self-initiated forms of talk gave them a new perspective which strengthened their resolve and enriches their continuing inner dialogue with self. Within this form of talk a key factor of relatedness to the discussion at hand and to other participants was evident and as the intrinsic motivation to talk to develop practice was fostered so the motivation to engage in grassroot forms of talk increased. This positive cycle of reinforcement continued as a motivational component of practitioner development which can sometimes be overlooked (Evans 2015).

Within a restrictive ecology the disposed and willing were enabled to act in situations where they felt it was possible to achieve agency as compared to contexts where they felt less powerful to do so. This indicates that the achievement of agency is not just a capacity of having a clear sense of direction of what is important and needs to be done but that it is always achieved or not in concrete situations, e.g., within the classroom, and to some extent at departmental level but within the wider school context it can become more challenging. It is interesting to see the places where the disposed and willing felt they could and were able to enact this form of talk and conversely the places where they felt limited in doing so. This further illustrates the ecological conditions of the achievement of agency. For the disposed and willing the prime motivation to talk about their practice was to generate better ideas (those which were more fitting, or appropriate, or advantageous) which they could not access without restraint within the restrictions of their setting. Using this resource, this newly found form of interaction, they could now consider options and

make informed judgements relating to their next steps of action. In this sense this resource became a vital element as the talk was not insular or narrow but considered the wider aspects of changes required to practice which aligned with their views and beliefs about being a professional. This newly revised form of talk was valued and seen as a continuing force for good and without which some felt that they would have '*phased out'* or even dis-engaged. From this study the ability to access each other by phone, email or in-person on a regular basis was a (re)enabling feature of their agentic practice.

Within a submissive ecology the compliant and submissive practitioner was enabled to engage with limited forms of talk. For them talk was characterised as perfunctory, administrative, procedural and resourced based. Their dialogue with others was stable and still within a department-bound environment. When attempting to resolve any conflicts the form of talk employed saw each draw upon their own experiences from within the department, their previous pedagogic practice and from others at the school. Talk practices were almost exclusively internal and departmentally based and where conversations with others did happen external to the setting it was limited. When support was offered externally it did not always provide solutions to meet the challenge of the moment.

This form of talk was limited by options and opportunities afforded by their setting and seemingly comprised of formal professional development events held by the WJEC examination board. This form of talk was considered dictatorial, as they (the WJEC) have '*a structured way of doing things'*. This perceived stance caused the compliant and submissive to become aggrieved and dis-interested in the advice presented. As a consequence of having limited access to practitioner-initiated or practitioner-led opportunities within their ecology, this WBC became marginalised to the options available and their defensive and/or diffident stance led any real opportunity for talk to become practice related. Through adopting these limited talk practices, the submissive and compliant has become side-lined because of their locale within a submissive ecology. This position has continued to influence others by reproducing these less agentic forms of talk practices.

Within a repressed ecology talk about their practice is characterised as an outcome of an over reliance and dependency on others to provide solutions to practice-based dilemmas and while it does show that both inner with self and outer forms of conversation with others have occurred it does not demonstrate that their pedagogical practice had undergone any change or been subjected to new ways of thinking, speaking or understanding: e.g., '*one way to contend with this situation would be for the WJEC to produce a textbook...... it would just make it so much easier for teachers not having to reinvent the wheel all the time'*.  Although this constitutes a lot of talk there is not much evidence of an overarching view to evaluate or judge the direction of their practice.

However, this does not suggest that there was no agency enacted but rather that the emphasis of the talk was on the here and now.

Within a repressed ecology the outer talk practices of the disengaged WBC appeared overwhelmingly confrontational with others in their locale. As such their outer dialogue with others was limited. It had become overwhelmed by conversations which were negative in nature. This had caused their inner dialogue with self to shrink as they became marginalised within the particular interplay of these environing factors: that it '*angers*' the staff, they become '*frustrated because we take these pupils out of their lessons'*. This WBC practitioner had lost their access to and availability of opportunity to talk with others actively and positively. Any opportunity within this ecology to talk about practice had been eroded by domineering cultural factors. The lack of freedom within the interactive dimension meant conversations with others, to discuss choices, review goals etc., appear to have reached an impasse, leaving the WBC's development of talk and of agency a solitary pursuit: '*life's pretty hard at times'*.

To be agentic a WBC needs the locale of their practice to be within an ecology which enables them to engage with others as part of a relational and reciprocal endeavour and where talking about practice can lead to innovative ways of thinking, speaking and understanding whether in regards to the nature and value of the WBQ or with respect to a change in pedagogical practice required by a skills-based curriculum.

### The development of talk practices

This research has centred upon the universal adoption of the WBQ as an example of change and has considered the impact of this curriculum reform upon the environment within which the WBC works and the interaction that has occurred between this individual and their environment. It has demonstrated that during a time of curriculum change staff should be supported to realise that they have 'explicit permission' (Biesta 2010, p.624) to deliver the curriculum reform. Through the development of talk practices, a school environment may create a more positive and active ecology, and similarly, the outcomes of the interaction may enable and enrich the practitioner's sense of agency.

A practitioner makes choices daily yet no matter how autonomous they feel their everyday practice is saturated with structural and cultural forces and as such their agentic practice becomes influenced by the codes which limit or deregulate their options or makes others more natural or easy to take. This study argues that enabling an individual to become a transformer influencer will only arise from an on-going process of positive and active engagement between the individual and their environment (Biesta and Tedder 2007) and the generation of a transformative ecology within which they locate their practice. This type of ecology is characterised as having a number of

available and accessible options which enable a range of talk practices and 'Talk-in-Practice' to happen.

*An understanding of Talk-in-Practice - what it is, and what it is not.*
Talk-in-Practice is characterised as a robust and purposeful form of inner dialogue (that is with self) and outer dialogue (that is with others) practiced during a time of pedagogic change (Figure 17). Talk-in-Practice is the form of talk that was generated by a transforming ecology as it is central to the development of practice. In contrast, Talk-on-Practice is a form of talk that was generated from a submissive ecology as it is on the fringe of the development of practice.

| **What it is....** | **What it is NOT...** |
|---|---|
| Emotional and confessional | Administrative or procedural |
| Time efficient | Risk-averse |
| Reciprocal | Still or static or comfortable |
| 'In the moment' and 'of the moment' | Defensive or diffident |
| Gives 'better ideas' | Insular or narrow |
| Influential and transformational | Dictatorial or pushy |
| Immersive and dynamic | Place to have a 'moan' |
| Central to practice | On the fringe of practice |

*Figure 17: Talk-in-Practice: What it is and what it is not.*

Within a transforming ecology dialogue with self and with others aims to come up with better ideas which help practitioners contend with challenges when enacting a new curriculum or take advantage of the potential opportunities created by the change, e.g., to teach more creatively and innovatively whilst uncoupled from the specifics of subject-based knowledge. To this end Talk-in-Practice builds the trust amongst practitioners so when an issue does arise regarding an active change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum support can be accessed within the knowledge that someone '*has your back'*. This requires a continuous investment of time and effort to create a trusted space within which information is shared, understanding is found and complex problems are resolved. Within this type of space, a positive stance with respect to the nature and value of the WBQ is maintained. Within a submissive ecology, however, talk remained passive, constrained by cultural and structural forces which

indirectly inhibited a change from subject-based pedagogy to a skills-based pedagogy by means of the school-based environment.

*The significance of Talk-in-Practice*

Put simply this study makes two claims: an ecology can become more positive and active by adopting Talk-in-Practice practices and Talk-in-Practice practices can enable and enrich the practitioner's sense of agency.

Through the enactment of curriculum policy Biesta et al. (2015) argue that teacher agency is of great significance and as the WBC role is unlike any other within the school setting a particular form of agency is needed to create and enact the different type of pedagogy required which is skills-based not subject-based. The ability to Talk-in-Practice would allow for the development of agency which would enable the WBC to actively contribute to and shape their co-ordinating role. This role brought about through the policy of universal adoption has caused some members of staff to feel vulnerable and confused about their substantive subject-based role as the WBQ has led to the displacement of some (elective) subjects. These feelings of uncertainty have been further compounded by the inclusion of the WBQ into a series of accountability and performance measures, which has led to further disenchantment.

So, what contribution can Talk-in-Practice make in ecologies where the nature of the WBQ is not valued or where there is a passive stance with regard to a change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the skills-based curriculum? Talk-in -Practice, regardless of the topic of talk can contribute to the overall quality of education by enabling practitioners to respond in meaningful ways to new and unique situations of practice. Through these means the WBC is able to make reasoned judgements in the here and now as their flexibility enables them to respond to matters as they arise and which are of greatest importance to them. Such a capacity is needed in a complex system like education. Ecologies where this is made possible are no less complex but they work because of the intelligence of practitioners who are able to name-the-issue, discuss the issue and then implement the best solution sourced from dialogue with others. Such action arising from choice is reminiscent of Schwab's (1969) *Practical* whereby an issue is not best addressed with familiar solutions which are often 'drawn from old habits of mind' (p.18) but that they should be attended to 'with new modes of attack' (p.18) and then reflected upon.

Talk-in-Practice requires effort from practitioners as they engage actively in constructing ways forward, acquiring skills as they do so that make them more able to adapt to future novel situations Similarly, it requires more from those who have the '*responsibility for shaping the conditions'* within the setting (Priestley et al. 2015, p.149, *my emphasis*).  In this sense, these ideas of Talk-in-Practice aligns with Dewey and his understanding that action, communication and learning results from the individual being in an ongoing transaction with their (natural and social) environment.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Conclusion

### Shaping the conditions

This study has illustrated how ecologies can be shaped through dialogue and talk practices. When seeking to shape the cultural conditions needed to enhance talk practices the factors identified by Priestley et al. (2015) have been deemed significant. These factors comprise - ways of speaking, thinking and understanding which include forms of inner dialogue (that is with self within one's own thinking) and outer dialogue (that is conversations self has with others within the setting). This study foregrounds and theorises the characteristics of positive talk practices by arguing that the place, value and outcomes of talk are influential when an ecology is shaped. Therefore, when considering how a school-based environment might create a more positive and active ecology for agency it is important to consider how these conditions can be (re)shaped to influence talk practices.

### The Big Asks?

While in one sense it would be prudent to ask who initiates and influences the talk within the setting that is who leads and who manages talk while in another sense it would be pragmatic to assume that this responsibility falls within the remit of the SLT. Fostering and underwriting the importance of a skills-based pedagogy so that it gains parity of esteem with more traditional forms of subject and exam-based pedagogy would positively influence the types of talk which materialise within the school-based environment. In this instance the debated distinction between managing and leading an organisation has never been more important (Naylor 1999). When leading an organisation, the need for a vision, a picture of the preferred future needs to be shared with all to shape the programmes of learning and teaching, as well as the policies, priorities, plans and procedures need to pervade the day-to-day life of the institution (Beare et al. 1997).

Through clear communications the SLT could ensure areas of difference and commonality between the two forms of pedagogy are made plain and understood by all. Similarly, Bennis (2004) argued that leadership is a creative enterprise which involve all in innovating, initiating and maintaining a common understanding. This does not mean just considering the imperative of the bottom-line of any performance measure or the adherence to accountability systems in situ but that leaders make good decisions and provide an articulated direction regarding the inclusion of subject-based and skills-based qualification. Only this would ensure that an equal regard be paid to the contribution made by both within the suite of performance and accountability measures facing schools. Until a clear and coherent message is articulated by the SLT the benefits of including a skills-based qualification in the curriculum will remain an area of debate and ambiguity where uncertainty dominates. This in effect gives practitioners licence to opt out of embracing its

value. However, if the SLT were to provide a clear rationale and establish a shared understanding then a re-shaping of the culture would help to bring about the internal cultural and structural changes required to re-formulate what has been an indistinct and open-to-argument view of a skills-based curriculum. Here too it is equally significant to ask who else if not the SLT could and indeed would influence the talk? If not the SLT then the controversy would continue and practice would continue to be challenged through the ambivalence influence of "others". It is prudent, however, to remember that amid this debate the factors at interplay within the environment are not static but are dynamic and fluid. Similarly, they are temporal and as they interact with other factors, they may at times clash, overlap or complement each other. The interaction and resultant phenomena may be felt more so at a whole school-level during such a time or may be more focussed upon and experienced by certain practitioners, the WBC or WBQ teachers.

Of consequence then is it a big ask of the SLT to (re)shape the conditions for improving talk practice and agency when leading and managing schools? By loosening restrictions placed on practitioners the SLT could allow certain affordances, certain allowances in terms of their professional practice which would enable the practice of talk to develop. To ensure that all the practicalities of co-ordinating a qualification (whether subject-based or skills-based) are met practitioners should be allowed time to attend professional development events. These events are designed to provide information and guidance and to ensure the maintenance and administration of programmes through the 'delivery of some kind of information' (Timperley 2010, p.10). Practitioner attendance at such events would ensure compliant forms of talk are undertaken as characterised by Talk-on-practice. More importantly, however, is their attendance at professional learning events. These are designed to '...challenge previous assumptions and create new meanings [which] require transformative rather than additive change to teaching practice' (Timperley 2010, pp.4-5). With reference to Schwab's *Practical* such attendance at these events could provide opportunity for those concerned with curriculum issues to be heard if the endeavour is to shape the 'intelligent consensus' (p.116) of the choices and actions for future practice. Within the *Practical* choices appear from which individuals can employ the most appropriate form of action. Schwab characterises this as 'choice and action' (p.2) or perhaps more fittingly choice in or for action.

While the focus of these events remains practical such opportunities should be endorsed to solve practice-based challenges. Practitioner attendance at professional learning events is vital. They allow practitioners to Talk-in-practice and to begin to transform their practice. Of interest here is that some WBC practitioners within this study have sought to engage with grassroots professional learning, which may be considered more informal and less conventional in nature (e.g., Forte et al. 2012; Visser et al. 2014; Carpenter and Krutka 2015). These voluntary and participant-driven

forms of professional learning adopt the principles of Open Space Technology (OST) which contends individuals with a shared focus can meet, self-organise, collaborate, and solve complex problems (Owen 2008). While Teachmeets have been popularised within Wales with increased levels of interest from amongst practitioners (Carpenter and Linton 2016) they along with other unconference events and movements have successfully utilized OST principles which forgo 'traditional conference structures such as advance agendas.... which are thought to potentially limit participants' engagement, creativity, and collaboration' (Carpenter and Linton 2016, p.98).

For one WBC grassroot professional learning provided an opportunity for her talk-in-practice to reach a point where it became transformative in nature. Thus, grassroots professional learning practices are of significance in terms of developing talk practice. While their appeal may stem from their lack of any formal hierarchical power structure as they do not originate from within a formal organisation (e.g., school, local consortium) they contrast distinctly from the systems based on performativity that all practitioners operate within in their school setting. Given their diminished or non-existent form of accountability no one owns the 'event' and no one requires formal measurement or the reporting of outcomes from it. Grassroots forms of practitioner development operate on a practical level and remain beyond these limitations and constraints.

However, the question of who directs the dialogue and talk, and who monitors it may be a big ask for the SLT to contend with? This study has shown that having practitioners who are able to 'own-it' and 'name-it' has brought a range of better ideas within transforming and restricted ecologies. Therefore, is attendance at more informal events a step too far for the SLT or could they endorse it to become a more frequent occurrence? Then again, in keeping with the nature of agency there needs to be a flow in and out of such talk practices with like-minded others as needs are temporal and as issues emerge to become a priority. Does then the temporal nature of attending such events make it more palatable for the SLT to accept and endorse these practices? The big ask for SLT is to consider whether they could begin to afford and offer these democratising powers to practitioners. Would it be a comfortable step for the SLT to take given it results in like-minded practitioners meeting and facilitates a dialogue/discussion which can change practice and pedagogies. Would they endorse and allow their staff to engage with social media platforms such as Twitter (Jefferis 2016)?

