Exploring the usefulness of Narrative Approaches in Educational Psychology Practice when working with Young People who have offended.

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Abstract

This small-scale, narrative study explores two concepts that aid understanding of the school experiences of young people who have offended. The first focuses on the concept of borders between the multiple worlds that the six young people in this study live within and between (Phelan, Locke-Davidson & Cao-Yu, 1993). This is combined with the concept of complementarity between Illeris' (2007) learning dimensions (content, incentive and interaction) in order to explore the narrative co-constructions of the school experiences of these young people who have offended, and the strength of their self-identities in relation to learning across time and context. The study draws on Hiles and Čermák's (2007a) Narrative Oriented Inquiry methodology and employs a three-step analysis of the six interview transcripts in order to carry out a categorical content and form analysis of the interview data. The concepts of borders and learning dimensions were common across the unique stories of the young people interviewed, and enabled the development of a typology of narrative resources, including an Instability Narrative, an Incompatibility Narrative and a Reformation Narrative. A typology renders orderly what initially seems chaotic (Frank, 2013) and can demonstrate how people are enabled to create, strengthen and weaken their learning identities by utilising available narrative resources. This typology provides an alternative method of understanding how young people actively choose, or not, to adopt canonical, institutional narratives within the education and youth justice systems they are part of and in the process of doing so strengthen or weaken their self-identities in relation to learning. The implications of this are discussed in terms of how Educational Psychologists might support professionals working with young people who have offended in developing an active approach to listening to the complex, eco-systemic narrative threads running through the stories they tell of their experiences, in order to facilitate strengthened learning identity and engagement in learning.

Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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Acknowledgements

Contents

Chapter 4

Chapter 6

Chapter 7

Chapter 1

1.1 Rationale

For the purpose of this narrative study, it is important to recognise that as a researcher, I contribute my own personal and distinctive context to my analysis (Reissman, 2008). I therefore provide below a brief summary of my personal and professional history, as well as my current situation, in relation to this thesis.

I initially became intrigued by the concepts of identity and belonging through personal family discussions about the life experiences of two family members, one of whom emigrated from Mexico to the UK and one of whom was adopted. Then, as a young teenager, I experienced both bereavement and the upheaval of moving home, losing my sense of belonging developed over time and needing to develop a new identity and connections with a new community whilst coping with feelings of grief and loss from my previous home. My experiences took me through feelings of anxiety, separation and difficulties associated with resisting temptations, and although they were mild and short-term in comparison to the experiences of many young people, they have given me some initial insights and great interest in the difficulties some young people have in navigating successfully onto a productive life path.

Working as a primary school teacher and for a Youth Offending Service, I often witnessed the difficulties children and young people had in establishing a self-identity within their social worlds; a learning identity within their school and a need for 'connectedness' between themselves and their 'worlds'. It seemed that often their views and feelings were at risk of being marginalised through changing societal ideology and agendas within the education and youth justice systems. Furthermore, it

appeared that they "possessed little political power that was free from adult sanction, and they clearly shared much in common with those marginalised groups in society who can be subject to abuses of power" (Billington & Pomerantz in Billington, 2006: 3).

Now, as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (EP), I have been privileged with having the opportunity to develop ways of working that ensure that young people are listened to and their voices heard (Billington, 2006). However, I continue meeting young people "whose lives and futures are influenced by the ways that professionals talk about and make decisions for them" (Wareham, 2012: 5). EPs have a responsibility to utilise their training to find effective ways of fulfilling the requirements of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the rights of the child (UNICEF, 1989), which sets out the right of the child to have their views sought and taken seriously on all matters regarding their welfare. Narrative practice is ideally suited to addressing this. It provides space in which young people can develop ways of thinking and feeling about themselves and / or their situation (Billington, 2006), whilst enabling professionals to reflect on their own practice and develop an understanding of the impact of their practice on young people.

I believe that an Educational Psychologist's job is twofold: a) to focus on what the system of influential adults within young peoples' worlds can do to enable them to achieve positive outcomes, and b) to develop equal, respectful and emancipatory ways of engaging with young people (Beaver, 2011; Wareham, 2012). This should reduce the likelihood of repeating the more oppressive professional encounters these young people may have experienced.

To accomplish this twofold perspective, Billington (2006: 8) suggests that professionals should reflect on their own practice by considering how we speak of and with children, how we write of and listen to children, and how we listen to ourselves when working with children. I hope to begin my career as an Educational Psychologist with an

understanding of how a narrative approach can enable me to answer these questions

through my work with vulnerable children and young people.

1.2 Introduction

This study uses a qualitative method to privilege the voices of young people who have offended, listen to their stories of school experience, and explore their narratives in ways that might facilitate professionals working with them.

Here I intend to outline research demonstrating the correlation between offending and education, focusing on underachievement and detachment issues. I conclude with a brief discussion about the role of Educational Psychology in fostering links between the complex and contradictory systems young people live within and between.

1.3 The Link between Education and Offending

The relationship between education and offending behaviour has long been recognised. Recent figures (Department of Work & Pensions [DWP], 2012) suggested that 64% of young men permanently excluded from school had subsequently committed criminal offences (compared to 31% of non-excluded young men[1]) , and 86% of young men and 82% of young women aged 15-17 in Young Offender Institutions in 2011 had been excluded from school. Nearly 42% of young men and 55% of young women had last attended school aged 14 or younger.

The nature and causes of this relationship are hotly debated and are beyond the scope of this introduction to explore. Yet whatever its nature and whether offending behaviour is adolescent-limited or life-course-persistent (Moffitt, 1993), underachievement and detachment from education appear to be significant in the development of offending behaviour (Hayward, Stephenson & Blyth, in McGuire, 1995).

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[1] MORI (2004) *MORI Youth Survey 2004*. Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

1.3a *Underachievement*

Several studies crossing education, health, social services and criminal justice boundaries demonstrated that the various 'client' groups of these different agencies all had linked educational problems (Farrington, 1995; Pritchard, 2001). Indeed, academic failure at school is widely recognised as being endemic among the population of young people who offend. One UK survey found that in the custodial setting, 51% of young people were below Level 1 in literacy (equivalent to that expected for a competent 11 year-old) and 52% in numeracy (ECOTEC, 2001). A study by Davis, Lewis, Byatt, Purvis, and Cole (2004) evaluated the literacy demands of adult offending behaviour programmes, reporting that the reading demands of such programmes were frequently at Level 1 and Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE UK A-C grade), but 57% of adult offenders had reading skills below Level 1. The report of a study on improving literacy and numeracy amongst a group of 15-18 year olds in the youth justice system found that about two thirds were at or below Level 1 (Hurry, Brazier, Snapes & Wilson, 2005). This finding is consistently reported internationally (Hurry, Brazier, & Wilson, 2010).

Sanger, Moore-Brown, Magnuson and Svoboda (2001) suggest that even when adolescents perform poorly on language tests they may not access services due to factors such as lack of motivation or background knowledge. Beitchman, Douglas, Wilson et al (1999) suggest that communication difficulties are misinterpreted as non-compliance and conduct problems in the classroom environment and Whitmire (2000) considers adolescents with language problems to be vulnerable to problems in developing peer and family relationships as well as in meeting the expectations and demands of school. Vallence, Im and Cohen (in Bryan, Freer & Furlong, 2007: 508) reported that around 50% of young people receiving services for a range of behaviour and anxiety disorders actually displayed language impairments when tested. They

posited that "the co-morbidity of language and behaviour disturbance results in a disproportionate 'favouring' of behaviour when allocation and delivery of interventions is considered". This means that services may be missing the main difficulty and exacerbating young peoples' problems. It is probable then that this will reduce the likelihood of engagement in interventions and the protective factor of academic achievement (Bryan et al, 2007).

The emerging evidence indicates that Young Offenders are likely to be at significant risk for previously unrecognised language impairments (Snow & Powell, 2005). Consequently, Bryan et al (2007) conducted research aiming to screen language and communication skills in Young Offenders, and found that most would be likely to struggle with verbally mediated interventions without appropriate and timely access to Speech and Language Therapy. They recognised the need to distinguish between young people who had verbal skill difficulties and literacy difficulties as this may have implications for the ability of young people to cope with educational and skills provision within school and custodial settings.

1.3b *Detachment from Education*

The impact of disengagement from education can have severe and ultimately lifelong implications. Hayward et al (in McGuire, 1995) suggest that an interaction of systems can put barriers in the way of young people who are already excluded and can make their return to mainstream education difficult.

"Exclusion from school is perhaps the most explicit form of rejection by a school of its pupils and for some excluded pupils it increases the likelihood of wider social exclusion" (Munn & Lloyd, 2005: 205). Yet the question of how to secure young

peoples' engagement in learning is scarcely examined in research on interventions with Young Offenders (Prior & Mason, 2010).

In conducting a review of the evidence base for 'What Works' in engaging Young Offenders, Prior and Mason (2010) recognised there was ambiguity about the meaning of 'techniques of engagement'. They established the need for a distinction between the practitioner skills and knowledge necessary to enable engagement and the particular type of intervention in which the young person is being engaged.

Many meta-analyses and reviews of interventions now show that the effectiveness of an intervention in engaging Young Offenders depends on "careful assessment; a risk and protective factors framework; a cognitive skills element; a co-ordinated multi-modal design; an element of reparation; programme integrity and long-term engagement and contact time" (National Audit Office, in Prior & Mason, 2010: 213). However, there is little research evidence exploring why some interventions work better than others or 'what makes a difference' when applying interventions.

UK governments have been increasingly concerned with detachment from education. Its relationship with offending behaviour and wider social exclusion has become central to social policy agendas in the UK. The government's Social Exclusion Unit (2000) defined 'social exclusion' as the outcome of suffering from multiple social difficulties such as unemployment, low skills, poverty and family breakdown. The Coalition Government, in a recent policy paper on social justice (DWP, 2012), cites research reporting that children aged 13-14 who live in families with multiple social problems are 36 times more likely to be excluded from school or to have contact with the police than children in families with no social problems. Response to these bleak statistics has included policies and initiatives such as 'Positive for Youth' (Department for Education

[DfE], 2011c), and 'Troubled Families' (Department for Communities & Local Government [DfCLG] & Casey, 2011).

In addition to social exclusion reduction initiatives, there is also an extensive variety of legal sources pertaining to school exclusion and attendance, which, whilst not all consistent, do hold three main principles to ensure the welfare of young people and to promote social inclusion (Whitney, 2008). These include promoting participation and working in partnership, recently legislated for through the Children and Families Act (2014). The third, more controversial principle involves the appropriate dissemination of statutory powers, "useful in situations where the welfare of the child is at risk or the parents have failed to act responsibly" (Whitney, 2008: 31).

Statutory powers in the UK, including fast-track prosecutions, fixed-penalty notices, parenting contracts, parenting orders and truancy sweeps (Hallam & Rogers, 2008), have been introduced to address disaffection issues (Whitney, 2008). These punitive initiatives demonstrate the highly politicised nature of exclusion and inclusion, and the dilemma about how to accommodate disaffected young people in increasingly scrutinised education and youth justice systems.

1.4 The Role of Educational Psychologists (EPs) in Working with Young Offenders

Despite working with the same young people, (albeit often at different points in their educational career) "there is virtually no professional cross-pollination between youth justice and education" (Youth Justice Board [YJB], 2006: 102). Yet the evidence outlined above shows that Young Offenders tend to share some of the characteristics and needs of young people with special needs or who are vulnerable to social exclusion. In response, the Coalition Government has committed to the 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' (IAPT) initiative which aims to improve the access

of young people to evidence-based psychological therapies (Department of Health [DoH], 2011), and has included guidance on providing for Young Offenders within the most recent draft of the SEN Code of Practice (DfE & DoH, 2014). Furthermore, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence now identifies EPs as "appropriate specialists to deliver interventions to promote the emotional well-being of children and families" (Hannen & Woods, 2012: 187). Ryrie (2006) suggests that although work carried out with Young Offenders may seem peripheral to the main interests of 'typical' EPs, there are clear, powerful links between offending behaviour, psychology and education: 25% of young people in the youth justice system are known to have special educational needs and 46% are rated as underachieving at school (Berelowitz, 2011). Therefore, it seems obvious that Young Offenders should be a prominent population with which Educational Psychology Services should engage. The eco-systemic framework within which EPs now tend to work fits well with research findings into the types of interventions that appear most effective in reducing offending and re-engaging with education. These interventions have been shown to be multi-modal, addressing school, family and individual elements (Harrington & Bailey, 2005).

Ryrie (2006: 13) describes the process of including EPs within a multi-professional Youth Offending Service and discusses the broad range of support Educational Psychology could contribute to the team. A distinctive contribution is that of research; "particularly seeking and analysing the views of young people in the youth justice system about the educational provision they receive at school, in the community and in custody". I hope to develop and contribute to this area of research described by Ryrie (2006), by interviewing Young Offenders who have experienced educational difficulties in such a way as to enable their voices to be heard.

Chapter 2

2.1 Literature Review

This literature review intends to provide a brief but informative account of relevant research regarding adolescent development; the school role in providing optimal learning conditions and the development of self-identity in relation to education. I conclude by examining the narrative approach to identity development. Throughout, I will attempt to outline the role of Educational Psychologists in these areas.

2.2 <u>The concept of adolescence</u>

Adolescence is a cultural construct, varying between societies, and nowadays develops against a backdrop of changing economic, social and political circumstances (Coleman, 2011). It is also a time of individual physical, biological and geographical transitions and turning points; key moments that have the ability to change the course of direction into adulthood (Graber, Brookes-Gunn & Petersen, 1996).

Despite recognition of 'adolescence' in academic research, difficulties have arisen in UK policy with this concept. In some legislation, 'youth' does not officially exist. For example, in the Children's Act (2004) all young people under the age of 18 are defined as children. Yet the Criminal Justice & Immigration Act, Chapter 4, (2008) defines young people aged 10-17:11 years as 'Young Offenders', deemed capable of coping with the requirements of a youth criminal justice system. In other areas, policy has recognised the difference between children and young people as 'emerging adults', suggesting that they go through certain 'rites of passage' moving them towards adulthood. Notions of competence and responsibility influence these rites of passage,

but contradictions exist over the ages at which young people are deemed competent and responsible. For example, at 16 years old, a young person can get married (with parental consent), or smoke cigarettes, yet a young person cannot legally vote or drink alcohol until 18.

These contradictions are particularly apparent within the rise of the 'politics of behaviour' as a consequence of the convergence of New Labour and Conservative positions on education and justice, through the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) and significant changes to the youth justice system. Together they have created dominant political discourses and ideology (Stephenson, 2007a). The vocabulary used both reflects and shapes media headlines, with language such as 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' and 'hug-a-hoodie' identifying the apparent lurch between justice and welfare approaches to vulnerable and disaffected young people. Stephenson (2007b) argues that this has unintended consequences, with welfarism tending to increase formal interventions and control unnecessarily and justice ignoring individual needs and sometimes human rights. Both approaches have apparently failed to capture the essence of what it means to be an adolescent situated within these interconnected contexts.

2.3 Contextual theories of adolescent development

The contextual perspective provides a useful framework for thinking about the transitions and turning points in adolescence. It emphasises the inseparability and reciprocal nature of person and context.

2.3a *Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Eco-Systemic Model*

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006; see Figure 1) used an interactionist, eco-systemic approach to outline several 'systems'; contexts which simultaneously influence, and are influenced by, the environment in which adolescents live, develop and make choices, according to the meaning and interpretation they place on the interactions they are part of. Within this model, the importance of the environment in its widest sense is stressed. Timing and type of events and the concept of agency are seen as equally important.
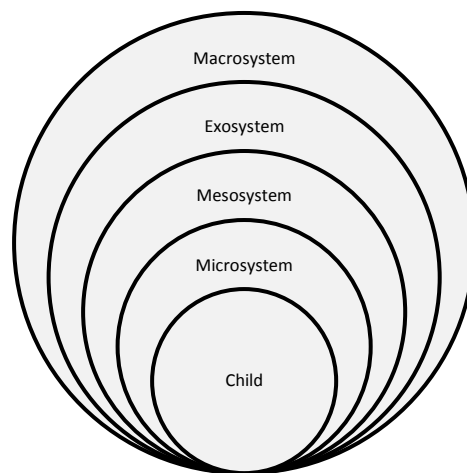
Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's (1979) "Eco-Systemic Model"

Although a useful generic model in identifying the multiple contexts in which adolescents live, further research has been needed to focus on the impact of and transitions between these systems.