Conversely, such forms of democratising may not be familiar to or appeal to all practitioners within the setting. Some may feel they do not have the confidence, time or energy, to engage and that the practitioners who do attend such events may be naturally more progressive in their views and beliefs. However, when coupled with opportunity for talk and dialogue in a safe space (i.e., without the regular hierarchical controls) this format may encourage more collaborative forms of talk practice to diffuse throughout the education sector which has the benefit of developing 'deep and

sometimes demanding dialogue, candid but constructive feedback' (Hargreaves and O'Connor 2018, p.3). In practical terms this could include giving practitioners time to choose what to do in directed time by allowing them to arrange their own activities. This would mean loosening the ties to whole school blanket approaches or programmes for all staff. Such a hands-off approach and the relaxation of constraints may cause the SLT anxiety as they cease to micro-manage as a way of control. Yet, while these may be perceived as non-negotiable if schools are to rise to the challenges of the present day these forms of professional learning which are non-hierarchical may also cause further anxiety as there is little in terms of accountability and reporting back inherent within them. Regardless, the temporal nature of agency counsels that practitioner talk development options must be sustained over-time and it is incumbent upon the SLT to create and support a culture which stabilises the ecological environment through a structured and reshaped systems approach. This revised approach would ensure an interactional focus remained between individuals and subject areas within the ecology to mirror those enjoyed by some practitioners outside the environ and that the relational imperative to the development of talk would not become side-lined by any other factor within the ecology. Simultaneously, by fostering talk-in-practice practices internally and-between-schools and by underwriting the use of less formal channels premised upon teacher-led or teacher-initiated involvement the SLT would enable an open culture where an interactional and relational foci can be fostered between practitioners who deliver both subject-based and skills-based pedagogies. On a salutary note, however, the SLT may retain doubts regarding the level of surety that forms of positive agency would be achieved and that a clash or overlap of forces would not disrupt the push-pull <u>within</u> and <u>between</u> the factors to bring unwelcomed and unplanned consequences.

### Why bother to (re)shape the conditions?

At this stage it would be prudent to consider why the SLT should bother to (re)shape and/or (re)determine the environmental conditions within their school. The answer lies in the fact that by choosing to do so they can create an evolving space for a revised ecological form to be generated and that within this revised form certain practices can be made more easy or difficult to enact (Figure16). These practices can influence a practitioner's sense of agency and their talk practice. This phenomenon of a newly created sense of agency can be realised when the individual interacts with the cultural forces which have been re-fashioned by the SLT and the revised ecology is generated. It is through these revisions – through the loosening or removal of constraints, or the encouragement and enablement of factorial forces within the locale that new ways of practice can be adopted.

The SLT's actions to re-fashion the cultural forces within the environment aligns with Egan's (2017) third stage of educational decision making in Wales. Such a position presupposes the

104

second phase characteristics of the tight prescription of content (e.g., Numeracy and Literacy Measures) and output regulation via Estyn inspections and the evaluative use of data to judge the performance of schools, subjects and teachers are to become replaced. These second phase prescriptive measures sought to shape the environment of the school by routinely monitoring, evaluating and managing the individual and in doing so limited and eroded their sense of agency. The problematic focus of centring attention upon the quality and capacity of the individual while part of the dual and dialectic aspect of an ecological understanding of agency has not taken into account the significance of the practical constraints encountered within the locale. The OECD (2005) considers this dilemma of a policy shift requiring practitioners to act with agency but concludes that it is a complex task for it to happen in practice when their context does not allow them to do so;

> 'The quality of teaching is determined not just by the "quality" of teachers – although that is clearly critical – but also by the environment in which they work. Able teachers are not necessarily going to reach their potential in settings that do not provide appropriate support or sufficient challenge or reward' (OECD 2005, p.9)

The third phase of Egan's characterisation of education policy in Wales begins to propose solutions to these issues caused by curricular and systemic solutions which (albeit unintendedly) created systems in which the actions of individual practitioners did not really matter. Whether via input steering – through prescribing the content of education, process steering – by stipulating forms of education, or via outcome steering by means of invasive and oppressive inspection regimes, performance related pay, league tables, standards setting and bureaucratic accountability, many individual practitioners have become dissatisfied and any space they had for agency had been taken away, eroded or lost. Consequently, practitioners acting within the second phase became complaisant and compliant to working in a limiting manner within their setting as the system required them to do so.

Priestley et al. (2015) consider this approach to be unintelligent, as practitioners were unable to respond in meaningful and purposeful ways to evolving situations. Instead, they had become reliant upon established protocols and rules which had the appearance of solving problems but were too general and did not always relate to the issue of the here and now. The constraining nature of the education protocols and policies within this second phase lacked the flexibility required to solve issues within complex settings such as education. That said despite their limited space to enact a form of agency many of the systems put in place to control education only worked because of the intelligence of the practitioners who implemented them (James and Biesta 2007).

Thus, good and productive forms of agency have the capacity to make the systems of education work even if to only lessen the harm caused by top-down systems, so can agency work well at a systems level, an individual level and at the collective practitioner level? If not then why shape the conditions? Shaping the conditions makes the whole system more intelligent and more able to engage with the complexities of the here and now. Enabling practitioners to enact agency seeks to improve the intelligence of the overall operation of the system at all levels. This would mean that bottom-up approaches would be included as they offer an alternative and different way of thinking, speaking and understanding about policy enactment.

By shaping the cultural conditions within their environment, the SLT can foster and develop close working and collaborative talk practices inwardly between members of staff and outwardly between schools for the benefit of all practitioners. This places the SLT of a school in alignment with Egan's (2017) articulation of a third stage of education policy making which is characterised as collegial and collaborative (WG 2017a). Through (open) dialogue with others the individual gains a bigger picture which allows them to put things into perspective by having another window to view the situation and opportunity to perceive and evaluate what is going on; what is absent or missing. Practitioners need to be equipped for future practice-based challenges and changes and so require support to assist pupil learning more effectively. However, as classroom-based situations are ever changing a reliance on professional development or training alone has become insufficient to deal with the emergence of change. In order to deal with change successfully the qualities of adaptability, lateral and divergent thinking are essential (Jones 2017). Talk orientated forms of practice should be active and continuing, reflective, evaluative; they should be collaborative and not constrained to a linear understanding of future possibilities and ways of working (ibid). Through the engagement in heuristic practices problem-solving opportunities have allowed practitioners within this study to meet, speak, associate with 'others', and act upon the support secured. Heuristic practice have allowed some WBC in this study to talk from their own experiences and to listen to the experiences of others, which is not only 'in' the moment but also 'of' the moment.

This study argues that by shaping the cultural conditions within the environment the SLT can underwrite inner and outer forms of dialogue to become positively enacted by practitioners in an attempt to authorise new ways of speaking, thinking and understanding of their own, and the practice of others in a time of curriculum change. As these forms of dialogue include the inner dialogue that is within one's own thinking and the outer dialogue that is conversations had with others within the setting there emerges an expectation that all the practitioners will participate in not only professional development but will actively seek out professional learning and potentially grassroot opportunities. The cumulative and progressive outcome of encouraging talk practices

will ensure that talk is not limited or constrained but that it has every opportunity to become transformative, immersive and influential. These forms of talk are significant as practitioners are able to 'name' the issue and find better ideas to remedy the dilemma as they have the 'permission' to do so and while subsidiarity and performance measures remain a 'framework' of constraint at a meso and micro level each practitioner needs to be active and positively agentic in their practice.

Agency is important as it improves practice. The ownership of the problem or issue at hand remains with the practitioner as does coming up with the answer. This bottom-up approach to problem-solving aligns with an ecological view of agency which argues that it is not something that the individual owns or acquires but is something they do and more specifically that it denotes the quality of the engagement the individual has with their temporal–relational contexts-for-action. For the SLT these talk practices can be both time and cost effective and efficient. While performance measures remain the imperative the advancement of positive talk practices within the setting can enable the practitioner to become 'active' and positively agentic in role. The SLT has opportunity to re-shaped conditions within the setting and by remaining cognisant of how the factors interplay can increase the motivation and job satisfaction of their staff.

## (Re)shaping the four ecologies

Within his Transactional theory Dewey's principle of transaction is of significance as 'An experience is always what is it because of a transaction taking place between the individual and, what at the time, constitutes the environment' (Dewey 1938/1997, p.43). For Dewey (1938/1997) transaction refers to matters of "trying" and "undergoing" within which the individual tries to make an impression upon the environment by demonstrating an intention to act with purposeful engagement within their environment. However, all experience falls within the context of the continual adaption of the individual within their environment.

If as Dewey argues 'everything depends upon the quality of the experience' (1938, p.27) and experience is disagreeable then these experiences will affect subsequent experiences negatively, and if this prevents the growth of further and/or richer experience how then will the enactment of teacher agency bring about better education outcomes? This study has considered the (re)acknowledgment of 'the importance of teacher agency – that is their active contribution to shaping their work and its conditions for the overall quality of education' (Biesta et al. 2015, p.621). It therefore follows that only by (re)shaping the cultural conditions within a school based-setting that an evolving ecology can (re)emerge within which certain practices are made more easy or difficult to enact or are allowed or constrained (Figure 16). These practices are seen to influence the agentic and talk practices of individuals.

This premise is significant within this study as the universal adoption of the WBQ has caused some WBCs to become 'dis-abled' by institutional, social and cultural factors and a lack of understanding regarding its benefit and value has limited their ability to act as policy intended. However, this does not mean that this will or should always be the case as agency is temporal, and should or when cultural conditions become re-fashioned or re-shaped differing forms of interactions will occur and differing types of ecologies will emerge. The four types of ecology, resulting from this study, are temporal, as is the form of practice (talk or agentic) enacted by individuals. Any subsequent change in the factors (whether structural, material or cultural) would change the nature of the interplay and the resultant outcome that is the type of ecology which accordingly influences the practice of an individual.

The transforming ecology within a school is one which enables an individual to undertake innovative and creative practices. Within this ecology the forms of agency generated are positive and active and they seem to promote and contribute to a positive outlook and one which encourages a skills-based pedagogy. By endorsing collaborative ways of working the SLT have allowed practitioners to see themselves as being actively enabled to resolve their own difficulties and sufficiently collegiate to work with others to change their pedagogic practice and influence the practice of others simultaneously. Such a transforming ecology allows these certain freedoms to facilitate outcomes which align with the third phase of educations Welsh policy making (Egan 2017). The temporal nature of the transforming ecology, or any ecology, suggests that the outcome of the interaction is transitory and of the moment and as such the interaction of factors need be reviewed and revised to ensure that another type of (limiting or constraining) outcome does not result. Any revision of the interaction needs to ensure that first and foremost the practitioner's agency remains enabled and enriched.

A restrictive type of ecology within a school is one which requires a practitioner to continue to believe in the value of a skills-based award but remains unable to act as creatively or innovatively as they would like. Consequently, the pedagogic practice of the disposed and willing becomes constrained by cultural factors within the setting. The re-shaping of these factors would reenable these practitioners to re-gain their sense of agency and will begin when options become available for them to talk productively with others. Many of the disposed and willing would have had, prior to taking on this role, certain freedoms which had allowed them to access a range of options, places and spaces to have advanced their ways of thinking, speaking and understanding. Through the re-instating of such options the SLT would reenable them to access productive talk practice (and Talk-in-practice again) and to participate in forms of dialogue once employed in their past. In this sense the SLT re-fashioning of the environment would allow them to re-gain a sense of agency which has currently eluded them.

Within the submissive ecology the re-fashioning of factors would re-able the submissive and compliant to re-gain their sense of agency. In particular, talk practices would need to be restored and practised through informal and/or formal forms of talk and through inter or intra forms of conversations with others. It is the responsibility of the SLT to become cognisant of this and to act when they suspect the interplay yields damaging or destructive consequences which can limit a sense of agency of any practitioner. This is especially important for those who hold a TLR during a time of curriculum reform. By shaping the conditions, the SLT would be pro-actively undertaking action to negate any restrictive measures and allow reablement to begin. This should begin with lifting the constraints of talk so that their inner conversation that is those conversations with self are robust and purposeful prior to talking with others who do not fully understand the rationale of the qualification.

The disabling of practitioners will ensue if their marginalisation by repressive cultural, structural and material factors within their setting is not addressed and the re-fashioning of the cultural conditions is not undertaken. Given that the particular interaction of such environing factors has limited the sense of agency (e.g., materially by trying to manage the constraints of an asymmetrical timetable at KS4, culturally by contending with angry and frustrated staff, or structurally by limited and negative interaction with others) the position of the WBC must be underwritten by the SLT who endorse their 'explicit permission' (Biesta 2010, p.624) to deliver the curriculum reform. Such a purposeful stance from the SLT would ensure the WBC re-gain a sense of agency lost within the negative forms of dialogue held with those who do not understand or value the award. The disengaged who have been disadvantaged from this type of interaction, resultant ecology and dialogue with others need to acquire a refreshed sense of purpose and permission to enact their role. Should this outcome not be achieved and the fate of those who have fallen by the way-side not be addressed attrition may result.

### A reconsideration of the questions set

The WBQ is a universally adopted (NAW 2015) qualification in Wales at Key Stage 4 and 5. It is part of the Welsh Government's school performance measures (NAW 2019) and accountability system for schools (WG 2019). This study focused upon the role of the WBC and what kinds of factors constrain and/or enable agency, and how might schools act to create more positive opportunities and outcomes for agency?

The review of literature had established the importance of practitioner agency in the 'overall quality of education' (Biesta et al. 2015, p.621) and particularly within the enactment of curriculum policy. The Ecological Approach of agency as posited by Priestley et al. (2015) was used as a lens to examine the practice of the WBC. This theory was drawn upon the Transactional theory of Dewey (1938) and the related principles of Continuity, Transaction and Situation. Having examined how

best to engage with practitioners to understand their practice this study has considered two research questions:

1. Within an ecological understanding of agency, what kinds of contextual factors constrain and/or enable agency?

2. How might schools act to create more positive opportunities and outcomes for agency?

Using the ecological interpretation of agency of Priestley et al. (2015) this study has explained the impact of material, cultural and structural factors on the actions of the WBC, and identified the contextual factors which may constrained and/or enabled agency. This was done so that the SLT of a school might consider ways in which it could act to create more positive agentic opportunities and outcomes for its practitioners. As this study sought to address Goodson's call that 'we need ....to know more about the lives of teacher's' (1989, p.138) data was collected from fifteen WBCs which was re-storied into twelve mini-vignettes from which the two themes of Institutional Influences and the Influence of Talk were drawn. The mini-vignettes having been grouped into a two-by-two matrix based on the types of school-based settings (environments) led to the generation of a particular ecologies (Figure 15). This matrix demonstrated that some settings were shaped by institutional influences and which appeared to be more positive or negative regarding the nature and value of the WBQ's skills-based curriculum, and other settings were shaped by the influence of talk and which appeared to be more active or passive with regard to a change in pedagogical practice required to deliver the WBQ's skills-based curriculum.

Within this study the categorisation of each type of setting became significant as the setting was the place where the individual located their practice and where the individual and all that was within the environment interacted. It was within this place all interactions were seen to shaped the individual's experience(s) and from these interactions within the setting that a particular type of ecology emerged. Subsequently, from the emergence of a particular type of ecology the nature of practice and agentic practice of the individual was determined which seemed to be susceptible to change as the contextual factors varied. This was also the case for the ecology as it was generated as an outcome of the interaction of the individual in and within their environment (Dewey).

Subsequently, this study demonstrated that four different ecologies were generated as the individual WBC interacted in and within their environment (Dewey 1939) The data generated by this study served to illustrate that within each type of ecology certain practices were allowed or constrained, made more easy or difficult to enact (Figure 16) and that these practices were seen to influence their agentic practice and their talk practice. This reasoned categorisation of ecologies became of further significance as these ecologies were seen to be differentiated by particular

environmental constraints and enablers which represent the availability of options, or the lack thereof which were accessible to the WBC at that time. Consequently, from the generation of these ecologies differing practices which influenced their agentic practice and their talk practice were seen to be enabled, allowed, constrained or relegated as these types of ecologies mediated and determined the present and future courses of action and, the sense of agency which the practitioner experienced. These practices continue to be temporal, situational and relational in nature (Emirbayer and Mische 1998)

In relation to curriculum reform and the change it creates this study argued that exercising agency is not a fixed disposition or a capacity but is something which is achieved within a social context and is wholly dependent upon the quality of the engagement a practitioner has within their temporal and relational context-of-action (Emirbayer and Mische 1998). Viewing agency in this way has meant that some WBC appeared to be reflexive and creative in the ways they countered societal, material and cultural constraints within their setting while others appeared less so. Priestley et al. (2015) distinguish between various cultural factors and those which relate to ways of speaking, thinking and understanding, including forms of inner dialogue (that which the WBC has within their own thinking) and outer dialogue (conversations the WBS has with others); these have been explored as a means of understanding how different forms of agencies have been achieved.

This argument has theoretically underpinned this study and has served to support the development of two matrixes: The matrix of ecological types (Figure 15), and emerging types of practice (Figure 16). This study has argued that a practitioner's sense of agency depends on the degree to which they were able to engage with talk practices and forms of collaboration and deliberation with others and whether these are viewed as positive, active and innovative, or indeed risky. The talk practices which emanated from a particular type of ecology were responsible for the forms of agentic practice that the WBC was able to enact.

This study has theorised the impact of Talk-in-Practice and Talk-on-Practice. While Talk-in-Practice has been characterised as a robust and purposeful form of inner dialogue (that is with self) and outer dialogue (that is with others) practiced during a time of pedagogic change (Figure 10), Talk-on-Practice has been characterised as risk-averse, insular and situated on the fringe of the development of practice. This distinction is significant as this study makes two claims: firstly, that a school may create a more positive and active ecology by shaping the environmental conditions so that practitioners may engage in Talk-in-Practice, and secondly that the outcome of Talk-in-Practice may enrich the practitioner's sense of agency.

The WBQ is an example of a change within the secondary school curriculum and as such this study is significant as by collecting, theorising and disseminating these stories the 'ideal-types' of ecologies they represent will not remain as a separate and unrelated set of experiences but will allow all stakeholders (the SLT, practitioners and policy makers) an understanding of how forms of agentic practice have been generated and enacted, and how practitioners can be supported and encouraged during a time of change. In this light certain policy recommendations are offered to the SLT, practitioner and policy-maker.

- The SLT

Given that the SLT is tasked with managing and leading the change they would need to be cognisant of the nature of setting they lead. While relevant data would be available within the school's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and its Self-evaluation report, honest and reflective judgements would need to be made prior to any enactment of a new curriculum policy commencing.

Such a reconnaissance should reveal favourable or unfavourable push-pull influences within the setting which may influence the interplay of cultural, structural and material resources, and how the interplay at particular times and in particular places (e.g., school-wide or within departments or subject areas) may occur. Having an opportunity to acknowledge which ecological factors seem more dominant, at any particular time, and which potentially, either individually, cumulatively or unexpectedly influence the interplay the SLT would have greater understanding of how best to create more positive opportunities and outcomes for practitioner agency.

However, while the actions of the SLT may not fully alleviate or mitigate against the pull-push forces, agency of itself is not something an individual can possess but is something that they do (Biesta and Tedder 2006) and is dependent upon how the individual engages with these factors within their temporal-relational contexts for action. Therefore, the role of the SLT is to ensure that practitioners do not become solely passive recipients of information delivered for curriculum enactment at professional development events, but that they ensure practitioners participate in appropriate forms of professional learning which practically equip and enable them to resolve emerging dilemmas (Timperley 2011) related to the introduction of a new curriculum. The imperative here, is that the SLT equip practitioners to contend with future pedagogic classroom-based challenges which allows them to take purposeful action within their practice.

- The practitioner

The practitioner tasked with subsidiarity needs support to ensure that their sense of agency remains focused and is not compromised or limited by ecological factors within their setting.  By

accessing forms of support, a practitioner can ensure their inner dialogue (Priestley et al. 2015) remains robust and is not constrained by any dissenting forms of outer dialogue with others.

The practitioner in the absence of any SLT initiated professional learning opportunities or options for Talk-in-practice may attune to less formal or grassroots forms of talk where they can initiate what they want to talk about. This would serve to ensure the dialogue remains relevant to them (Vella 2002). Similarly, at this micro level the practitioner should remain mindful that they have explicit permission to act purposefully as they are a TLR post-holder recruited to undertake the role.

- The policy-maker

The task of the policy-maker is to review and evaluate how curriculum reform is perceived by schools, and enacted within a variety of settings (Schwab 1969). By encouraging appropriate and applicable practitioner-led and practitioner-initiated learning, alternatives which would begin to negate potential cultural, structural, and material constraints and/or enhance innovative forms of practice may become understood. Whilst this study is niche, it does make clear that Talk-in-practice enables a practitioner to contend with the unintended, unplanned consequences which may result from curriculum enactment, and that this supportive form of talk is not always realised through more formal professional development channels.

Consequently, at a macro level the policy-maker needs to remain open to and aware of the positive outcomes (the development of alternate forms of talk practice) as well as the negatives outcomes (attrition, stress) of enacted curriculum change. This should enable future curriculum plans to become better informed and suitably constructed (Schwab 1969). By remaining cognisant of feedback, the policy-maker should dialogue with stakeholders at a meso and micro level when considering revisions (e.g., inclusion in a performance measure) to ensure those charged with securing enacting the policy are not impeded from realising these goals. The move away from second stage policy implementation to the third (Egan 2017) needs to be encouraged via and in practical terms.

## Limitations

Whilst this study is niche it does illustrate how an ecological understanding of agency can be employed to understand how environmental conditions can be (re)shaped, and how agency can be made more easy or difficult to enact. There are options to extend this study e.g., by considering how ecological factors can be (re)shaped over longer periods of time. However, this study illustrates that by sharing stories of practice during a time of curriculum change new ways of speaking, thinking and understanding can be uncovered. These practices are influential in

developing agentic and talk practices which can be transformative and influential during a time of such change.

The data were collected from a sample of fifteen WBC within one academic year. Participants were chosen by a process of convenience sampling and their willingness and availability to meet with me in this timeframe. The participants included those who were introduced to me by my former colleagues who work within the south Wales area.

Whilst this study is niche in relation to curriculum reform the WBQ has been used is an example of change within the Welsh education system. It's wider purpose has been to discover the impact of the change, and how the (WBC) practitioner can be supported during times of change. The rationale for studying the WBQ/WBC as an example of change has been provided by Yin (2003, pp. 40-42) who suggests that this study be considered a revelatory case which has previously received little attention. However, a study such as this can feel constrained in the quality of the discussions generated and the level of generalizability inferred (Merriam 1988; Creswell 1994), as the depth required may depend upon greater access to actors, events and settings (Cousins 2005).

This study, its findings and suggestions in relation to the research questions set are pertinent to the WBCs who took part. The may or may not be comparable to other WBCs across Wales and in terms of enacting changes within the curriculum this study may in part inform other innovations with a similar caveat. The temporal-relational contexts of an individual are inherent in this study and attempts to over generalise outside of this remit would not be prudent. Indeed, Bassey's (1999) 'reconstruction' of a study underpins the scope of this research into the 'storied lives' of WBCs as one which was

> '...conducted within a localized boundary of space and time …into interesting aspects of an educational activity, or institution…in its natural context …. to inform the judgements and decisions of practitioners or policy-makers….in such a way that sufficient data are collected for the researcher to be able … to explore significant features of the case … create plausible interpretations … test for the[ir] trustworthiness … construct a worthwhile argument …[and] convey convincingly to an audience this argument' (p.58).

I have sought to ensure 'thick description[s]' (Geerz 1983) were generated by employing narrative, Story line and CIT and so provide the reader with a vicarious experience of 'being there' and to share in its interpretation (Stake 1995). This study has captured the particularly complex world of a WBC and the use of story-telling has been employed successfully to illuminate their practice.

# References

Abajian, S. M.  (2016) Documenting Militarism: Challenges of researching highly contested practices within urban schools' *Anthropology and Education*. Vol 47 (1), pp. 25-41.

Adams, R. (2003) Model B: The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, in G. Phillips and T. Pound (Eds.), *The Baccalaureate: A Model for Curriculum Reform*, London: Kogan Page. pp.104–16.

Alden, K. R. and Durham, C. F. (2012) Integrating reflection in simulation: Structure, content, and process. Chp 8 *in* Sherwood, G.D. and Horton-Deutsch, S. (2012) (Eds.) Reflective Practice: Transforming Education and Improving Outcomes. Indianapolis, IN: Sigma Theta Tau International, pp149-168.

Ambrose, R. (1993) Personal Narratives and Professional development. *Childhood Education*, Vol 69 (5) pp.274-276.

Anderson, L. (2010) 'Embedded, emboldened, and (net)working for change: Support-seeking and teacher agency in urban, high-needs schools'. *Harvard Educational Review,* Vol 80 (4), pp.541–72.

Andrews, L. (2011) *Teaching makes a difference* (Speech at the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre, Cardiff, 2 February). Available at:  http://www.iwa.wales/click/2011/02/teaching-makes-a-difference/ (accessed 20 February 2019).

Andrews, L. (2014) *Ministering to education: a reformer reports*. Cardigan: Parthian Books.

Anyamele, S. C. (2004) Institutional Management in Higher Education*: A Study of Leadership Approaches to Quality Improvement in University Management*. Nigerian and Finnish Cases. Doctoral Dissertation University of Helsinki. E-thesis. from http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/kay/kasva/vk/anyamele/inst itut.pdf.

Archer, M. (1995). *Realist social theory: The morphogenetic approach*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. (1998) Realism and morphogenesis. In M. Archer, R. Bhaskar, A. Collier, T. Lawson and A. Norrie (Eds.), *Critical realism: Essential readings* (pp.356–382). London: Routledge.

Archer, M. (2000a) *Being human: The problem of agency*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. (2000b) Realism and the problem of agency. *Journal of Critical Realism*, Vol 5, pp.11–20.

Archer, M. (2003) *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation*, Cambridge University Press.

Atkinson, P. (2002) The life story interview. In J. F. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein (Eds.). *Handbook of Interview research: Context and method* (pp.121-141) Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Atkinson, P., Coffey, A. and Delamont, S. (2003) *Key Themes in Qualitative Research*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001) *Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research*. Vol 1 (3), pp.385-405. SAGE Publications. London, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Avalos, B. (2006) *Curriculum and teachers' professional development*. Paper presented in the framework of the Second Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), Santiago de Chile, 11–13 May, UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean OREALC.

Ayres, W. C. (1992) In W. H. and Ayres, W. C. (1992) *Teacher Lore. Learning from our own experience*. Longman: New York and London.

Ball, S. (1994) Researching inside the state: issues in the interpretation of elite interviews. In D. HALPIN and B. TROYNA (Eds.) *Researching Education Policy: Ethical and methodological issues*.  London: Falmer.

Ball, S. J. (1994) *Education reform. A critical and post-structural approach*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Ball, S. J. (2001) Performativities and fabrications in the education ceremony: Towards the performative society. In D. Gleeson and C. Husbands (Eds.), *The performing school.*

Ball, S. J. (2008) *The education debate*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.

Barnieh, Z. (1998) *Understanding playwriting for children*. University of Calgary.

Barthes, R. (1975) *Introduction to the structural analysis of narrative*: New Literary History. Vol 6, pp.237-272.

Bassey, M. (1999) *Case study research in educational settings*. McGraw-Hill Education: UK.

Bateson, G. (1972) *Steps to an ecology of mind.* New York: Ballantine.

Bauman, Z. (2000) *Liquid modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beare, H., Caldwell, B. and Millikan, R. (1997) Dimensions of leadership. In Megan Crawford, L. Kydd and C. Riches (Eds). *Leadership and teams in educational management*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Becker, H. S. Footnote added to the paper by Wax, M. and Wax, R. (1971). Great tradition, Little Tradition, and Formal Education. In Wax, M and Diamond, S. and Gearing, F. (Eds). *Anthropology perspectives on education*, pp3-19. New York: Basic Books.

Beijaard, D., Dreil, J. and Verloop, N. (1999) Evaluation of story-line methodology in research on teachers' practical knowledge. *Studies in Educational Evaluation,* Vol (25), pp.47-62.

Berger, P. L.  and Kellner, H. (1964) Marriage and the construction of reality. *Diogenes*, Vol 46 (I), pp.1-23.

Bhaskar, R. (1989) *The Possibility of Naturalism*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester-Wheatsheaf.

Biesta, G., Priestly, M. and Robinson, S. (2015b). Teacher agency. An ecological approach. London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic.

Biesta, G. J.  and Burbles, N. (2003) *Pragmatism and Educational Research*, Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Biesta, G. J. (2010) *Good education in an age of measurement. Ethics, politics, democracy*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Biesta, G. J. (2011) From learning cultures to educational cultures. Values and judgements in educational research and educational improvement. *International Journal of Early Childhood,* Vol 43; pp.199-210.

Biesta, G. J. and Tedder, M. (2006) *How is agency possible? Towards an ecological understanding of agency-as-achievement*. Working paper 5. Exeter, UK: The Learning Lives Project.

Biesta, G. J. J. and Burbles, N. C. (2003) *Pragmatism and Educational research*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers ltd: Oxford.

Biesta, G. J., Allan, J. and Edwards, R. G. (Eds.) (2014) *Making a Difference in Theory: The Theory Question in Education and the Education Question in Theory*. London and New York: Routledge.

Biesta, G. J., Priestly, M. and Robinson, S. (2015) Teachers and Teaching: *Theory and practice*, Vol. 21(6), pp.624–640, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.104432

Biesta, G., Priestley, M. and Robinson, S. (2015) The role and beliefs in teacher agency. *Teachers and Teaching,* Vol 21(6), pp.624–640.

Biesta, G.J. and Tedder, M. (2007) Agency and learning in the Life course: Towards an ecological perspective. *Studies in the Education of Adults*. Vol 39 (2), pp.132-149.

Billet, S. and Newton, J. (2010) A learning practice: conceptualising professional lifelong learning

Boud, D., Cressey, P. and Doherty, P. (2006) *Productive Reflection at Work*, London: Routledge

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, Vol 3(2), pp 77-101.

Brinkmann, S. (2013) *Qualitative interviewing.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Brinkmann, S. and S. (2014). InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications

British Educational Research Association [BERA] (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, fourth edition, London. (Available at https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethicalguidelines-for-educational-research-2018. Accessed on 25/01/19)

Britzman, D. (in press). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach.* New York: SUNY Press.

Brown, A.  and Danaher, P. A. (2019) CHE Principles: facilitating authentic and dialogical semi-structured interviews in educational research, *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, Vol 42 (1), pp. 6-90.

Bruner, J. (1986) *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA:  Harvard University press.

Bruner, J. (1988) Research currents: Life as Narrative. *Language and Arts.* Vol 65, p.574.

Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of meaning.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods.* (Third edition). Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2003) *Business Research Methods.* Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Butt, R. (1983) *The illucidatory potential of autobiography and biography and understanding teachers' thoughts and actions.* Paper presented to the Bergamo Conference (Ohio USA) and to the First International Symposium of the International Study Association on Teacher Thinking, Tilburg University, Holland.