2.3b *Phelan, Locke-Davidson & Cao-Yu's (1993) Multiple Worlds Model*

Phelan et al (1993) posited their theory of "Multiple Worlds" (see Figure 2) in an effort to provide information to assist educational practitioners in building bridges between

adolescent 'worlds' and the school 'world' in particular. They carried out a two-year longitudinal study across four high school settings in America, using in-depth interviewing techniques with 54 students. Each student was asked to provide information on their perceptions of classrooms and schools, the importance and influence of friends and peer groups, and the family conditions that were significant to their lives. Their qualitative analysis enabled them to define 'world' as "cultural knowledge and behaviour found within the boundaries of students' particular families, peer groups and school". They suggested that "each world contains values and beliefs, expectations, actions and emotional responses familiar to insiders" (Phelan et al, 1993: 53). Their model suggests that young people constantly traverse real or perceived boundaries and borders of multiple worlds. Boundaries were conceptualised as neutral with equality between settings. Borders were conceptualised as not neutral with separate worlds unequal, one world apparently having more highly valued knowledge and skills over another. Phelan et al (1993) posited that their proposed typology of four distinct adaptation strategies that support these border crossings (a: congruent worlds / smooth transitions; b: different worlds / border crossings managed; c: different worlds / border crossings difficult and d: different worlds / borders impenetrable), have profound implications for the construction of identity and how students engage with learning.

As a generic model, 'Multiple Worlds' could be applied to young people who have offended. Farrington (2005) has argued that school failure is an important correlate with offending behaviour. Applying this model, it could be hypothesised that school failure is likely to be associated with types c) and d) of Phelan et al's (1993) adaptation strategies for managing transitions between school and other 'worlds'.
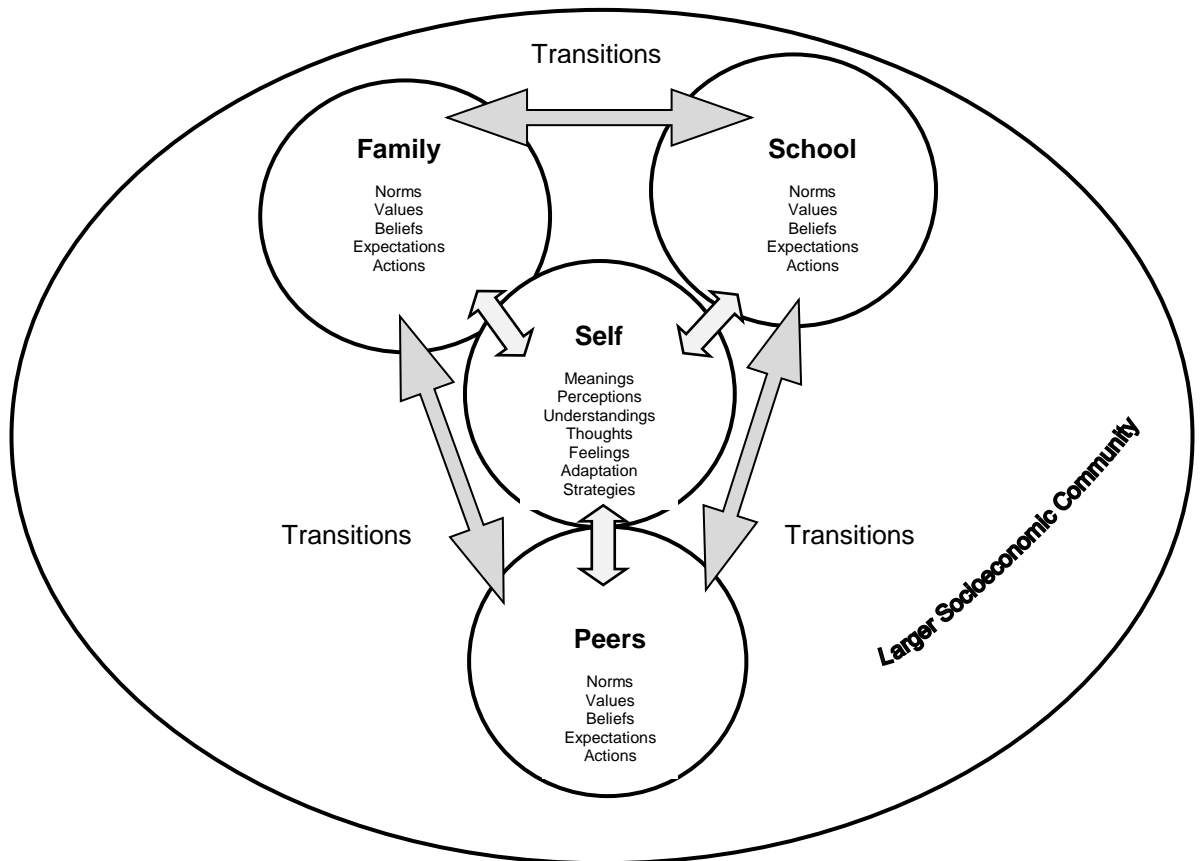
Figure 2: Phelan, Locke-Davidson & Cao-Yu, (1993) "Multiple Worlds Model"

Not obviously highlighted in their research was whether adolescents actively adopted strategies to suit contexts, or whether this was a passive process. This study attempts to address how adolescents experience living within and across these contexts.

Home and school provide the two basic social worlds in which children have traditionally grown up in the UK and many children have no other significant institutional context within which they can negotiate their sense of identity in the world (Billington & Pomerantz, 2004). Schools, like families, are important socialising agents (Ashkar & Kenny, 2009). Phelan et al's (1993) study concluded that despite the importance of home and school in supporting adolescents to navigate the transitions between 'worlds', schools in particular do not appear to provide direct assistance in this endeavour. They argued for schools to identify ways of eliminating 'borders' so that young people can construct stable identities and engage positively with learning. It

seems important therefore for schools to provide optimal learning conditions in which children can develop a sense of learner identity.

2.4 Optimal learning conditions: a dimensional theory of learning

Historically, empirical and theoretical research into learning has focused on how learning takes place within the individual. However, more recently it has been accepted that learning is embedded in a social and societal context. Social constructionism posits that learning is something taking place between people and therefore is a social process. 'School failure' arguably implies a reciprocal failure between the young person and the school, resulting in lack of suitable qualifications for meaningful employment, and lower positioning in school league tables.

In his book 'How We Learn', Illeris (2007: 3), broadly defines learning as "any process that in living organisms leads to permanent capacity change and which is not solely due to biological maturation or ageing". The processes that allow learning to take place appear twofold. There are (social) interaction processes between the learner and the environment, as well as the (psychological) inner mental acquisition and elaboration processes. Illeris (2007) further theorises that there are three dimensions of learning, namely 'content', 'incentive', and 'interaction' (see Figure 3), which are significant for youth learning, as opposed to learning in childhood or adulthood in particular. Illeris (2007) argues that these processes and dimensions are broadly associated with the process of identity development in adolescence.

2.4a *Content*

The Content Dimension typically concerns knowledge, understanding and skills, through which both meaning and mastery are sought, thus strengthening one's

functionality in the world. It could be described as being about acquiring a general readiness to understand, follow and critically relate to the world (Illeris, 2007).

This dimension has traditionally been studied the most and has perhaps predominantly influenced the development of UK school curriculums, assessment procedures and pedagogy. Public debate currently rages regarding the most appropriate curriculum content for our multicultural society, alongside debate about raising standards to the highest in the world. Debates also abound regarding the best types of schools and curriculum content offered. Whilst outside of the scope of this literature review, it is important to briefly mention it here as young people who have offended have often experienced several school environments, each with differing curricula and standards for achievement.

2.4b *Incentive*

The Incentive Dimension comprises motivation, emotion and volition, through which individuals seek to maintain mental and bodily balance and develop sensitivity. This partly refers to Vygotsky's (1978) 'zone of proximal development' whereby the learning space must provide optimal support and challenge. Much psychological research into achievement motivation and self-determination is also relevant here (see for example Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002).

This 'incentive' dimension of learning has received increasing attention from successive governments following reports suggesting that the emotional well-being of British young people is low compared to other developed countries. UNICEF (2007) ranked the UK as last out of 21 countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development across six dimensions of child well-being. This resulted in the government stating that:

> *Too many young people still suffer an unhappy childhood and fail to reach their potential because of poverty and disadvantage, or problems that are not addressed, or are tackled too late.*

(Department for Children, Schools & Families [DCSF], 2008a: 3)

This, combined with several high profile child-protection cases (Laming, 2003), has resulted in a prioritising of improving the life outcomes for all young people (DfE: Positive for Youth, 2011c; Children and Families Act, 2014).

Locating this dimension within a wider context and in relation to the population of young people in this study, the Coalition Government recently introduced the 'Troubled Families' initiative (DfCLG & Casey, 2012), aiming to get truanting children back into school, reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour, support adults in finding work and reduce the amount public services currently spend on them. This report noted that as much as troubled families are often characterised as dysfunctional – the same could be said for the services around them. The emotional and motivational aspects of both being in and working with a 'troubled family' must surely have profound impacts on engagement with learning of any kind, at any level.

Improving educational outcomes and promoting emotional well-being for young people through early intervention has been repeatedly cited as integral to society's vision for its children. In the UK, alongside the 'Troubled Families' initiative, it continues to be part of the Coalition Government's agenda in its new Children and Families Act (2014).

The role of EPs is important in this aspect of learning. EPs are often asked by schools to support them in re-engaging children and young people who show emotional or behavioural difficulties within school. Deakin-Crick and Wilson (2005: 359) argue that "awareness of self and one's own worth as a person is a necessary condition for 'becoming a learner' and for identifying and engaging with 'what is of worth'". Where a

sense of self-worth in a young person is limited or has reduced, EPs can engage in a wide variety of assessment and therapeutic work with the young person and solution-focused work with schools and families. These functions were recognised by government reports (Department for Education & Employment [DfEE], 2000; DfE 2011a; 2011b) and Farrell, Woods & Lewis et al (2006: 7):

> *… core work for educational psychology services should focus around assessment and intervention … where there are concerns about [children's] cognitive, linguistic, sensory, physical and/or social and emotional development.*

The role of the EP has been recognised more recently with the imminent advent of the Coalition Governments new Special Educational Need Code of Practice and Education, Health and Care plans (DfE & DoH, 2014). EPs have highly developed skills in facilitating and mediating through consultation (Beaver, 2011), and as such can also therefore support other professionals and services in connecting with young people and families who are perceived as hard to engage.

2.4c *Interaction*

The Interaction Dimension of learning includes action, communication and cooperation. Through this dimension students seek to achieve social and societal integration and develop sociability. This dimension suggests that all learning takes place within a social or societal context. Lavé and Wenger (1991) term this learning as 'situated'; as a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind. They locate learning not in the acquisition of structure, but in the increased access of learners to participatory roles in 'expert performances'. They suggest 'legitimate peripheral participation' (LPP) as an interactive process in which the learner engages with learning by performing in different roles, such as 'status subordinate'; 'learning practitioner'; 'aspiring expert'. Each role implies a different sort of responsibility, set of

role relations and interactive involvement. Illeris (2007) suggests that the more activity and engagement the teacher and learner involves in the interaction the more likely it is that there will be opportunities to engage in different types of learning, and therefore the greater the learning possibilities will be. I would argue that the LPP process is likely to be highly important for young people who frequently experience 'subordinate status' in their worlds and I suggest that teachers need to be particularly sensitive to maintaining a balance between the performative roles they offer in their lessons in order to maintain engagement with learning.
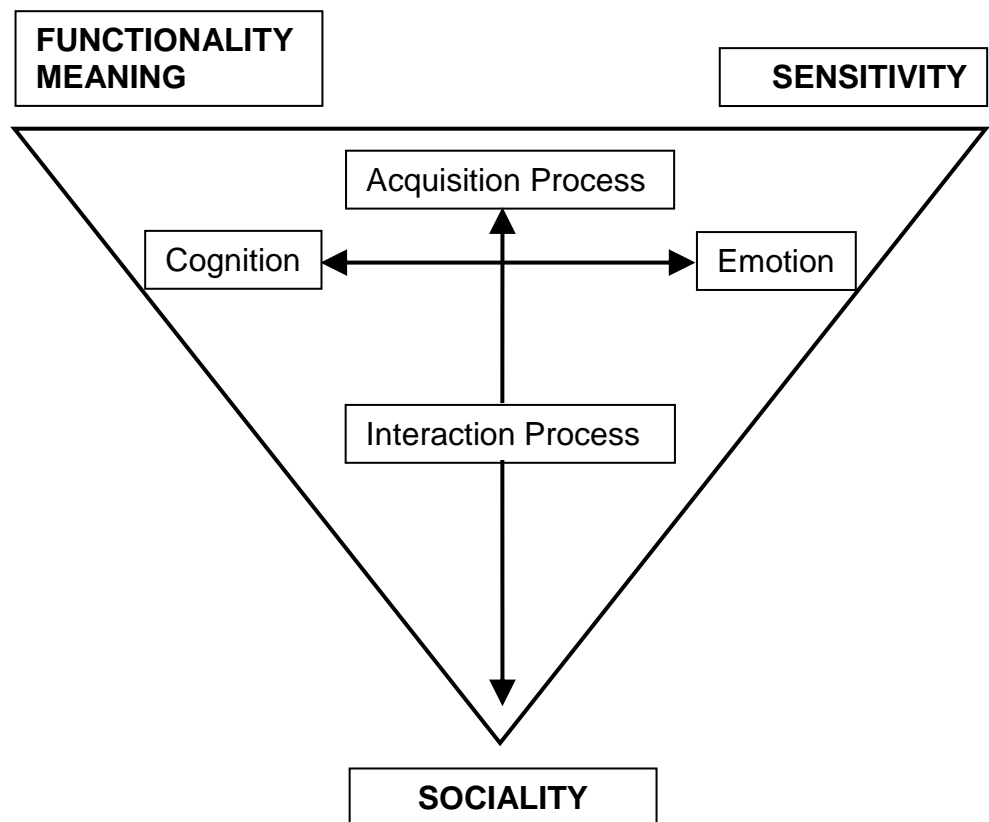
Figure 3: 'The Processes and Dimensions of Learning' Framework (Illeris, 2007).

The dimensional theory of learning outlined by Illeris (2007) puts forward the notion that learning is constructive in nature; the learner actively builds up his or her learning as conceptual structures relating to functionality (cognition), sensitivity (emotion) and sociality (interaction), and that learning cannot take place without these processes and

dimensions being balanced. Previous research into school failure and offending has investigated these dimensions separately. For example, some studies suggest that intellectual disability and low academic achievement precede offending behaviour (Farrington, 1995; Allerton & Champion et al, 2003). This seems to demonstrate an imbalance within the 'content' dimension of learning, whereby learning cannot take place if the capacity for understanding is limited. Some argue that young people with low school achievement develop fewer bonds with the school and community (Shochet, Dadds, Ham, & Montague, 2006), suggestive of an imbalance within the 'interaction' dimension of learning. Others argue that adolescents who are frustrated in achieving at school reject traditional values and seek compensatory achievement through unlawful means (Salmelainen, 1995). This frustration perhaps represents aspects of the 'incentive' dimension, whereby emotion and motivation to learn are impeded.