Butt, R. (1989) An integrative function for teachers' biographies. In G. Milburn, I. Goodson and R. Clarke (Eds.), *Reinterpreting curriculum research: Images and arguments* (pp.146-159). London, Ontario, Canada: The Althouse Press.

Butt, R. (1991) In the spotlight of life: Dramatic expression of emancipatory pedagogy. In G. Will and W. Schubert (Eds.) *Reflections from the heart of curriculum inquiry: Understanding curriculum and teaching through the arts.* (pp.267-276). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Butt, R. and Raymond, D. (1987) Arguments for using qualitative approaches and understanding teacher thinking: The case for biography. *Journal of Curriculum Theorising*, Vol 7(1) pp.62-93.

Butt, R. and Raymond, D. (1988) Biographical and contextual influences on an 'ordinary' teacher's thoughts and actions. In J. Lowyck, C. Clarke and R. Halkes (Eds.), *Teacher thinking and professional action.* Lisse, Holland: Swets and Zeitlinger.

Butt, R. and Raymond, D. (1992) *Studying the nature and development of teachers' knowledge using collaborative autobiography*. International Journal of Educational Research, 13(4), pp.402-499.

Butt, R., Raymond, D., Mc Cue, G. and Yamagishi, L. (1992) Collaborative autobiography and the teachers' voice. In Ivor F. Goodson (Eds.). *Studying Teachers' Lives* (pp.51-98). New York: Teachers' College Press.

Calhoun, C. (2002) Dictionary of the social sciences [electronic resource]/ edited by Craig Calhoun [et al.]. Oxford: Blackwell.

Camburn, E. M. and Han, S. W. (2015) Infrastructure for teacher reflection and instructional change: An exploratory study. *Journal of Educational Change*, Vol 16(4), pp.511-533.

Carpenter, J. P. and Krutka, D. G. (2015) Engagement through microblogging: educator professional development via Twitter. *Professional development in education,* Vol 41, pp.707–728.

Carpenter, J. P. and Linton, J. N. (2016) Edcamp unconferences: educators' perspectives on an untraditional professional learning experience. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol 57, pp.97–108.

Chell, E. (2004) Critical Incident Technique. In C. Cassell and G. Symon *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organisational Research*. London: Sage.

Clandinin D.J. (1985) Personal practical knowledge: A study of teachers' classroom image. *Curriculum Inquiry*, Vol 15(4) pp.361-385.

Clandinin, D. J. (2006) Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying lived experience. *Research studies in music education*, Vol *27*(1), pp.44-54.

Clandinin, D. J. and Connelly, F. M. (2000) *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Coburn, C. E. and Russell, J. L. (2008) District policy and teachers' social networks. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, Vol 30(3), pp.203-235.

Cochran-Smith, M. and Lytle, S. L. (1990) Research on Teaching and Teacher Research: The Issues that divide. *Educational Researcher*, Vol 19(2), pp.2-11.

Cochran-Smith, M., Carney, M. C., Keefe, E. S., Burton, S., Chang, W., Fernández, M. B., Miller, A.F., Sánchez, J.G. and Baker, M. (2018) *Reclaiming Accountability in Teacher Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2017) *Research methods in education*. Routledge.

Cohler, B. (1979) *Personal narrative and life-course.* University of Chicago.

Coles, R. (1989) *The call of stories. Teaching and the moral imagination*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Colne, R Eastman T and Nitsis V (1991) *Narrative echoing: Resonance and reflection in stories of experience.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Connelly F.M. and Clandinin D.J. (1987) On narrative method, biography, and narrative unities in the study of teaching. *The Journal of Education thought,* Vol 21(3), pp.130-139.

Connelly F.M. and Clandinin D.J. (1990) Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, Vol19(5), pp.2-14.

Connelly, F. M. and Clandinin, D. J. (1988) Studying teacher's knowledge of classrooms: Collaborative research, ethics and the negotiation of narrative. *The Journal of Educational Thought*, Vol 22(2A), pp.269-282.

Connelly, F. M. and Clandinin, D. J. (1988) *Teachers as curriculum planners. Narratives of experience.* Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027.

Conrad, F. G. and Schober, M. F. (2008) New frontiers in standardized survey interviewing. *Handbook of emergent methods*, pp.173-188.

Cortazzi, M. (1993) *Narrative analysis*. Washington, DC: Falmer.

Cox K., Bergen A. and Norman I. J. (1993) Exploring consumer views of care provided by the Macmillan nurse using critical incident technique. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol18, pp. 408–415.

Cresswell, J.W. (2008) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 3rd edition. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

CYPE Committee, RoP [para 93], 14 November 2018. In NAW, 2019, *Bacc to the Future: The status of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification*. April 2019.

Czarniawska, B. (2004) *Social science research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Daugherty, R., Phillips, R .and Rees, G. (Eds.) (2000) *Education Policy Making in Wales: Explorations in devolved governance.* Cardiff, University of Wales Press.

David, J. and Jenkins, C. (2003) *The Baccalaureate: A Model for Curriculum Reform*. Kogan Page Ltd: London.

Day, C., Elliot, B. and Kington, A. (2005) Reform, Standards and Teacher Identity: Challenges of Sustaining Commitment. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol 21(5), pp.563–577.

Delamont, S. (2005) Four great gates. Dilemmas, directions and distractions in educational research. *Research Papers in Education*, Vol 20(1), pp.85-100.

Delamont, S. and Atkinson, P. (1995) Fighting Familiarity: Essays on Education and Ethnography. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2005) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2018) *The Sage handbook of Qualitative Research.* Fifth edition. Los Angeles: Sage.

DeRue, D.S. and Ashford, S.J. (2010) Who will lead and who will follow? A social process of leadership identity construction in organizations. *Academy of management review*, Vol 35(4), pp.627–647.

DeWaele, P. J. and Harre, R. (1979) The personality of individuals. In R. Harre (Eds.). *Personality*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Dewey, J. (1938) *Experience and Education. The Kappa delta Pi Lecture Series*. London: McMillan Publishing Company.

Dewey, J. (1956) *The school and society, the child and the curriculum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1900).

Dewey, J. (1981) *The later works, 1925–1953* (J. A. Boydston, Eds.). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, J. (1997) *Experience and education*. New York: Touchstone. (Original work published 1938).

Dewey, J. (2007) *Democracy and education*. Teddington: Echo Library. (Original work published 1916).

Dillon, M. (2010) *Introduction to Sociological Theory, ETextbook: Theorists, Concepts, and Their Applicability to the Twenty-First Century*. Chichester, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell. Available at: https://search-ebscohost-com.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1441758&site=ehost-live&scope=site (Accessed: 21 November 2022).

Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*. Available at http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22165/2/150225-successful-futures-en_Redacted.pdf:accessed on 5th August 2018.

Donaldson, G. (2016a) A systematic approach to curriculum reform in Wales. *Cylchgrawn Addysg Cymru/Wales Journal of Education*, Vol 18(1), pp. 7–20.

Donaldson, G. (2016b) *Professionalism and governance*. Paper presented at the GCES Conference on Governing Education in a Complex World, Brussels. Available online at: https://www.slide share.net/OECDEDU/keynote-professionalism-and-goverance (accessed 18 October 2016).

Edwards, A. (2005) Relational agency: Learning to be a resourceful practitioner. *International Journal of Educational Research,* Vol 43 (3), pp.168-182.

Edwards, S. (2017) Reflecting differently. New dimensions: reflection-before-action and reflection-beyond-action. *International Practice Development Journal.* Vol 7(1).

Edwards, S. L. (2013) *Learning from Practice: The Value of Story in Nurse Education*. Unpublished doctoral thesis.

Edwards, S. L. (2014) Finding a place for story: Looking beyond reflective practice. *International Practice Development Journal,* Vol 4(2). pp 1-14.

Edwards, S. L. (2015) A personal narrative of a nurse: A journey through practice. *Journal of* Egan, D. (2017) *After PISA: A way forward for education in Wales*? Merthyr Tydfil: Bevan Foundation.

Elbaz, F. (1991) Research on teachers' knowledge: The evolution of a discourse. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol 23(1). pp1-19.

Elbaz, F. (1992) Hope, attentiveness, and caring for difference: The moral voice in teaching. *Teaching and teacher education*, Vol *8*(5-6), pp.421-432.

Elwyn, G., Edwards, A. and Thompson, R. (2015) *Shared Decision Making in Health Care: Achieving evidence-based patient choice.* Oxford Scholarship Online.

Emirbayer, M. and Mische, A. (1998) What Is Agency? *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol 103(4), pp 962-1023. The University of Chicago Press.

Erikson, F. (1986) Qualitative Methods in Research on Teaching, in M.C. Wittrock (Eds.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching.* pp. 119–58. New York: Macmillan.

Estyn (2011) *Numeracy for 14-19-year olds.* July 2011.

Estyn (2012) *Literacy in Key Stage 3.* June 2012.

Estyn (2012) *The impact of family learning programmes on raising the literacy and numeracy levels of children and adults.* May 2012.

Estyn (2012) *Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification provision at level 3 in secondary schools. A good practice guide.* July 2012 available at https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/welsh-baccalaureate-qualification-provision-level-3-secondary-schools-july-2012: accessed on 5th August 2018.

Estyn (2014) *Numeracy in Key Stage 2 and 3: An interim report.* November 2014.

Estyn (2015) *Literacy in Key Stage 3: An interim report.* January 2015.

Eteläpelto, A., Vähäsantanen, K., Hökkä, P., and Paloniemi, S. (2014) Identity and agency in professional learning. In S. Billett, C. Harteis, and H. Gruber (Eds.). *International handbook of research in professional and practice-based learning* (pp. 645–672). Springer.

Evans, K. (2002) Taking control of their lives? The youth, citizenship and social change project. *European Educational Research Journal,* Vol 1(3), pp.497-521.

Evans, L. (1998) *Teacher morale, job satisfaction and motivation*: Sage.

Evans, L. (2014) Leadership for professional development and learning: enhancing our understanding of how teachers develop. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol 44(2), pp.179–198.

Fleetwood, S. (2008) Structure, institution, agency, habit, and reflexive deliberation. *Journal of Institutional Economics*, Vol *4*(2), pp.183-203.

Forte, A., Humphreys, M, and Park, T. (2012) *Grassroots professional development: how teachers use Twitter*. Sixth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media.

Freshwater, D. (2008) *Practitioner Based Research: Power, Discourse and Transformation*. Edited by John Lees and Dawn Freshwater. London: Karnac Books Ltd.

Frost, N. (2016) *Practising research: why you're always part of the research process even when you think you're not*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fuchs, S. (2001) Beyond agency. *Sociological theory*, Vol *19*(1), pp.24-40.

Fullan, M., Rincon-Gallardo, S. and Hargreaves, A. (2015) Professional capital as accountability. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, Vol 23, p.15.

Fuller, A. and Unwin, L. (2003) Learning as apprentices in the contemporary UK workplace: creating and managing expansive and restrictive participation. *Journal of Education and Work*, Vol. 16 (4) pp.407-426.

Garforth, F.W. (1966). Introduction. In J. Dewey and F.W. Garforth (Eds.), *Selected educational writings*. London: Heinemann.

Garrison, D. and Anderson, T. (2003) *E-Learning in the 21st Century: A Framework for Research and Practice*. Routledge Falmer: London.

Gee, J. P. (1985) The narrativization of experience in the oral style. *Journal of Education*, Vol 167 (1) pp.9-35.

Geer. B. (1964) First days in the field. In Hammond, P. (Eds.). *Sociologists at work*. pp.372-398. New York: Basic Books.

Gergen, K. J. and Gergen, M. M. (1986) Narrative form and the construction of psychological science. In T.R. Sarbin (Eds.). *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct*, pp.22-44. New York: Preager.

Gergen, K. J. and Gergen, M. M. (1988) Narratives and the self as relationship. In L. Berkovitz (Eds.), *Advances in experimental social psychology,* Vol 21, pp.17-56. New York: Academic Press.

Gergen, M.M. (1988) Narrative structures in social explanation. In C. Antaki (Eds.), *Analysing social explanation,* pp. 94-112. London: Sage.

Giddens, A. (1976/1993) New Rules of Sociological Method, 2nd edn. Cambridge: Polity. —— (1979) *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*. London: Macmillan.

Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Cambridge: Polity.

Giddens, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity. Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gillespie, A. (2005), G.H. Mead: Theorist of the Social Act. Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, Vol 35, pp.19-39. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0021-8308.2005.00262.x

Goodson, I. (1989) Curriculum reform and curriculum theory: A case study of historical amnesia. *Cambridge Journal* of Education, Vol 19(2), pp131-141.

Goodson, I. (1991) Sponsoring the teacher's voice: teachers' lives and teacher development. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol 21(1), pp.35-45.

Goodson, I. (1991) Teachers' lives and educational research. In I. Goodson and R. Walker (Eds.), *Biography, identity and schooling.* (pp137-149). London England: Falmer.

Goodson, I. and Walker, R. (1991) *Biography, identity and schooling: Episodes in educational research*. London, England: Falmer.

Goodson, I. F. (1992) Studying teachers' lives, and emergent field of inquiry. In Goodson I. F. (Eds.) *Studying Teachers' Lives.* London: Routledge. pp. 1-17.

Goodson, I. F. (2003) *Professional knowledge, professional lives*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Goodson, I. F. and Marsh, C. J. (1996) *Studying school subjects: A guide*. London: Falmer.

Grumet, M. R.  (1990) Voice: The search for a feminist rhetoric for educational studies. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol 20(2), pp.277-282.

Guba, E. G. (1990) The alternative paradigm dialogue. In E. G. Guba (Eds.) *The paradigm dialogue* (pp.17-30). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Guba, E. G. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2005) Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In N. K.

Gubrium, J. F.  and Holstein, J. A.  (1997) *The new language of qualitative method*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gudmundsdottir, S. (1997) Introduction to the issue of narrative perspectives on research in teaching and teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, Vol 1*3(1), pp. 1-3.

Hargreaves, A. and O'Connor, M. T. (2018) *Collaborative professionalism: when teaching together means learning for all.* Corwin Press.

Hayden, M. and Thompson, J. (Eds.) *International Education: Principe sans practices*. pp.65-76.

Hayden, M., and Thompson, J. (2007) Policy-making in Practice: Issues Arising from Evaluation of Welsh Baccalaureate. *Welsh Journal of Education,* Vol 14.

Helsby, G. (1999) *Changing Teachers' Work*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

*Holistic Nursing*, Vol 20. No. 10. pp 1-8. doi: 10.1177/0898010115587582.

Hoyle, E. (1972) Education innovation and the role of the teacher. *Forum*, Vol 14, pp.42-44.

Hoyle, E. (2008). Changing conceptions of teaching as a profession: Personal reflections. In *Teaching: Professionalization, development and leadership.* (pp.285-304). Springer: Dordrecht.

Irvine, A., Drew, P. and Sainsbury, R. (2013) Am I Not Answering Your Questions Properly? Clarification, Adequacy and Responsiveness in Semi-Structured Telephone and Face-To-Face Interviews. *Qualitative Research*, Vol 13(1), pp. 87–106.

Jacobsson, K. and Åkerström, M. (2013) Interviewees with an Agenda: Learning from a 'Failed' Interview. *Qualitative Research*, Vol 13(6), pp.717–734.

Jalongo, M. R. (1992) Teachers' Stories: Our Ways of Knowing. *Educational Leadership*, Vol 49 (7), pp.68-73.

Jalongo, M. R. and Isenberg, J. P. (1995). *Teachers' stories: From personal narrative to professional insight*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

James, D. and Biesta, G. (2007) *Improving learning cultures and further education*. Routledge Taylor Francis group: Oxon.