No empirical research utilising this theory in its entirety and investigating its robustness was found during the present study, and it does not appear to account for those young people whose offending behaviour may have preceded school failure (Hinshaw, 1992). However, it nevertheless provides a potentially useful framework for considering the school experiences of young people who have offended in this study. This theory appears to be used extensively, albeit implicitly in Educational Psychology casework in schools. In exploring problem situations such as difficulties with learning, EPs use solution-focused approaches to deconstruct the often complex elements that might be preventing learning from occurring. These elements may relate to low cognitive levels (content), emotional, motivational (incentive) or relationship (interaction) difficulties within the classroom. They may also relate to wider contextual factors within the three theoretical dimensions, such as differentiation, staff changes or systemic behaviour management strategies, for example.

This study intends to use this framework to hypothesise that for my participants the processes and dimensions of learning were unbalanced. It intends to explore the young peoples' experiences of this.

2.5 Mapping the progress of adolescent identity development research in relation to education

The two aforementioned processes involved in learning involve a balance between individuality and sociality, or 'self' and 'other'. 'Self' is a crucial concept in learning because of its individual acquisition element. Much research has been carried out into the concepts of self-efficacy; self-esteem and self-concept (see for example Reid, 1982; van Welzenis, 1997; Pisecco et al, 2001; Irwin, 2003; Boyle, 2007; Marsh & Scalas, 2010; Wouters et al, 2011; Osborne & Jones, 2011), but the formation of 'self-identity' in learning (see for example Head, 1997; Stables, 2003; Kolb & Kolb, 2010) is particularly important to this study. The academic literature on identity development is vast and beyond the scope of this study to review, but outlined below is an attempt to review the literature on adolescent identity development particularly in relation to education.

The topic of 'youth identity' is a theoretically complex, holistic concept, which covers individual and social levels. Erikson's (1968) linear, stage-driven theory of identity development shaped much of the discourse around adolescent 'identity crisis' in the 20th century and emphasised the duality of identity: the search for a "sense of self and social position that is situated within and informed by different contexts and by structural power arrangements" (Abrams & Hyun, 2009: 28). This bears a resemblance to the dimensional learning theory outlined above (Illeris, 2007). Corresponding to Erikson's individual side of identity is learning that results from biological, cognitive and emotional development. Relating to Erikson's social side of identity is the learning that

takes place within the societally developed participation framework. Thus from the standpoint of learning, identity development can be understood as "the coherent development of meaning, functionality, sensitivity and sociality" (Illeris, 2007: 366).

Marcia's (1980) influential model of identity development posited four possible identity statuses emerging from the interaction of two processes. These referred to a) an active exploration of the possibilities by the young person, involving matching self-knowledge with knowledge of the world (undergoing crisis), and b) making decisions in order to progress into adulthood (commitment). Marcia's four identity statuses relate to 1) identity achievement: having experienced crisis in the decision making process, made a commitment and achieved resolution; 2) identity diffusion: having experienced neither crisis nor commitment; 3) moratorium: experiencing extended 'crisis' and unable to make a commitment, and 4) foreclosure: not yet having experienced crisis, yet achieving commitment. Conceivably, the moratorium status could be increasingly identified within the adolescent population as the compulsory schooling age is raised and engagement in further and higher education and training is promoted.

Head (1997) proposed a further variant on the model. He suggested that rather than use the term 'experiencing crisis', the term 'exploration' might better describe the situation, and added the possibility that "some adolescents might proceed through their teenage years and achieve a sense of identity without revealing any signs of trauma" (Head, 1997: 14).

Marcia's model and methodology has spearheaded the literature on personal identity development. However, as Head (1997) highlighted, it has some limitations. These include the difficulty in empirically distinguishing between different identity statuses and the difficulty in confirming the common assumption that the statuses lie on a

continuum. Furthermore, the model has been criticised for only dealing with vocational and ideological identity to the detriment of other identities, including sexual identity.

Historically, identity development started within an inherited framework of genetic predispositions, class, family, ethnicity and demographic status. Both Erikson and Marcia implicitly assumed that after adolescence, self-identity would remain fairly constant, implying that there was a critical period for identity development. This was in keeping with other psychological 'stage' theories of the time. However, an extensive review of the developmental significance of the identity statuses carried out by Meeus (1996) argued that developmental concerns were only addressed in 49 out of the 163 empirical studies reviewed. Most studied cross-sectional concomitants of the statuses and found a robust, replicable difference between the identity diffusion and identity achievement statuses, but the correlates of the moratorium and foreclosure statuses did not reveal a picture of developmental significance. The Eriksonian assertion that the only successful resolution of the identity stage is identity achievement, in conjunction with the empirical finding that few adults achieve this status, suggested that the identity status paradigm prescribes what ought to happen rather than describes what does happen.

In other empirical research, Schoon and Parsons (2002) investigated teenage aspirations and occupational outcomes. They carried out a study with two cohorts of over 17,000 individuals born 12 years apart, using structural equation modelling to formulate theoretically derived hypotheses about the effects of teenage aspiration on occupational outcome. They found that in both cohorts, young people with high aspirations (those who had already developed a strong sense of identity) were more likely to enter a professional career, supporting the critical 'stage' hypothesis.

In recent decades education has increasingly been promoted as necessary for successful employment, and young people have had an expanding number of educational or training options available, with the choice to be educated or train for longer periods of time (the age at which compulsory education or training ends will have increased to 18 by 2015 (DfE & DoH, 2014). Another finding by Schoon and Parsons (2002) was that for the later born cohort, who had grown up during steep recession in the 1970s and 1980s and with a consequent lack of guaranteed employment, educational achievement played a more important role in influencing self-conceptions. From this they concluded that the power of educational credentials for occupational attainment had increased over past decades. This arguably fits with recent thinking that identity development has become more complex, confusing and frustrating, due to young people now having greater opportunities to experience a wider variety of different educational or occupational identities, yet still having to fit with both the needs of wider society and within the restrictions of the educational settings they attend.

The above notion of more choice within more restrictive systems highlights the tension between needing to understand oneself as wanting to develop whilst also remaining relatively stable over time. This has been much debated within social psychology (Elliot, 2005). One aspect of the 'self' is the concept of intelligence, and there has been long-standing deliberation regarding the nature and measurement of intelligence – particularly whether it is malleable to expansion or whether it is fixed. Irrespective of the 'true' answer to this question, there is persuasive evidence to suggest that what a student thinks about intelligence can have a powerful effect on their educational achievement (Aronson, Fried & Good, 2002). Much research has been carried out into whether fundamental person attributes such as intelligence are considered relatively fixed, stable traits, or more dynamic qualities that could evolve. For example, Dweck (in Molden & Dweck, 2006: 115) studied children's implicit theories about the nature of

intelligence. She described the belief that human attributes are fixed and unable to develop as an 'entity' theory, and the belief that human attributes can develop incrementally through a person's efforts as an 'incremental theory'. Dweck reported that holding either an 'entity theory' or an 'incremental theory' of intelligence determined the goals the children pursued, their responses to difficulty and how well they did in school.

Aronson et al (2002) used these concepts of entity and incremental theory to empirically investigate the effects of negative stereotyping on the academic achievement of Black American college students, who were generally assumed in this study to contend regularly with debilitating suspicions of intellectual inferiority. They hypothesised that students typically underperformed in situations where a stereotype of low ability was insinuated, a psychological factor they referred to as 'stereotype threat'. This was described as "a social psychological predicament rooted in the prevailing image of African Americans as intellectually inferior" (p114). It was furthermore described as an extra cognitive and emotional burden not borne by people for whom the stereotype does not apply, which took the form of undermining academic achievement through inducing anxiety and / or through psychological disengagement from achievement. Controlled field experiments were carried out with 79 male and female African American and Caucasian undergraduate students. Students were randomly assigned to one of six conditions yielded by crossing race with treatment. Treatments consisted of an intervention designed to promote the incremental theory by increasing belief in and advocacy of the view that intelligence is malleable; a control intervention which provided no argument for or against the malleability of intelligence and a third control group with no intervention. Results showed that participants in the incremental theory intervention viewed intelligence as more malleable than in the control condition, and that there was no difference between the control and no intervention conditions. This was taken to suggest that after just three sessions of

advocating the malleability of intelligence, an enduring and beneficial change in participants own attitudes about intelligence had occurred, and students showed greater valuing of and engagement with their academic work, gaining higher grades than those in control groups.

Whilst the notion that self-identity regarding intelligence can be boosted still commands consideration, particularly for vulnerable or disengaged young people, there appeared to be some shortcomings in this study. Aronson et al (2002) did not report assessing students' initial theories of intelligence thus did not control for variation in student theories of intelligence. It seems an important omission that initial theories of intelligence may not have been assessed, and a sweeping assumption that all participating African American students were affected by stereotype threat. They also recruited participants for pay, suggesting that the sample may have shown unintended social desirability effects. Furthermore, whilst this study demonstrated the importance of careful consideration of how concepts such as intelligence are discussed and applied when determining how to support underachievers, it did not suggest how potential self-identity change could be independently sustained by underachievers in the long term, and indeed did not fully eliminate the gap in performance and engagement. This suggests that the development of self-identity goes much deeper psychologically than a short intervention could hope to address, and is perhaps rooted in broader social-contextual factors.

Molden and Dweck (2006) detailed research into fixed (entity) versus malleable (incremental) traits which they reported showed repeatedly that most people generally endorsed either an entity or an incremental theory but that people could hold different theories in different 'self' domains such as intelligence or personality. Related to the incentive dimension of learning described earlier, they cited achievement research which has taken attribution theory and the study of achievement goals and repeatedly

shown that "people's specific interpretations of their achievement prospects and outcomes can radically influence their persistence and performance" (Molden & Dweck, 2006: 196). For example, they cite Blackwell who investigated the transitions of 400 seventh grade students from elementary to junior high maths classes. Students' entity or incremental theories of intelligence were assessed at the start and their maths grades were monitored as they progressed. Comparisons were made between students holding an entity theory to those holding an incremental theory. They found that incremental theorists predominantly:

> *…adopted learning goals aimed at extending their ability; viewed effort as a positive way of activating ability rather than as a negative lack of ability; less frequently explained their failures in terms of low ability and reported mastery-oriented responses of increased effort and persistence rather than helpless strategies of effort withdrawal*

(Molden & Dweck, 2006: 196).

Statistical path analyses revealed too that differences between entity and incremental theorists' grades increased over time. This self-regulatory use of incremental rather than entity theory thus appears to have had an impact on motivation to learn, an important dimension within learning theory (Illeris, 2007). In contrast to Aronson et al's (2002) experimental study above, this longitudinal study reported assessing students' implicit theories of intelligence at the start of the study, and monitored change over time, arguably lending robustness to the results.

The above studies, whilst demonstrating the importance of attaching personal meaning to experiences, do not appear to adequately address why students might have an entity or incremental theory, and what factors might initially influence the development of these theories. A limiting factor regarding the empirical research into identity

development discussed above therefore appears to be the lack of attention to broader social-contextual factors (Côté, in Lerner & Steinberg, 2009).

2.6 <u>The 'turn to discourse' in psychological identity research</u>

Partly in response to the difficulties with previous empirical research into identity development, and in line with the social-constructionist turn in psychology research in the late 20th century, Elliott (2005) argues that identity is relational and inherent within social interaction - the self is deconstructed through linguistic sources of self being accentuated, resulting in identity becoming more sinuous and shaped by context. Research in this social-constructionist turn has been redirected towards the analysis of social interaction, focusing on how individuals constantly construct and reconstruct a coherent sense of identity through their experiences over time and in context.

Cushman and Cowan (2010) investigated the importance of relationships in enhancing positive self-identity in the primary school. They carried out a thematic analysis using semi-structured interviews with four teachers and focus group interviews with 23 students across two primary schools in New Zealand. Key themes emerging that promoted positive self-identity included teacher qualities of humour, fairness, consistency, confidentiality and trust; teacher strategies such as showing personal interest in students, appropriate praise, providing opportunities for leadership and responsibility and encouragement. Overall, they found that both teachers and students believed that the affective side of education had a strong impact on students' self-worth, achievement and general school experiences.

This research appeared to demonstrate that perceptions were more powerful than actions: student perceptions of their teachers' ability to create a classroom environment conducive to learning were more important than actual, active

collaboration with their teacher in creating a productive learning environment. This may be in part due to the interview questions asked. Whilst teachers were asked two questions, one relating to their views on factors affecting a students' self-worth and the other relating to strategies they used to support the enhancement of self-identity, students were only asked about how their teachers helped them feel better about themselves, losing the student voice regarding their agency in developing positive self-identity in the classroom.

Focusing on social interaction within educational settings, Wortham (2006) provides a framework for the development of learning identity over time. He presented detailed analyses of specific case studies within one American ninth grade classroom over an academic year. Wortham argued that social interaction and academic learning must merge to enable the process of becoming an individual with a 'learning identity'. Wortham (2006) drew on the work of discursive psychologists Davies & Harré (in Wetherall, Taylor & Yates, 2008), who use social constructionism to further argue that individuals behave in certain ways, which are interpreted by others as 'signs' of identity. An individual's social identity is enacted in the event level, minute-by-minute interactions, which are interpreted by drawing on widely circulated socio-historical models and relevant contextual information to infer the meaning of the sign (Wortham, 2006). Relevant context in terms of establishing a learning identity could be taken to be the 'discursive practices' of the teacher and how their students are 'positioned' within those discursive practices, for example relating to behaviour or attainment (Davies & Harré, in Wetherall et al, 2008).

The research carried out by Wortham (2006) and discursive psychologists suggests that an individual's emerging identity can be imposed on them by peers or teachers through the interpretation of socio-linguistic 'signs', and that this could encourage the more 'fixed' nature of learning identity in some students. Whilst this accounts for the

social aspect apparently missing from empirical research into identity development discussed previously, it seems to obscure a sense of individual agency. For example, in Wortham's (2006) research, some students reportedly exhibited characteristics that enabled them to actively adopt or transform identities offered by others.

Abrams and Hyun (2009: 28) built on the notion that young people adopt or transform identities offered by others in their study into the process of negotiated identity among incarcerated young men. They aimed to demonstrate that formative social contexts such as correctional facilities offer possibilities for youth to "actively 'try on' new identities, thereby providing spaces where identity modifications and transformations can transpire". A longitudinal cross-case and cross-institutional study with 10 young men using ethnographic data comprising observation and in-depth interviewing was carried out. Using Phelan et al's (1993) 'Multiple Worlds' model, coding of themes from the data revealed distinct identity transition patterns that "worked to preserve a positive sense of self in relation to treatment messages challenging their prior identities and an institutional structure that diminishes their sense of personal power" (Abrams & Hyun, 2009: 47). The issue of power was reported to remain central as youth navigated the borders of these facilities. Whilst the agency of these young men seemed apparent in this study regarding modifying and transforming identities, limited consideration was given to how they made meaning of and understood these identity modifications and transformations.

From a social-constructionist standpoint, meaning-making is carried out through the interactive use of language: "the meanings of words are derived from an accumulated dynamic social use of particular forms of language in different contexts and for different, sometimes conflicting purposes" (Maybin, in Wetherall et al, 2008: 65). Elliott (2005) argues that narrative is one resource available to organise our own experiences and activities, as well as the actions of others, and that through the formation of

narratives individuals organise their experiences in ways which provide a sense of 'self' as an intentional agent over time. Narrative additionally provides a method of conveying and negotiating 'self' with others, both through social interactions and through the cultural repertoire of stories to which individuals have access (Elliott, 2005). Elliott (2005) cites the French philosopher Ricoeur as highlighting the narrative constitution of identity. He defines identity in two ways: a) meaning 'exactly the same' – identical, or b) referring to continuity through time. Ricoeur suggests that narrative fits with the notion of identity as continuous through time; "humans with a past, present and future, made whole by the coherence of the narrative plot with a beginning, a middle and an end" (Elliott, 2005: 125). According to Elliott, Ricoeur argues that narrative understanding of identity avoids the choice between "continual flux and instability and the stasis of absolute identity, thereby avoiding the extremes of both essentialist and constructivist views of the self" (Elliott, 2005: 125).