Jefferis, T. J. (2016) *Leading the conversation the use of Twitter by school leaders for professional development as their careers progress,* Doctoral thesis. University of Birmingham.

Jenkins, C., David, J., Osmond, J., and Pierce, J. (1997) *The Welsh Baccalaureate: Educating Wales in the next Century*. Institute of Welsh Affairs: Cardiff.

Jones, G.E and Roderick, G.W. (2003) *A History of Education in Wales.* Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Jones, K. (2011) Central, local and individual continuing professional development (CPD) priorities: changing policies of CPD in Wales. *Professional Development in Education*, Vol 37(5), pp.759-776.

Jones, K. (2015) *Professional Development or 'Professional Learning ... and does it matter?* Son: Education Workforce Council. Available from: www.ewc.wales.

Kalberg, S. (2012) *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology Today: Major Themes, Modes of Causal Analysis, and Applications.* Ashgate: Surrey.

Keeney, B. (1983) *Aesthetics of change.* New York: Guildford.

Ketelaar, E., Beijaard, D., Boshuizen, H. P. A. and Den Brok, P. J. (2012) Teachers' positioning towards an educational innovation in the light of ownership, sense-making and agency. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol 28, pp.273-282.

King, A. (1999) Against Structure: A Critique of Morphogenetic Social Theory. *The Sociological Review*, Vol 47: pp.199-227. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.00170

Kohli, M.  (1981) Biography: Account, text and method. In D. Bertaux (Eds.) *Biography and Society*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2009) *Interviews, Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing.* Second edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2018) *Doing Interviews* (Second Edition) Sage publications Ltd: UK.

Latour, B. (2000) When things strike back: A possible contribution of 'social studies' to the social sciences. *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol 51, pp.107-123.

Leander, K. M. and Osborne, M. D. (2008) Complex positioning: Teachers as agents of curricular and pedagogical reform. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol 40, pp. 3–46.

Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., and Zilber, T. (1998) *Narrative research: Reading, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G.  (1985) *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lipponen, L. and Kumpulainen, K. (2011) Acting as accountable authors: Creating interactional spaces for agency work in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol 27, pp. 812-819.

Loftland, J. and Loftland, L. H. (1995) *Analysing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (Third edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Louws, M., Zwart, R., Zuiker, I., Meijer, P., Oolbekkink-Marchand, H., Schaap, H. and van der Want, A. (2020) Exploring school leaders' dilemmas in response to tensions related to teacher professional agency. *Professional Development in Education*, Vol *46*(4), pp.691-710.

Luft, J. A., Firestone, J. B., Wong, S., Ortega, I., Adams, K. and Bang E. J. (2011). Beginning Secondary Science Teacher Induction: A Two-Year Mixed Methods Study. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, Vol 48(10): pp.1199–1224.

Maccoby, E. E. and Maccoby, N. (1954) The interview: A tool of social science. In G. Lindzey (Eds.) Handbook of social psychology (pp. 449-487). Cambridge, Ma: Addsion-Wesley.

Madill, A. (2011) Interaction in the Semi-Structured Interview: A Comparative Analysis of the Use of and Response to Indirect Complaints. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, Vol 8 (4), pp. 333–353.

Maguire, M. (2007) Gender and movement in social policy. In C. Skelton, B. Francis and L. Smulyan (Eds.). *The Sage handbook of gender and education*. pp.109124. London: Sage.

Maguire, M., Braun, A, and Ball, S. (2015) Where you stand depends on where you sit: the social construction of policy enactments in the (English) secondary school, Discourse: *Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, Vol 36(4), pp.485-499.

Mannay, D. (2010) Making the familiar strange: can visual research methods render the familiar setting more perceptible? *Qualitative Research*, Vol 10(1), pp.91–111.

Margolis, J. (2011) Hybrid teacher leaders and the new professional development ecology. *Professional Development in Education*, Vol 38, pp.291-315.

McGregor, J. (2004) Making space: Teachers' workplace topologies. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, Vol 11, pp.353–377.

Mead, G.H. and Morris, C.W. (1934) *Mind, self, and society: From the standpoint of a social behaviourist.*

Mead, G.H., (1913) The social self. *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, Vol *10*(14), pp.374-380.

Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Molla, T. and Nolan, A. (2020) Teacher agency and professional practice. *Teachers and Teaching*, Vol 26(1), pp.67-87.

Moore, A. and Clarke, M. (2016) Cruel optimism: teacher attachment to professionalism in an era of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol 31(5), pp.666-677.

Morgan, R. (2002) *Clear Red Water Speech at National Centre for Public Policy Swansea* (Available at: https://www.iwa.wales/click/2010/07/making-the-%E2%80%98red-water%E2%80%99-really-clear/. Accessed on 03/01/19)

National Union of Teachers (2023) Capability Procedure for school staff. Available at https://neu.org.uk/advice/capability-procedure-school-staff. Accessed on 31/01/23).

NAW (2001) *The Learning Country - A Paving Document. A Comprehensive Education and Lifelong Learning Programme to 2010 in Wales*.

NAW (2015) *The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification - Quick Guide* (Available at http://www.assembly.wales/research%20documents/qg15-001-welshbac/qg15-001.pdf. Accessed on 03/01/18)

NAW (2018) Explanatory memorandum: *The education (amendments relating to teacher assessment information) (Wales) regulations 2018*. Senedd Cymru. (Available at http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/sub-ld11633-em/sub-ld11633-em-e.pdf. Accessed on 31/03/23)

NAW (2019) *Bacc to the Future: The status of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification.* April 2019. (Available at http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld12487/cr-ld12487-e.pdf. Accessed on 17/07/19).

Naylor, J. (1999). *Management*. Harlow, England: Prentice Hall.

Newton, N. (2020) The rationale for subsidiarity as a principle applied within curriculum reform and its unintended consequences. *The Curriculum Journal*, Vol 31(2), pp.215–230.

Nias, J., Southworth, G. and Campbell, P. (1992) *Whole School Curriculum Development in Primary School*. London: Falmer press.

Nieveen, N. (2011) *Teachers' professional development in curriculum design in the Netherlands.* Paper presented at the European Conference for Educational Research: Berlin.

OECD (Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development) (2005) *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Ollerenshaw, J. and Creswell, J. W. (2000, April) *Data analysis in narrative research: A comparison of two "restorying" approaches*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA.

Oolbekkink-Marchand H. W., Hadar, L. L., Smith, I. K., Helleve, I. and Ulvik, M. (2017) Teachers' perceived professional space and their agency. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol 62, pp. 37-46.

Olsen, D.H. (2010) Pilgrims, tourists, and Max Weber's" ideal types". *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol 37(3), pp.848-851.

Owen, H. (2008) *Open space technology: A user's guide*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Partington, D. (2009) *Essential skills for management research*. London: Sage publications.

Peshkin, A. (1988) In search of subjectivity—one's own. *Educational researcher*, Vol 17(7), pp.17–21.

Pinar, W., Reynolds, M. R., Slattery, P. and Taubman, P. M. (2008) *Understanding the Curriculum: An Introduction to the Study of Historical and Contemporary Discourses*, Vol 17. Peter Lang Publishers: New York.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995) Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International journal of qualitative studies in education* Vol *8*(1), pp.5-23.

Power, S. (2016) The politics of education and the misrecognition of Wales. *Oxford Review of Education.*, Vol 42(3), pp.285–298.

Power, S., Newton, N. and Taylor, C. (2020) 'Successful futures' for all in Wales? The challenges of curriculum reform for addressing educational inequalities. *The Curriculum Journal,* Vol 51(4), pp.181 – 201.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G. and Robinson, S. (2015) *Teacher agency: an ecological approach*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G. J. J. and Robinson, S. (2012, April 13–17) *Understanding teacher agency: The importance of relationships.* A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Vancouver, Canada.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G.J.J. and Robinson, S. (2015) Teacher agency: what is it and why does it matter? In R. Kneyber and J. Evers (Eds.) *Flip the System: Changing Education from the Bottom Up.* London: Routledge.

Priestley, M., Edwards, R., Priestley, A. and Miller, K., (2012) Teacher agency in curriculum making: Agents of change and spaces for manoeuvre. *Curriculum inquiry,* Vol *42*(2), pp.191-214.

Qualifications Wales (2015) *Review of the implementation of the new Welsh Baccalaureate from September 2015*. Available at http://qualificationswales.org/media/1631/qw-review-of-new-welsh-bacc-230316.pdf: accessed on 5th August 2018.

Qualifications Wales (2017) *Confidence in the Qualification System in Wales.* February 2017. Available at: http://www.qualificationswales.org/media/2598/york-research-report-2017-e.pdf. Accessed on 5th August 2018.

Ransome, P. (2010) *Social Theory for Beginners*. The policy Press: Bristol.

Richardson, M. J. (2015) Embodied inter-generationality: family position, place and masculinity. *Gender, Place and Culture.* Vol 22(2), pp.157-171.

Ricoeur, P. (1991) *A Ricoeir reader: Reflection and imagination*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Ribaeus, K., Enochsson. A and Löfdahl Hultman, A.  (2022) Student teachers' professional development: early practice and horizontal networks as ways to bridge the theory-practice gap, Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, Vol 43(1) pp. 2-16, DOI: 10.1080/10901027.2020.1797956 To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2020.1797956

Riessman, C. K. (1993) *Narrative Analysis. Qualitative research methods Series 30.*  Sage Publications, Ltd: London.

Roberts, C. (1997). The politics of transcription. *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol 31(1), pp.167-172. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2307/3587983/abstract Accessed 04/02/2019.

Rogan, A. I. and de Kock, D. M. (2005) Chronicles from the Classroom: Making Sense of the Methodology and Methods of Narrative Analysis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol 11(4), pp. 628–49.

Rosen, H. (1988) The autobiographical impulse. In D. Tannen (Eds.), *Linguistics in context: Connecting observation and understanding*, pp. 69-88. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp.

Rosenwald, G., C, and Ochberg, R. L. (1992) Introduction: Life Stories, cultural politics and self-understanding. In G. C. Rosenwald and R. L. Ochberg (Eds.) *Storied lives: The cultural politics of self-understanding*, pp. 1-18. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Roth, E. H. (1998) *The emerging paradigm of reader-text transaction:* Contributions of John Dewey and Louise M. Rosenblatt, with implications for educators (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Virginia Polytechnic and State University, Blacksburg, VA.

Roulston, K. (2010) *Reflective Interviewing: A Guide to Theory and Practice*, Sage: London.

Roulston, K. (2014) Interactional Problems in Research Interviews. *Qualitative Research*, Vol 14 (3), pp.277–293.

Rowley, J. (2012) Conducting Research Interviews. *Management Research Review,* Vol 35 (3/4), pp.260–271.

Sampson, H. (2004) Navigating the waves: The usefulness of pilot in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research,* Vol 4. pp. 383-402.

Sarbin, T. R. (1986) The narrative as a root metaphor for psychology. In T. R. Sarbin (Eds.), Narrative Psychology: The storied nature of human conduct. New York: Vintage.

Saunders, M. N. K., Thornhill, A. and Lewis, P. (2009) *Research Methods for Business Students*. Fifth edition. FT Prentice-Hall, London.

Schon, D. (1983) *Reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*. London: Temple Smith.

Schubert, W. (1991) Teacher Lore: A basis for understanding praxis. In C. Witherell and N. Noddings (Eds.), *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue in education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Schubert, W. H. and Ayres, W. C. (1992) *Teachers Lore: learning from our own experience*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Schwab, J. J. (1969) The Practical: A Language for Curriculum in Flinders, D.J. and Thornton, S.J. eds., 1969. *The Curriculum Studies readers* (2nd edition). New York: Routledge.

Seashore Louis, K., Dretzke, B., and Wahlstrom, K. (2010) *How does leadership affect student achievement? Results from a national US survey. School effectiveness and school improvement*, Vol 21 (3), pp.315–336.

Segady, T. W. (2014). The Utility of Weber's Ideal Type: Verstehen and the Theory of Critical Mass. *Sociological Spectrum*, Vol 34, pp.354–361.

Sharoff, L.  (2008) Critique of the critical incident technique. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, Vol 13(4), pp. 301-309.

Sikes, J., Measor, L. and Woods, P. (1985) *Teacher Careers. Crises and Continuities*. The Falmer Press: London.

Silverman, D. (2010) *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook* (Third edition). Sage: London.

Song, M. and Parker, D. (1995) Commonality, Difference and the Dynamics of Discourse in In-depth Interviewing. *Sociology,* Vol 29(2), pp.241–56.

Spillane, J. (2004) *Standards deviation: How schools misunderstand education policy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Spindler, G. and Spindler, L. (1982) Roger Harker and Schoenhausen: from familiar to strange and back again. In Spindler, G. (eds). *Doing the Ethnography of schooling*, pp20-46. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Strauss, A. L. (1959) *Mirrors and Masks.* San Francisco, The Sociology Press.

Strauss, A. L. and Rainwater, L. (1962) *The Professional Scientist.* Chicago: Aidine Press.

Swedberg, R. (2018) How to use Max Weber's ideal type in sociological analysis. *Journal of Classical Sociology*, Vol 18 (3), pp.181-196.

Tappan, M. B. and Brown, L. M. (1991) Stories Told and lessons Learned. In C. Witherell and N. Noddings (Eds.). *Storied Lives Tell. Narrative and Dialogue in Education*, pp.171-192. New York: Teachers College Press.

The Personal Narratives Group (1989) *Truths. In Personal Narratives Groups (Eds.) Interpreting women's lives: Feminist theory and personal narratives.* Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

The Welsh Office Wales. (2010) *Creating our futures.* (1993).

The Welsh Office. *A bright Future – Getting the Best from Every Pupil at School in Wales.* (1995).

Timperley, H. S. (2011) *Realizing the Power of Professional Learning Maidenhead*: Open University Press.

Tripp, D. (1993) *Critical Incidents in Teaching. Developing Professional Judgement.* Routledge Falmer: London.

Urquhart, C., Light, A., Thomas, R., Barker, A., Yeoman, A., Cooper, J. (2003) Critical incident technique and explication interviewing in studies of information behavior. *Library and Information Science Research*, Vol 5, pp. 63–68.

Usher, R. and Edwards, R. (1994) *Postmodernism and education.* London: Routledge.

Van der Heijden, H., Geldens, J., Beijaard, D., and Popeijus, H. L. (2015) Characteristics of teachers as change agents. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, Vol 21(6), pp.681-699.

Vella, J. (2002) *Learning to listen, learning to teach: The power of dialogue in educating adults.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Visser, R.D., Evering, L.C. and Barrett, D.E. (2014) #TwitterforTeachers: the implications of Twitter as a self-directed professional development tool for K–12 teachers. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, Vol 46, pp.396–413.

Wallace, C. and Kang, N. H. (2004) An investigation of experienced secondary science teachers' beliefs about inquiry: An examination of competing belief sets. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, Vol 41, pp. 936–960.

Wallace, M. (1991) *Coping with multiple innovations in schools: An exploratory study*. School *Organisation*, Vol *11*(2), pp.187-209.

Wavehill Ltd. (2018) *A review of the design and assessment model of the skills challenge certificate and its place within the Welsh Baccalaureate*. Available at http://www.qualificationswales.org/media/3311/review-of-scc-final-report-e.pdf : accessed on 5th August 2018.

Weber, M. (1978) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (trans.Fischoff E, et al.) 2 vols. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Welsh Government (2017a) *Education in Wales: Our national mission. Action plan 2017–21*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Welsh Government (2020) The curriculum for Wales. Available online at: https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/introduction (accessed 22 February 2020).

Welsh Government. (2015) 'A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life' available at http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/24680/1/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en_Redacted.pdf.

Welsh Government. (2015) *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life*. available at http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/24680/1/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en_Redacted.pdf.