2.7 Conclusion

This literature review, whilst limited in scope, still arguably serves to illustrate the importance of the personal meaning people actively assign to, or have imposed on, their experiences. It also demonstrates that the process of becoming a learner and understanding oneself as 'a learner' is complex; easily affected by perceptions and experiences in several contexts. Understanding these multifaceted interactions between perceptions and experiences of learning, applying this knowledge in practical, emancipatory ways and advocating the voice of the child is the mainstay of Educational Psychology casework. Educational Psychologists focus on preventing this fragile process from inexorably developing into deep-rooted anxiety about, boredom with, or lack of understanding of, the consequences of disengagement from learning (Brazier, 2010). Disengagement is known to start early on and is cumulative (Alexander, Entwistle, & Horsey, 1997), thus the concept of 'self as learner' may be particularly

important for Young Offenders, a population defined in the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act (2008) as young people aged between 10 and 17:11 years convicted or cautioned for a criminal offence, and who generally achieve at significantly lower literacy and numeracy levels than their non-offending peers (Hurry et al, 2010).

As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest, published statistics and dominant narratives (within the education and youth justice systems) seem to overlook both the personal contexts and individuality of young people:

> *...people are never only (not even a close approximation to) a particular set of isolated theoretical notions, categories or terms...They are people living storied lives in storied landscapes.*
>
> (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000: 145).

Despite much attention paid to the development of learning identity, little research appears available regarding the strength of learning identity in young people who have offended or the use of narrative approaches to understanding this. Similarly, little was found regarding EP involvement with Young Offenders. It is therefore hoped that herein lies the unique contribution of this study.

2.8 <u>Research Questions</u>

Through my research, I hope to explore and advocate the stories that 'Young Offenders' who have experienced educational difficulties co-construct with me.   In particular, I propose to seek answers to the following research questions:

- What narratives about learning identity develop within stories of school experiences co-constructed between the young people and myself?

- What narrative resources do these young people draw on to relay the subjective impact of their school experience and to indicate the strength of their learning identity?

- How might Educational Psychology Services be best placed to support those working with Young Offenders?

Chapter 3

3.1 Methodology

This chapter intends to outline my epistemological position in relation to my research questions and to discuss my decision to select a narrative methodology. It will attempt to define 'Narrative' and review its use within educational psychology practice. I will conclude with how I believe a narrative methodology is the most appropriate methodology for this study and I will describe the specific narrative approach taken in this study.

3.2 <u>Epistemological Position</u>

"The construction of any work always bears the mark of the person who created it" (Reissman, 1993: v), so I accept that readers may construct divergent interpretations to those outlined in this study (Wareham, 2012).

My involvement in education both as a student and as a teacher has shaped my thinking about learning to the extent that I now believe it to be primarily a social process, happening within a context of interaction with other people or with mediums created by other people. For this reason, the main theoretical perspective influencing my research is Social Constructionism. Burr (1995) regards this as a perspective in which reality and knowledge are socially constructed within a context that is mediated by and situated in history, culture and language. From a positivist stance, a limitation of the social constructionist perspective is that through the active construction of multiple 'knowledges' and realities, a single, objective and universal 'truth' cannot be claimed. McNamee (in Emerson & Frosh, 2009: 7) characterises the difference

between positivist and poststructuralist approaches to social science as "a difference between the representational and the constitutive views of language". The representational view of language suggests that explanations and descriptions represent what is actually there (the objective, observable 'truth'), whilst constructionist theory argues that people construct their reality in context, through the relatively naturalistic ways in which they express themselves (Emerson & Frosh, 2009).

3.3 Relating my epistemological position to my research questions

In this study I wanted to explore a) the narratives about learning that develop within stories of school experiences co-constructed between the young people and myself; b) the narrative resources these young people draw on in order to relay the subjective impact of their school experience, and how these relate to their self-identities as learners. I therefore felt that the social constructionist view of language as constitutive would do more justice to understanding how young people constructed their reality and how they positioned themselves as learners within the contexts of their experiences and the wider social, historical and cultural influences upon them.

3.4 Reflections on the dilemmas encountered in choosing a research method

I hoped to explore the individual stories, experiences and perspectives behind the predominantly quantitative, statistical and self-report analyses published about Young Offenders. I therefore required a qualitative method that both critically questioned how identity and experience were represented in academic research but that was also able to give voice to a particular population of young people.

I initially explored the possibilities of various qualitative forms of research method to support my study, including Grounded Theory, Interpretative Phenomenological

Analysis (IPA) and Discourse Analysis. I felt that Grounded Theory, whilst capable of generating theory regarding learning identity, would have reduced the experiences and lives of the participants down to a selection of codes, something I was keen to avoid, particularly as it may have seemed to de-value this already vulnerable population of young people in the pursuit of new theory. IPA appeared to depart from my epistemological position in that in order to interpret participants' experiences; the researcher must provide a detailed description of them with minimum reliance on her own beliefs, expectations and predispositions about the phenomenon under investigation (Denscombe, 2007). I was keen to ensure that the impact of my language during interviews was not minimised, as I felt this might deny the influence of language for meaning-making in co-constructing reality. Furthermore, through the process of analysis, the potential for understanding context and agency may have been be lost (Parker, 2008).

I explored the possibilities of Discourse Analysis (DA), where language is conceptualised as performative, with discursive repertoires available which function to establish a point of view and inevitably to pass judgement on the world, even as they describe it (Maybin, in Wetherall et al, 2008). However, I felt that this might not have offered insight into the personal dynamics that might make these discourses so salient for the participants, and would not have enabled me to consider how individuals may assert agency within their lives (Emerson & Frosh, 2009; Willig, 2008).

Overall therefore, I felt that the above methods of analysis would not do justice to the potential complexities within the stories of the young people being interviewed, and as such they did not fit with my epistemological position. I therefore turned to a Narrative approach, whose theoretical basis acknowledges the personal, social and the interaction between them. I felt that this might enable me to hear the voices of the young people, record their experiences and interpret their perspectives in a trustworthy,

persuasive and coherent way, whilst acknowledging the complexity of their lives. Billington (2006) suggested that Narrative approaches provide young people with space to find ways of thinking and feeling about their experiences. From this, I believed that Narrative Analysis might show how the young people interviewed attempted to account for their lives, or how they might assert their agency in the context of the narrative resources available to them and the political / historical / social and cultural factors influencing them.

3.5 <u>What is Narrative?</u>

The term 'Narrative' carries many meanings and is used in a variety of ways by different disciplines. It is often synonymous with 'story'. Reissman (2008) argues that the narrative impulse is universal, present in every society, place and age, and may be used to remember, argue, justify, persuade, engage or entertain (Wareham, 2012).

The term 'Narrative' has been popularised through contemporary usage and with this has come a loss of specificity in definition. There is no simple, clear definition of what 'Narrative' actually is. In research, definitions of Narrative are often linked to theoretical perspective and research discipline and are therefore operationalised differently.

 3.6 <u>Defining Narrative</u>

The definition of Narrative could conceivably be seen as on a continuum depending on the theoretical perspective being adopted. At one end lies the very constrained definition of social linguistics, where Narrative refers to a discrete unit of discourse – a lengthy, temporally organised answer to a single question about a particular topic. Labov and Waletsky's (1967) research on the structural analysis of Narrative has become paradigmatic in the field of personal narrative research and is now often used

as a starting point for Narrative inquiry. However, Labov's focus on approaching oral personal experience narratives as though they are primarily about events, rather than experience, has more recently been shown to highlight a range of theoretical, methodological and interpretational problems (Patterson, in Andrews et al 2013).

At the other end of the continuum, Narrative refers to wider focused socio-historical and anthropological research, which may lead to inclusion not only of biographical detail from personal stories but also narrative themes, commonalities and differences across groups of individuals. Life-story research is often considered at this more wide-ranging end of the continuum. Life-stories are constructed gradually through interviews, observations and other documents, and as information is collected or generated, the researcher can be alert to the available narrative resources and social, cultural or political factors that might be influencing the narrative.

Much psychological and sociological research lies in the middle of this continuum of working definitions of Narrative. Personal narrative is composed of extended accounts of lives in context, co-constructed across several interviews or conversations. Personal narrative moves away from being a discrete story in Labovian terms, to a series of stories framed in and through interaction (Reissman, 2008). Interactions between interviewer and respondent can be analysed to examine how wider social / cultural / historical discourses and narrative resources influence identity development and subject-positioning within the narrative being co-constructed.