Welsh Government. *National Literacy and Numeracy Framework*. To support schools in introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework' (Information document no: 120/2013) Date of issue: March 2013.

Welty, E. (1979) *The eye of the story: selected essays and reviews*. New York: Vintage books.

WG (2019) Address list of schools in Wales (Accessed on 17/07/19. Available from: https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/address-list-of-schools/?lang=en

WG Bulletin 2 (04/10/16) School Performance Reporting, available at https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-performance-reporting-bulletin-2-4-october-2016.pdf;  both accessed on 5th August 2018)

WG School Performance Reporting Measures 2016 to 2018 (https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/changes-to-key-stage-4-school-performance-reporting-measures-2016-to-2018.pdf;

White, H., (1980) The value of narrativity in the representation of reality. *Critical inquiry*, Vol *7*(1), pp.5-27.

Wills, J. S. and Haymore Sandholtz, J. (2009) Constrained professionalism: Dilemmas of teaching in the face of test-based accountability. *Teachers College Record*, Vol 111(4), pp. 1065- 1114.

WISERD. (2015). *Successful Futures. Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales (the Donaldson Review), Analysis of questionnaire responses. Final Report* (available at http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22165/5/150225-questionnaire-responses-en.p

WJEC (Accessed on 30th March 2017 from http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/welsh-bacc-from-2015/Advanced/

Wolcott. H, F. (1981) Confessions of a "Trained Observer". pp. 254 – 264 in Popkewitz, T. S. and Tabachnick, B. R. *The Study of Schooling* (Field based methodologies in Educational Research and Evaluations) (Eds.). Praeger.

Woods, P. (1993) *Critical Events in Teaching and learning*. Routledge: London.

Woolsey, L. (1986) The critical incident technique: An innovative qualitative method of research. *Canadian Journal of Counselling*, Vol 20 (4), pp.242-254.

Yin, R. K. (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Third Edition. Sage. Thousand oaks. California.

Young, M. D. F. (1998) *The curriculum of the future: From the "new sociology of education" to a critical theory of learning*. London: Falmer.

Yussen, S. R., and Ozcan, N. M. (1997) The development of knowledge about narratives. Issues in Educational Psychology: *Contributions from Educational Psychology*, Vol 2(1), pp. 1-68.

Zhu, H. (2010) Curriculum reform and professional development: A case study on Chinese teacher educators. *Professional Development in Education*. Vol 36(1-2), pp.373-391.

# Appendices

Appendix 2: National KS4 WBQ Components (2015)

(Downloaded on 14th April 2017 from http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/welsh-bacc-from-2015/)

Appendix 3: KS4 WBQ Intermediate Diploma (2012) components.

(Downloaded 14th April 2017 from www.welshbaccalaureate.org.uk/media/40beb325-2a94.../intermediate_level_pdf)

| WELSH BACCALAUREATE INTERMEDIATE DIPLOMA | ASSESSMENT |
| --- | --- |
| Welsh Baccalaureate Core | Candidate Diary |
| o Personal And Social Education (PSE) including Community Participation | All sections assessed through completion of the Candidate Diary which can be found on the Welsh Baccalaureate website. |
| o Wales, Europe And The World (WEW) including the Language Module | Centre Progress File |
| | To support the Candidate Diary centres must submit a Centre Progress File. |
| o Work Related Education (WRE) including work experience and an enterprise activity | The Centre Progress File must outline the way the Welsh Baccalaureate Core requirements have been delivered and provide evidence of the teaching and learning experiences of candidates. |
| Individual Investigation | An independent study at Level 2, which meets the requirements of the assessment criteria. |
| Key Skills/ Essential Skills Wales | Two Essential Skills Wales/wider Key Skills at Level 2 and two at Level 1. ICT, Application of Number and Communication must be included, at least one of which, must be at Level 2. |

OPTIONS
Candidates must achieve the following qualifications from the NQF or QCF
To pass the Intermediate Diploma candidates must achieve one of the following:
A maximum of four qualifications at Level 2 which total 480 GLH or 60 credits or 80% of the Level 2 threshold or Principal Learning (Level 2) and Higher Project qualification Level 2.
Note: More details about Options are available from DAQW, NDAQ and relevant awarding organisations.

(Downloaded on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2017 from https://qips.ucas.com/qip/welsh-baccalaureate-advanced-diploma-legacy)

Structure

For courses commencing September 2013 and 2014:

- To gain a Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma candidates must successfully complete both the compulsory Core and optional requirements comprising Level 3 qualifications such as A levels vocational qualifications, etc.

A programme of personal development which also provides opportunities to develop skills.

The Core programme includes:

- Personal and Social Education – including Community Participation
- Wales, Europe & the World (WEW), including a Language Module
- Work Related Education including work experience and an enterprise activity-all evidenced through the Candidate Diary Individual Investigation – Independent study which meets specified assessment criteria and is graded at either Pass, Merit or Distinction (see section 11)
- Essential Skills Wales (ESW) / Wider Key Skills – A minimum of three Essential Skills Wales / Wider Key Skills at Level 3 and three at Level 2. At least one of the Level 3 skills must be from ESW i.e., Application of Number, ICT or Communication.

Optional qualifications:

- Level 3 qualifications which total 720 GLH or 108 credits or 100% of the Level 3 threshold (i.e., equivalent to two A levels graded A*– E).
- The optional qualifications contributing to the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma can be drawn from no more than three Level 3 qualifications.
- Although these optional qualifications are required to achieve the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma, grades achieved in these qualifications do not affect the grade awarded for the Core (see section 12).
- The component parts of the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma may be taken in either the Welsh or English language

Appendix 5: Examples of Advanced projects, available for assessment from September 2015

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT: 'Schooling and the Hidden Curriculum',' School Health Research Network 'Healthy Schools', both authored by Cardiff university (SOCSI).

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE: 'Welfare supporting an organisation' authored by Cadw.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP CHALLENGE 'Natural Environment – Construction' authored by Colegau Cymru or 'Coaching – educating the community' authored by the National Museum Wales.

(Accessed on 30th March 2017 from http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/welsh-bacc-from-2015/Advanced/)

Appendix 6: The Global Citizenship Challenge WJEC advice to students.

"The world faces many global challenges that require global solutions. The Global Citizenship Challenge provides you with an opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding of a complex global issue and develop an insight into the challenges faced across the world in addressing the issue. You will develop and support particular arguments, viewpoints or perspectives on the global issue to construct your own personal standpoint. If feasible solutions are to be uncovered it is vital to share your ideas of ways to take action through engagement with others. The Challenge provides an opportunity for you to promote your personal approach for solutions and strategies to tackle the global issue at a Global Choice Conference. You should communicate your message in a creative and innovative manner to engage and encourage the audience to think and act as global citizens.

Your contribution to is: 'Minority cultures are at risk in the modern world. What approach should be taken to preserve them?' …. which will be held on (when and where)."

(Accessed on 30th March 2017 from http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/welsh-bacc-from-2015/Advanced/)

*Appendix 7: The sample*

| W B C | Ys teach | Ys WB Q | Previous role(s) | Age range | Med | eFSM % | EAL % | ALN % | Att % | Cat | % L2 E+M | Ave cap 8 % | Ave cap 9 % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | 14 | 14 | Head of Art WB Co-ord | 11-16 | E | 28.5 | 5.2 | SA – 23.8 Sa+ -14.4 Stat – 2.5 | 92.3 | Amber | 36.2 | 333.7 | 342.4 |
| D | 4.5 | 2.5 | Head of PE RSL | 11-18 | E | 30.6 | 41 | SA – 17.4 Sa+- 5.3 Stat - 3.6 | 94 | Green | 44.7 | 354 | 368.4 |
| M | 19 | 4 | Head of ICT | 11-18 | E | 3.9 | * | SA – 4.9 Sa+ - 3.5 Stat – 0.6 | 95.2 | Green | 87.7 | 389.1 | 430.8 |
| J | 24 | 10 | Chem teacher PSE Co-ord Head of Year | 3-16 | E | 27.2 | * | SA – 16 Sa+ - 8 Stat – 1.2 | 92 | * | 48 | 364.1 | 352.8 |
| B | 25 | 9 | Head of Bus and ICT BTEC manager | 11-16 | E | 30.5 | 1.6 | SA – 17.7 Sa+ - 26.4 Stat - * | 91.7 | Green | 44.3 | 309 | 334.3 |
| A | 8 | 8 | Geog teacher | 11-19 | W | 13.8 | 0.8 | SA – 11.6 Sa+ - 9.2 Stat – 1.1 | 94.3 | Amber | 51.6 | 305.4 | 331.1 |
| L | 25 | 18 | Reception RE teacher | 11-19 | E | 13.2 | 4.9 | SA - 13 Sa+ - 9 Stat - * | 94.6 | Green | 69.1 | 369 | 388.7 |
| R | 25 | 12 | Head of RE | 11-19 | E | 24.8 | 0.9 | SA – 18.8 Sa+- 6.2 Stat- * | 92.8 | Amber | 45.5 | 335.5 | 348.9 |
| N | 10 | 6 | A level History and Politics teacher | 11-19 | E | 7.7 | 1.7 | SA – 8.3 Sa+ - 3.3 Stat – 1.3 | 94.2 | Green | 78.9 | 373.5 | 409 |
| J | 15 | 11 | Music teacher | 11-19 | E | 25.1 | 0.9 | SA – 10.3 Sa+ - 9.8 Stat – 1.1 | 94.3 | Yellow | 52 | 340.5 | 359.7 |
| D | 16 | 10 | Head of Bus Head of 6th WB Co-ord | 11-19 | E | 12.3 | 1.7 | SA – 12.3 Sa+ - 4.4 Stat - * | 93.4 | Yellow | 60.5 | 334.7 | 367.2 |
| C | 14 | 4 | Head of Bus | 11-19 | E | 9.5 | 0.6 | SA – 12.5 Sa+ - 1.7 Stat – 0.8 | 94.2 | Green | 69.7 | 361.9 | 395.3 |
| C | 24 | 6 | Head of PE | 11-19 | E | 12.4 | 0.6 | SA – 10.3 Sa+ - 12.4 Stat – 1.1 | 95.1 | Yellow | 59.4 | 350.5 | 379.3 |
| G | 15 | 10 | Head of Drama WB Co-ord | 11-19 | E | 23.3 | 4.3 | SA – 11.5 Sa+ - 7.9 Stat – 3.5 | 93.8 | Green | 58.3 | 356.1 | 375.5 |
| C | 10 | 4 | Head of Drama | 11-19 | W | 14.8 | 2.4 | SA – 14.3 Sa+ - 6.1 Stat - * | 94.3 | Green | 64.9 | 359.8 | 387.5 |

KEY

WBC – pseudonym

Ys teach – number of years as a teacher

Ys WBC – number of years as a WBC

Age range – age range of pupils at their school

Med – language medium of their school

eFSM % -percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals at the school

EAL % - percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language at the school

ALN % - percentage of pupils who have an additional learning need at the school

Att % - overall percentage of attendance at the school

Cat – category of support the school is in receipt of

% L2 E+M – performance indicator

Ave cap 8 % - performance measure

Ave cap 9% - performance measure


Data taken from www.Mylocalschool.gov.wales

- • = no information provided

| School of Social Sciences<br><br>Ysgol Gwyddorau Cymdeithasol<br><br>Head of School, Pennaeth yr Ysgol<br><br>Dr Tom Hall | |
|---|---|
| | CARDIFF UNIVERSITY<br>PRIFYSGOL CAERDYⱰ |

| SREC Ref No: |
|---|

STUDENT PROJECTS - MASTERS PROGRAMMES/ MPhil/PhD &

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Ethical Approval Application Form

**Must be submitted by the due deadline to:**
socsi-ethics@cardiff.ac.uk

**Note: This form uses check boxes, select the appropriate box, double click and select 'checked' a cross will appear in the box which indicates your response.**

| SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION [all boxes can be expanded] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Please tick relevant project type:*** | **Masters** | **MPhil/PHD** | **Professional Doctorate** | Yes ☒ |
| **Student Name:** | Judith Penikett | | **Student Number: C1571545** | |
| **Email Address:** | Penikettj1@cardiff.ac.uk | | | |
| **Supervisors:** | 1 Carina Girvan | | 2 Kevin Smith | |
| **Supervisors' Signatures:** | 1 | | 2 | |
| **Degree Programme:** | **Professional Doctorate in Education** | | | |
| **Title of Project:** | Storied lives: The on-going adventures of the Welsh Baccalaureate Coordinator. How does the personal narrative enrich a teacher's reflective practice? | | | |
| **Project Start Date:** | October 2018 | | **Dissertation/Thesis Submission Date: 2020** | |
| **Student's Signature:** | **J Penikett** | | **Date: 9/11/18** | |
| **Before completing, please now read the Application Guidance Notes** | | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **SECTION B: DISSERTATION SUMMARY** | |

| 1. | **Below,** please provide a **concise** general description of your dissertation project |
|---|---|
| | The proposed title is: 'Storied lives: The on-going adventures of the Welsh Baccalaureate Coordinator. How does the personal narrative enrich a teacher's reflective practice? |
| | I intend to gather initial data from approximately 15 WB Co-ordinators as part of an initial scoping exercise. Then, I will continue by concentrating my investigation with a smaller group of 4-6 Co-ordinators. The research will be undertaken throughout the academic year 2018-2020. |
| | During the scoping exercise I will use the (personal) narrative story-line methodology (Gergen (1988), Gergen and Gergen (1986 and 1988), Beijaard 1999, Connelly and Clandinin 1990) and semi-structured in-depth interviews with all 15 participants. |
| | Then, I will choose 4-6 participants to investigate their stories of practice in more detail using the critical incident technique (Flannagan 1954, Chell 2004, Sharoff 2008, Norman 1992, Woolsey 1986, Tripp 1993). |
| 2. | What are the research questions? |
| | Storied lives: The on-going adventures of the Welsh Baccalaureate Coordinator. How does personal narrative enrich a teacher's reflective practice? |
| | 1. How do stories of practice help us understand the important aspects of 'being' a WB Co-ordinator?<br>2. How does telling stories of practice enable a teacher to make sense of significant events that occur within their practice and setting?<br>3. How does story-telling help a teacher recognise a) their perceived agency and b) their exploited agency within their own practice and setting?<br>4. How does engagement in story-telling encourage a teacher to become critically reflective and insightful in their practice? |
| 3. | Who are the participants? |
| | The participants within this study comprise WB Co-ordinators in South Wales. Initially, as part of a scoping exercise I will interview 15 and then concentrate further on a smaller group of between 4- 6. The findings will be reported within a (comparative) case study format. |
| | This research does not involve pupils. I require no access to pupils or to their work throughout the duration of the research project. |
| 4. | How will the participants be recruited? |
| | I will use personal and previous professional contacts to enlist the group of 15. I have worked within secondary education for the last 30 years and as such I will contact former colleagues who now work in different schools. I will ask them if they would be happy to speak to their WB Co-ordinator on my behalf, to ask them if they would be happy to find out more about my research. If so, I would ask if they would provide me with an email address so I could make an initial contact with their WB Co-ordinator. I would be mindful of the burden this may bring to my former colleagues and respect both their decision and the decision of their WB Co-ordinator if they felt unable to help me. |
| | If they felt they were able to help with the research I would email them, introduce myself and outline the research. At all times I would be aware of the additional work this may bring to them, and would understand if they would feel uncomfortable and not want to participate further. Following their confirmation, I would contact their Head Teacher to gain their consent. It is possible that I may know some of the Head Teachers who I will then contact, but highly unlikely that I would know the WB Co-ordinators. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | I will then continue to work with between 4-6 Co-ordinators who are happy to continue with the research for a minimum of two further visits. Within this smaller group of Co-ordinators I will endeavour to have a mix of experience, views and settings represented. |
| | The participants and their Head teachers will be provided with an initial overview of the project and its aims via, email communication, and through further discussion face to face or by telephone with me if required.  They will be reminded on a regular basis of the research project aims. At each stage it will be re-enforced that their involvement is entirely voluntary and that they can withdraw their consent at any time.  Consent will be a positive 'opt-in' process via returning a signed form for all participants. The participants will consist of WB Co-ordinators, although I will meet with their head teachers / members of SMT to secure their on-going consent. |
| 5. | What sort of data will be collected and what methods will you use to do this? |
| | • I will gather solely qualitative data form the WB Co-ordinators during a number of visits, throughout academic year 2018-2019. Visit 1: Would involve a scoping exercise to gather data via Story- line methodology followed by a semi- structured in-depth interview. Visit 2: Would involve discussions with 4-6 WB Co-ordinators based around two critical incident summaries, which would be followed by a followed by second semi-structured in-depth interview. Visit 3 (and 4): Would discussions with the same 4-6 Co-ordinators and involve checking and further probing to ensure understanding and check for anomalies or omissions. |
| | • ==In addition, I intend to gather story-line data at a WB Co-ordinators network meeting. I will facilitate a session encouraging Co-ordinators to tell their story to others, write and construct their narrative as part of a workshop activity. I will ensure that opt in consent is obtained for this activity, prior to and following the workshop from the respective Head Teachers, Co-ordinators and Network manager.== |
| | • All data from the semi-structured in-depth interviews would be audio recorded and then transcribed. Hand-drawn story-line visual data (in line with Gerger and Gerger's model – on A4 paper using X and Y axis) and critical incident visual data (in line with Chell's double headed arrow- on A4 paper) would be collected and I would secure their consent to retain the A4 sheets (anonymised). |
| | • All interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed.  Where written consent has been obtained non-identifiable extracts may be used from participants. Careful consideration will be given to ensuring that these are selected and presented in a way that means there is no way of identifying the participant from any text included in the research. |
| 6. | How and where (venue) are you undertaking your research? |
| | At various secondary schools across south Wales, with names and locations anonymised or redacted. The venue may occasionally be in an alternative place at the convenience of the participant. It will be arranged with the consideration that it needs to be a private space where the interviews can take place without being over heard and without interruption. |
| | ==WB network meeting== |
| | What is the reason(s) for using this particular location? |
| | I will visit each participant at their place of work during the school day, or after, whatever is easier for them, as I am conscious of adding to their work load by participating within this study. If I visited their school, at a time |

convenient to them then maximum time would be available for data gathering. As my time is more flexible if I were to travel to them it would provide greater opportunity for them to accommodate my visit during their working day.

If alternative arrangements are requested then these will be selected to ensure appropriate levels of privacy within a public and safe space.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | (a) Will you be analysing secondary data?<br><br>I will use data already available in public domain to provide a context. It would include:<br><br>•       www.mylocalschool.co.uk – institutional contextual data<br><br>•       National Survey of Wales data set– wider contextual data. National Pupil Database, PLASC – utilising routinely collected data from Wales Centre for Public Policy<br><br>•       WG, Estyn, WJEC and Consortia (CSCJES, ERW, SEWEAS, GwE) – specific themes and inspection reports etc.<br><br>•       <mark>Attendance at WB Conferences and meetings</mark><br><br>   If YES, does approval already exist for its use in further projects such as yours?<br><br>This data already exists in the public domain. | Yes ☒ | No ☐ |
| | (b) Will you be using administrative data?<br>No; only what is currently in the public domain.<br>If YES, how will you be using these data (e.g. sifting for suitable research participants or analysing the data)? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |

**SECTION C:  RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8. | (c) Does your project involve children or young people under the age of 18?<br><br>   If **No**, go to 10 | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| | (d) If so, have you consulted the University's guidance on child protection procedures, and do you know how to respond if you have concerns? | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
| 9. | (a) Does your project involve one-to-one or other *unsupervised* research with children and young people under the age of 18 ?<br>   If **No** go to 9(b)  If **Yes**, go to 9(c) | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| | (b) If your project involves only *supervised* contact with children and young people under the age of 18, have you consulted the head of the institution where you are undertaking your research to establish if you need a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check?<br><br>If **Yes**, and you do need a DBS check, then go to 9(c); if you do not need a DBS check, then go to Question 10. | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
| | (c) Do you have an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check ?<br><br>If our application is **pending** please state the submission date: __ / __ / __ | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |

| | The SREC Office will require you to notify them when it is approved. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10. | Does your project include people with learning or communication difficulties? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| 11. | Does your project include people in custody? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| 12. | Is your project likely to include people involved in illegal activities? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| 13. | Does your project involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those listed above? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| 14. | Does your project include people who are, or are likely to become your clients or clients of the department in which you work? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |

**SECTION D:  CONSENT PROCEDURES**

Please ensure you are familiar with the updated General Protection Data Regulation (GDPR) guidance when considering consent for your participants.

| 15. | Will you obtain written consent for participation? | Yes ☒ | No ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|

| 16. | What procedures will you use to obtain, record and maintain informed consent from participants? |
|---|---|

*Head Teacher:

I will make initial contact with the HT via a phone call which I will follow up with email and letter. At each stage I will state clearly, and provide in written format, the details of the study: its purpose, data gathering methods, expectations, timescale and timings. The opt-in consent letters will be signed and dated prior to any participant meeting taking place.

*Participants (WB Co-ordinators):

I will state clearly and provide in written format the details of the study. In particular that  through  a number of visits (in 2019-2020) they would take part in a scoping exercise to gather data via Story- line methodology which would be followed by a semi- structured in-depth interview. If they were happy to continue with the research further meetings would be planned based around two critical incidents,  which would also be followed by a followed by second semi-structured in-depth interview. Further visits would be planned to ensure understanding and check for anomalies or omissions.

Opt-in consent letters will be signed and dated prior to any participant meeting or data collections taking place. All participants will be advised to keep these details for reference.

All written opt-in consent will be kept confidential and secure. It will be dated and signed. I will seek continued and on-going 'consent' at the beginning and end of each subsequent meeting and data collection event.

*WB Network manager

I will make initial contact with the manager via a phone call which I will follow up with email and letter. At each stage I will state clearly, and provide in written format, the details of the study: its purpose, data gathering methods, expectations, timescale and timings. The opt-in consent letter will be signed and dated prior to any network meeting taking place.

Additionally, the WB Co-ordinators will be provided with information on how to contact me should they wish to withdraw from the research at a later date.  Prior to the start of the interviews or any recordings of sessions the researcher will go through the overview sheet with all potential participants and answer any questions. At the completion of the interview they will be asked if there were any incidents they would rather not be included in the research. They will be provided again with information on how to contact me if they wish to subsequently withdraw from the research.

| 17. | If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed? | N/A **X** | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18. | Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary? | N/A ☐ | Yes **X** | No |
| 19. | Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reasons? | N/A ☐ | Yes **X** | No |
| 20. | Will you give potential participants appropriate time to consider participation? | N/A ☐ | Yes **X** | No |
| 21. | Does your project provide for people for whom English / Welsh is not their first language? | N/A ☐ | Yes | No **X** |

| **SECTION E:  POTENTIAL HARMS ARISING FROM THE PROJECT** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 22. | Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
| 23. | Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |

| 24. | **Below, please identify any potential for harm (to yourself or participants) that might arise from the way the research is conducted** <br><br> <u>**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE BOX BLANK**</u> |
|---|---|

The following issues relating to 'potential for harm' have been recognised within this study:

*There is the potential for a power imbalance to exist or arise between the researcher and HT and researcher and WB Co-ordinator. This may manifest itself in the participant wanting to 'please' their HT by agreeing to take part, or not be totally honest with their responses when considering role, agency etc. It is recognised that this may be through embarrassment, telling what is expected, and wishing to present a rosier picture etc.

*There is the potential for a breach of confidentiality and possible identification of individuals, schools or locations whereby personal information is disclosed and not redacted or removed, or that histories are uncovered (potentially through the Story-line and Critical Incident reporting).

*There is the potential for security breaches to occur where data is not anonymised or kept secure. Therefore, pseudonyms will be used and all data will be stored on H drive at Cardiff University. Anonymity of all participants and the school will be maintained through the use of the pseudonyms (for example: School A, WB Co-ordinator B etc.). Furthermore, data regarding the participants will be stored on the 'H Drive' to ensure practitioner confidentiality and the protection of their data (Data Protection Act 1998). All participants will be made aware of the anonymous nature of the study in line with data protection.

*Additional participant workload could potentially cause stress as time is taken out of their working day for data gathering and meetings. Additionally, there is the potential for embarrassment through the use of story-line methodology and/or critical incidents data gathering, which could lead to feelings of vulnerability.

*Participant withdrawal at some time during the study may occur, due to participant contracts, illness or other personal reasons or, unease or, for no particular reason whatsoever. This may cause harm to the research, the study or to the remaining participants as new participants may have to be sought or the adjustment to the amount of data provided by the remaining participants Should a participant wish to withdraw from the study their data would be destroyed to eradicate harm.

* I have read Cardiff University guidance on safety in fieldwork / for lone workers. I am aware of the risks of being on school premises before, during and after hours. I will remain cognisant of this guidance while I undertake the research.

| 25. | **Below, please set out the measures you will put in place to control possible harms to yourself or participants** <br><br> <u>**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE BOX BLANK**</u> |
|---|---|

I will ensure that:

*Written opt-in consent is to be obtained from all participants (HT and WB Co-ordinators) form each school, prior to any data gathering commencing.

*I will seek 'on-going' consent throughout the duration of the study. Watt (1995) identifies the requirement for consent and transparency throughout the intervention with a clear sense of purpose. Before the study takes place, consent will be obtained with aims of the study being clearly outlined. Verbal consent will firstly be obtained, followed by opt-in written consent. Participants will be fully informed of the aims of the interview and will be told about the aims and will be opportunity to share any questions or concerns they may have, providing an 'opt in' model. All processes are in line with BERA (2011) guidelines' requirements for 'voluntary informed consent'.

*I will ensure participants know they have the option to withdraw from the inquiry for any or no reason, and that they can express any concerns or worries to me. If so, all data collected from these participants will be destroyed. I am aware that the methodology employed will need to be explained in detail to allay fears and ensure the participant comfortable with the method as stories are personal and private and will need to be treated with complete confidentiality. Such data, whether personal or professional in nature, must be regarded as potentially sensitive.

*I will ensure that all participants know they do not need to feel obliged to respond to each and every question or prompt. Denscombe (2010) suggests that this point should be acknowledged on the cover page of the questionnaires and participants reassured that every piece of their data is to be given completed voluntarily. Therefore, each participant data capture sheets will clearly state this to ensure all are aware that the process is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw at and time.

*I will ensure participants are aware that pseudonyms are to be used to protect their identity and provide anonymity and, that all gathered data will be securely stored on the H drive at Cardiff University.

* I have read Cardiff University guidance on safety in fieldwork / for lone workers. I am aware of the risks of being on school premises before, during and after hours. I will remain cognisant of this guidance while I undertake the research.

I will inform my supervisors if and when I undertake fieldwork in such circumstances.

## SECTION F: SECURITY-SENSITIVE RESEARCH & PREVENT DUTY

Cardiff University has established a Security-sensitive research framework which aims to balance the commitment to academic freedom and scope against the need to safeguard researches from risk of radicalisation and/or risk that their research activity might result in a misinterpretation of intent by external authorities.

| 26. | Has due regard been given to the 'Prevent duty', in particular to prevent anyone being drawn into terrorism?<br><br>For further guidance, see:<br><br>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445916/<br><br>Prevent_Duty_Guidance_For_Higher_Education__England__Wales_.pdf<br><br>and<br><br>http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/freedom-of-speech | Yes ☒ | No ☐ |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 27. | Does your research fall within the Security-Sensitive policy? This includes the following:-<br><br>• Research concerning terrorist or extremist groups (in particular, those designated by the Home Office as a 'Proscribed Terrorist Organisation'); and<br>• Research involving access to materials that may be considered extremist and/or materials that promote terrorism, extremism or radicalisation.<br><br>For further guidance, see:<br><br>https://intranet.cardiff.ac.uk/intranet/staff/documents/research-support/integrity-and-governance/Final-V1_Security-Sensitive-Research-Policy.docx | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |

| | If 'Yes' go to Question 28. If 'No' go to Question 29. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 28 | Have you followed the registration procedure detailed within the policy? Please note this must be done before ethical approval can be given. | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |

**SECTION G: RESEARCH SAFETY**

Before completing this section, you should consult the document 'Guidance for Applicants' – and the information under 'Managing the risks associated with SOCSI research'.

| 29. | Are there any realistic safety risks associated with your fieldwork? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30. | Have you taken into account the Cardiff University guidance on safety in fieldwork / for lone workers? | Yes ☒ | No ☐ |

**SECTION H: DATA COLLECTION**

The SREC appreciates that these questions will not in general relate to research undertaken in SOCSI. However, for further University guidance and information please see the links below.

| 31. | Does the study involve the collection or use of human tissue (including, but not limited to, blood, saliva and bodily waste fluids)? | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
|---|---|---|---|
| | If **Yes**, a copy of the submitted application form and any supporting documentation must be emailed to the Human Tissue Act Compliance Team (**https://intranet.cardiff.ac.uk/staff/research-support/integrity-and-governance/human-tissue-research**). A decision will only be made once these documents have been received. For guidance on the Human Tissue Act: http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/govrn/cocom/humantissueact/index.html | | |
| 32. | Does the study include the use of a drug ? If **Yes**, you will need to contact Research Governance before submission (**resgov@cardiff.ac.uk**) | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |

**SECTION I: DATA PROTECTION**

| 33. | (a) Are you collecting sensitive data? [Defined as: the racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs (or similar), trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, the commission or alleged commission any offence, or any proceedings for any offence committed or alleged to have been committed the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings.] | Yes ☐ | No ☒ |
|---|---|---|---|
| | If **Yes**, how will you employ a more rigorous consent procedure? | | |
| | (b) Are you collecting identifiable data? [Please note, this includes recordings of interviews/focus groups etc.] | Yes ☒ | No ☐ |
| | If **Yes**, how you will anonymise these data? I will gather mainly qualitative data form the WB Co-ordinators. This includes: • Visit 1: where I gather written data via Story- line from 15 Co-ordinators as a scoping exercise. This would be followed by a semi-structured in-depth interview. All personal and identifiable information will be removed, redacted and anonymised with the use of a pseudonym for each participant and school. | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | • Visit 2: where I gather written data and we discuss two critical incident summaries (one negative and one positive) from the 4-6 WB Co-ordinators. This would be followed by a followed by second semi-structured in-depth interview. Again all personal and identifiable information will be removed, redacted and anonymised with the use of a pseudonym for each participant and school.<br><br>• Visit 3 (and potentially 4): Would involve checking data previously gathered and further probing to ensure understanding and to check for anomalies or omissions. | | |
| | (c)  Will any non-anonymised and/or personalised data be retained?<br><br>All personal and identifiable information will be removed, redacted and anonymised with the use of a pseudonym for each participant and school. In addition, I will remove headers, footers and watermarks from any papers gathered as part of any meeting. | Yes ⊠ | No<br>☐ |
| | (d)  Data (i.e. actual interview recordings, not just transcripts) should be retained **for one year post-submission of dissertation and then destroyed in accordance with the Data Protection Act.** Have you noted and included this information in your Information Sheet(s)? [The University may request access to these data at any point in this year to confirm your marks. It is your responsibility to maintain it securely] | Yes ⊠ | No<br>☐ |
| 34. | **Below,** please detail how you will deal with data security. Please note, personal laptops (even password protected) stored in personal accommodation are not acceptable. Storage on University network, or use of encrypted laptops is required. | | |

In order to ensure the safety and security of data collected:

* All data will be kept in accordance with Cardiff University guidelines. It will be uploaded the data onto University H Drive, as soon as I have IT access. I will not keep any data at home, on my computer, drive or stick.

*Participants will be made aware of their ability to withdraw throughout the study and will be told that they are not obliged to say or provide any information which they are not comfortable with. All personal data will be anonymised at the point of transcription. Participants will be allocated a number which will be used throughout the research process. Furthermore, during the initial briefing I will state to all involved that they can withdraw from the study at any time without reason or no reason and, that their data will be destroyed responsibly and not used in the study after that date.

*Access to PCs on which data are help will all require personal authentication (username and password). All portable media will be protected using a secure password/pass-phrase and data downloaded onto to university shared drives at the earliest opportunity.

If there are any other potential ethical issues that you think the Committee should consider, please explain them on a separate sheet. It is your obligation to bring to the attention of the Committee any ethical issues not covered on this form

**THE NEXT SECTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY YOUR SUPERVISOR(S)**

**SECTION J:  SUPERVISOR DECLARATION**

The supervisor(s) must explain in the box below how any potential ethical issue(s) highlighted by the student above and via ticked shaded boxes on this form, will be handled.  Please also consider if it is appropriate for the information sheet(s) and consent form(s) to be attached to this form.

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE THIS BOX BLANK**

As the supervisor for this student project, I believe that all research ethical issues have been dealt with in accordance with University policy and the research ethics guidelines of the relevant professional organisation.

| Supervisor(s) Signature: | 1. | 2. |
|---|---|---|
| Date: | | |

## Application Guidance Notes

### Making an application to the School Research Ethics Committee if you are a Postgraduate student

There are five stages in preparing an application to the Research Ethics Committee. These are:

1. Consider the guidance provided in the **SOCSI RESEARCH ETHICS 'module' on the Learning Central.**

2. Discuss any ethical issues you have about the conduct of your research with your supervisor(s).

3. Complete this Student Projects application form.

4. Sign and date the form, and ask your supervisor(s) to complete and sign the Supervisor Declaration.

5. Submit <u>one</u> copy of your application to the secretary of the School Research Ethics Committee – see contact details on Page 1.

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION:

1. Illegible handwritten applications <u>will not</u> be processed so please type.

2. Some NHS-related projects will need NHS REC approval. The SREC reviews NHS-related projects that do <u>not</u> require NHS REC approval. See guidance provided in the **SOCSI RESEARCH ETHICS 'module' on the Learning Central**.

3. You should not submit an application to the SREC if your research involves adults who do not have capacity to consent. Such projects must be submitted to the NRES system.

4. Research with children and young people under the age of 18.

    i) *One-to one research or other unsupervised research with this age group requires an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check (formerly called Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Check).*
    ii) *If your research is in an institution or setting such as a school or youth club and all contact with the children and young people is supervised you will still need to check with the person in charge about whether you need a DBS check; many such organisations do require DBS checks for all those carrying out research on their premises, whether this includes unsupervised contact or not.*
    iii) *You will need to have an awareness of how to respond if you have concerns about a child/young person in order that the child/young person is safeguarded.*
    iv) *You will also need:*
        a) *permission from the relevant institution*
        b) *consent from the parent or guardian for children under 16*
        c) *consent from the child/young person, after being provided with age-appropriate information.*
    See guidance provided in the **SOCSI RESEARCH ETHICS 'module' on the Learning Central**.

5. Information on data management, collecting personal data: data protection act requirements, can be accessed via:
    https://intranet.cardiff.ac.uk/students/study/postgraduate-research-support/integrity-and-governance

6. The collection or use of human tissue (including, but not limited to, blood, saliva and bodily waste fluids): The Committee appreciates that the question relating to this in this application form will not in general relate to research undertaken in SOCSI. However, for further University guidance and information on the Human Tissue Act, please see:
    https://intranet.cardiff.ac.uk/students/study/postgraduate-research-support/integrity-and-governance

7. Undergraduate Dissertation Research involving HM Prison Service Employees: students are advised to discuss with their supervisors the SREC guidance note 'Undergraduate Dissertation Research involving HM Prison Service Employees' which can be accessed in the **SOCSI RESEARCH ETHICS 'module' on the Learning Central**.

8. Supervisors are primarily responsible for the contents of information sheets and consent forms. Information Sheets and consent forms are not normally required as part of the SREC approval process, however, the Committee can find them helpful in cases where sensitive issues are involved or where the participants are children or vulnerable adults. Supervisors should consider whether their inclusion would assist the Committee.

    For interesting examples of information sheets and consent forms, please see the **SOCSI RESEARCH ETHICS 'module' on the Learning Central**.

11. If you tick a box in the shaded sections of the proforma you should address this in the Dissertation Summary and/or Supervisor's Declaration.

Ethical approval

**CARDIFF UNIVERSITY**
**PRIFYSGOL CAERDYᴅᴅ**

**School of Social Sciences**
**Ysgol Gwyddorau Cymdeithasol**
Head of School, Pennaeth yr Ysgol
Dr Tom Hall

19 December 2018

Our ref: SREC/3089

Judith Penikett
PhD Programme
SOCSI

Dear Judith,

Your project entitled *'Storied lives: The on-going adventures of the Welsh Baccalaureate Coordinator. How does the personal narrative enrich a teacher's reflective practice?'* has now been approved by the School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of Cardiff University and you can now commence the project should all necessary forms of approval been received.

If you make any substantial changes with ethical implications to the project as it progresses you need to inform the SREC about the nature of these changes. Such changes could be: 1) changes in the type of participants recruited (e.g. inclusion of a group of potentially vulnerable participants), 2) changes to questionnaires, interview guides etc. (e.g. including new questions on sensitive issues), 3) changes to the way data are handled (e.g. sharing of non-anonymised data with other researchers).

In addition, if anything occurs in your project from which you think the SREC might usefully learn, then please do share this information with us.

All ongoing projects will be monitored and you will be obliged periodically to complete and return a SREC monitoring form.

Please inform the SREC when the project has ended.

Please use the SREC's project reference number above in any future correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Professor Emma Renold
Chair of School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Cc: Carina Girvan, Kevin Smith

THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES
2013

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Athena
SWAN
Bronze Award

QAA
UK Quality Assured
Sicrwydd Ansawdd y DU

Registered Charity, no. 1136855
Elusen Gofrestredig, rhif 1136855

**Research project: Storied lives: What are the opportunities and challenges of the WB co-ordinator?**

Dear Head Teacher,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. I am grateful that you are allowing me the opportunity to interview your member of staff as I explore the storied lives of the WB Co-ordinator and investigate what are the opportunities and challenges that present themselves within the role.

The study has been granted ethical clearance by Cardiff University.

I am requesting permission to interview your WB Co-ordinator at a mutually agreement time and location to ensure minimal disruption. The interview invites the member of staff to share their thoughts and experiences about their practice. It will take a maximum of one hour. Participation within this research is completely voluntary and confidential, and the member of staff is free to withdraw at any time for whatever reason.

During the interview, they are free to withdraw at any time for whatever reason. They just need to tell me that they wish to withdraw either before the interview starts, during the interview or after the interview has finished if this is what they want to do. They are not obliged to answer any questions that are asked if they do not wish to. Further they can state that they do not wish to answer a particular question and I will move on to the next question. They are able to terminate the interview at any point.

Following the interview neither you, your member of staff nor your institution will be identifiable in any way; pseudonyms will be used if any direct speech is quoted. If a name is used in the course of the data gathering this will be removed when the interview is transcribed and a pseudonym used in all records, transcriptions and in any data analysis and reporting of the data. All data will be secured in files that are password protected, if computer files, or in lockable filing cabinets and accessible only to the researchers. After five years, all files will be destroyed.

Please indicate below that you give your informed consent for members of staff at your school to take part in lesson observations and interviews. Do not hesitate to contact me by email for any further details.

Thank you,

Judith Penikett: penikettj1@cardiff.ac.uk

**Research project: Storied lives: What are the opportunities and challenges of the WB co-ordinator?**

I give my voluntary informed consent for staff at my school to be interviewed. I have been informed that they can withdraw from this research at any time.

Head Teacher Signature

Head Teacher Name

Date

Email

**Research project: Storied lives: What are the opportunities and challenges of the WB co-ordinator?**

*This information and consent form is provided to participants prior to the research visit. A further hard copy of this form will be provided during the visit and the teacher will be asked to sign to give consent to participate prior to the interview. Please do not hesitate to ask for further details prior to the visit by me using the email addresses provided at the end of the letter.*

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for offering to be part of this research. I am grateful that you are allowing me the opportunity to share your experiences of your role as WB Co-ordinator. The study has been granted ethical clearance by Cardiff University.

The project aims to understand the opportunities and challenges of the WB co-ordinator via an interview. The interview invites you to share your thoughts and experiences about your practice. It will take a maximum of one hour.

Your participation is completely voluntary and confidential. You are free to withdraw from being interviewed at any time for whatever reason. You just need to tell me that you wish to withdraw either before the interview starts, during interview or after either has finished if this is what you want to do. You are not obliged to answer any questions that we ask you if you do not wish to. In the interview you can tell me that you do not wish to answer a particular question and I will move on to the next question. You are able to terminate the interview at any point.

The interview will be audio recorded and notes may be taken during the interview and analysed to provide data related to the research focus. Quotations may be used but neither you nor your institution will be identifiable in any way and pseudonyms will be used if I quote any of your words. If your name is used in the course of the interview this will be removed when the interview is transcribed and a pseudonym used in all records, transcriptions and in any data analysis and reporting of the data. All data will be secured in files that are password protected (if computer files) or in lockable filing cabinets and accessible only to myself. After five years, all files will be destroyed.

Please indicate below that you give your informed consent to taking part in the research study. Do not hesitate to contact me by email for any further details.

Thank you,


Judith Penikett: penikettj1@cardiff.ac.uk

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Research project: Storied lives: What are the opportunities and challenges of the WB co-ordinator?**

I give my voluntary informed consent to taking part in this interview. I have been informed that I can withdraw from this research at any time.

Participant name        _____

Signed        _____

Interviewer        _____

Date        _____

Interview 1

**Introduction / ethics / recording / date / location**

**Tell me a little bit about YOU** -

Your background? how you came to be WB Co-ordinator; asked, applied…..

Your previous role(s); how many years have you been here, in role, subjects taught….

Who supported you? How did you learn? Training received?

**Tell me a bit about the OTHERS you work closely with on WB-**

Their background? How they came to WB; asked, applied…..

Their previous role(s); how many years, subjects taught….

How do you support them? How do they learn? Training received?

**Could we construct a storyline,** of highs and lows, over the time you've been **co-ordinator.**

Begin with x axis – time line

Consider events – y axis: Tell / explain / describe – significant/ memorable/ important/ crucial / critical / revelationary / made you turn a corner events by annotating



Time
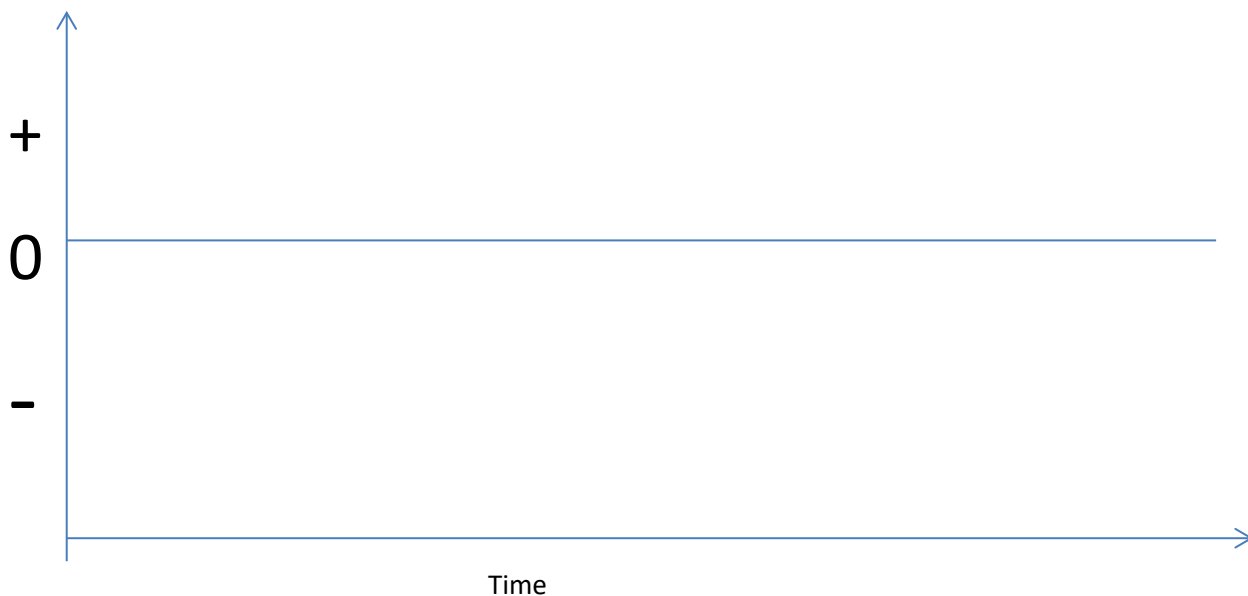
3. **Tell me what values underpin your practice as a teacher / as a leader?**

4. **Tell me about the future of WBQ as you see it?**

5. **I think I've covered everything….Is there anything you would like to ask?**

Interview 2 (and subsequent): Explanation, discussion, clarification.

**Introduction / ethics / recording / date / location**

**THE ROLE: Has anything changed?**

*Have you received further supported training received? Has the breadth or depth of role changed? Consequences – foreseen or unforeseen?*

**OTHERS you work closely with on WB- Has anything changed?**

*New members… staff absence…supply teachers….school priorities….subject conflict…Moderation…support…training?*

**PREVIOUSLY you spoke of ……could we explore that a little more** [ **What, Why, When, Where, How, Who]**

*Tell / explain / describe – Annotate*


a)


b)


c)


**Tell me what VALUES underpin your practice as a teacher / as a leader?** Has anything changed? Anything you wish to add?

**Tell me about the WB for 2019-2020?**

**I think I've covered everything… Is there anything you would like to ask/add?**

*Appendix 11: Proposed timescale for data collection*

| Date | Data collection |
|---|---|
| **Nov 7** | Initial contact made with colleagues I had worked with previously - professional and personal contacts utilised exploited. Initial contacts were then made with individual WB Co-ordinators. |
| **Dec 19** | Ethical approved received. |
| **Jan 14** | Re-contacted WB co-ordinators to arrange Interview 1. |
| **Jan 21** | Began data collection scoping exercise using Interview 1 schedule with fifteen WB Co-ordinators in their setting. |
| **Jan 28** | Continue with data collection and transcription of audio recorded interviews. |
| **Mar 4** | Read and re-read transcripts |
| **Apr 1** | Re-contacted eight (to get five) WB co-ordinators to arrange Interview 2. Continued to read and re-read transcripts. |
| **Apr 8** | Begin data collection Interview 2 with five WB Co-ordinators in their setting. |
| **May 6** | Continue with data collection and transcription of audio recorded interviews |
| **May 13** | Read and re-read transcripts |
| **May 20** | Re-contacted five WB co-ordinators to arrange Interview 3. |
| **Jul 1** | Begin data collection Interview 3 with five WB Co-ordinators in their setting |
| **Jul 8** | Continue with data collection and transcription of audio recorded interviews |
|  | Read and re-read transcripts |

NB: Moderation submission deadline to WJEC: Jan 11th, May 10th KS4 and June 10th KS5