Narrative is coming to be considered by many scholars as "the organising principle for human action" (Reissman, 1993: 1) and offers theoretical positioning and methodological resources capable of a) "researching the person as a site where meaning gets organised" (Wetherall, 2003: 114), and b) "analysing agency as a discursive resource" (Wetherall, 2005: 170).

3.7 Linking Narrative to Educational Psychology Practice

Using a Narrative methodology seemed appropriate to link my research with my professional psychology practice: part of my role is to acknowledge the complexities of life and offer alternative perspectives to situations in order to enable people to become empowered to move forward. Narrative approaches to both research and professional practice respect the stories of participants. These approaches also have therapeutic potential to help participants develop understanding of their lives and situations through their own words, from their own point of view, whilst the psychologist's role in co-constructing these stories is acknowledged (Wareham, 2012).

3.8 Using a Narrative methodology for this study – relating research to practice

A Narrative approach with young people who have offended may be particularly pertinent because being accountable to others – to story our actions and our experience in socially and culturally comprehensible ways – seems crucial to our whole standing as persons recognised by human society (Reissman, 2008). Furthermore, growing into narrative capability is perhaps fundamental in becoming adult. In developing narrative capacity, young people tend to show an increasing appreciation of their listener's position, which comes about through direct interaction with those to whom they tell their stories. However, it takes time and practice to produce credible, rhetorically persuasive, socially effective narratives, and the stories of very young children and of young people with speech and language, learning difficulties or mental health issues often lack economy, coherence and plausibility (Salmon & Reissman in Andrews et al, 2013). Therefore, the listener must show some tolerance of ambiguity and a willingness to wait for meaning to emerge. Prompts and questions should be used which are not a continuous correcting of what they say, in order to facilitate an understanding of their 'disrupted narratives', characterised by incoherence in the

testimonies and reflecting fragmented lives (Reissman, 2008). It is arguably this generosity in listening that is often lacking when young people who have offended and who often have communication, learning or behavioural difficulties are spoken to or interviewed. This in turn has the potential to restrict their ability and reduce their motivation to tell their story.

For these reasons, developing the use of Narrative approaches to interview and analysis seems to be a potentially useful tool when considering the value of professional Educational Psychology practice in working with both young people who offend and professionals who work with them.

3.9 Reflections on deciding to use a narrative approach

I was drawn to a narrative methodology because I felt that it supported my wish to approach this study by starting with the stories of the young people rather than a specific research agenda. I hoped it would enable me to demonstrate the complexity of life without reducing it to categorised issues. With hindsight, I feel that this approach needed more space than was allowed in this thesis in order to fully explore all the areas and issues of life that the young people in this study touched upon during their conversations with me.

3.10 Narrative Oriented Inquiry (NOI)

Following much research into different narrative research approaches, I finally chose to adopt Hiles and Čermák's (2007a; 2007b) NOI approach to data collection and analysis, which promotes the synthesis of a situated-occasioned action perspective together with a view of the individual as actively and creatively engaged in processes of meaning-making, organisation and agency. It is a phased methodological framework

not intended to be exhaustive and definitive, but inclusive, pluralistic and transparent (Hiles & Čermák, 2007a). In particular, using an NOI approach to interpret data can reveal the identity positioning at play in a narrator's constructions. I felt that this method in particular might be most useful in developing deeper insight into participants' development of learning identity through how they a) positioned themselves and b) felt positioned by the narrative resources available surrounding their 'multiple worlds' (Phelan et al, 1993).

The NOI approach proposes six interpretive perspectives, the first of which is separating the 'sjuzet' from the 'fabula'. Hiles and Čermák proposed that participants in narrative interviews position themselves with respect to the events that they speak about. They actively participate in the creation, compromise, celebration and configuration of who they are (Hiles, Čermák & Chrz, 2010). This is achieved not just by communicating the event (the 'fabula') to the interviewer, but is particularly achieved through the way in which the person relating the story positions himself or herself in relation to the event being told (the 'sjuzet'). In other words, the fabula corresponds to the event being related, which, when read alone, can read as rather 'flat', and the sjuzet corresponds to the 'window' on that event, which tends to 'bring the story to life' (Hiles, Čermák & Chrz, 2010). Herman and Vervaeck (2001) make the distinction between the fabula being 'bounded', since altering the details will simply change the story being told, and the sjuzet being 'unbounded', whereby altering this will only effect the emphasis, asides, remarks and intonations that are crucial for the identity positions constructed in telling the story.

Perspectives two to five derive directly from Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber (1998) who offer four distinct interpretive perspectives:

The *holistic-content* perspective involves exploring and establishing links and associations across the entire story, with the emphasis on the fabula. It may involve identifying a core theme for the whole story or might involve exploring how a segment of text can shed light on the story as a whole. The *holistic-form* perspective focuses on the form rather than the content of the story, with the focus on plot rather than sjuzet. The *categorical-content* perspective involves breaking the text down into relatively self-contained areas of content and submitting each to a thematic analysis, whilst the *categorical-form* perspective involves a careful analysis of the sjuzet, including extra-linguistic components and other features in the telling which could refer to difficult, still un-integrated experience.

The final perspective in the NOI approach is Emerson and Frosh's (2009) Critical Narrative Analysis, which questions the transcripts about the sort of account being constructed; how the narrator positions him / herself with regards to the events told in relation to both personal and social or cultural contexts.

3.11 <u>Why choose NOI?</u>

I felt that this approach offered me, a novice researcher in Narrative Analysis, a useful framework and clear perspectives from which to interpret the stories told by the young people. It offered not just a theoretical concept but how to utilise that concept in practice, and it allowed flexibility to explore stories from several interpretive perspectives. Additionally I felt it appeared to be a tool that could potentially offer a higher degree of replicability than other narrative methods, due to the clear guidelines given about how to analyse data. In reality it was difficult during analysis to clearly identify which perspective I was using at any one time and I found I still had to draw on other methods of analysis such as the use of 'speaker roles' to help me fully

understand what was happening within the transcripts and how it would help me answer my research questions.

Chapter 4

4.1 Specific Procedures

This chapter will discuss the development of my research, consider ethical issues and evaluation approaches and outline my approach to interviewing and transcription. Finally, I will describe the process of my analysis.

4.2 <u>Preparation</u>

After having had months of difficulties in making arrangements to carry out my study at the local Secondary Special School for young people with Emotional, Social and Behavioural Difficulties in my placement Local Authority, I sought advice from the lecturer of a series of evening lectures on Narrative Research at the Institute of Education I had recently attended. She suggested that I contact a former student, the Executive Head of a Secondary PRU in a South London borough, who had recently completed her doctoral thesis using narrative methodology. We met twice at the PRU and I gained her permission to carry out my research there.

My work placement Supervisor was still keen for me to carry out at least part of my research in my Local Authority, so I consequently approached the borough's Youth Offending Team (YOT). I initially met with the YOT's Deputy Head of Service and gained permission to carry out my research there too.

4.3 <u>Participant Selection</u>

As I did not intend for my findings to be generalizable to a wider population, I did not need to consider a large, statistically significant sample size. Due to the in depth nature of narrative analysis and my intent to focus on the stories told by individual young people, I chose to work with a small sample size of six participants. This choice fits with the ideology of narrative analysis, which "assumes that the detailed investigation of very small numbers of research subjects' processes of making sense of their experience is seen as being of intrinsic interest" (Wareham, 2012: 33)

4.3a *Selection Criteria*

Due to the difficulty I initially had had in accessing participants, I employed opportunistic sampling for this study, and specified four selection criteria when seeking participants, hoping not to restrict my potential access to them. The first was that that they should have had experience of the youth criminal justice system, namely through having been arrested, charged and convicted of an offence, currently be on a community-based Court Order and be engaged in working with a YOT Officer. Secondly, I felt it would be useful if the young people approached were already willingly engaging with their educational provision and / or with their YOT appointments, as shown through regular and punctual attendance. My third criteria was to ensure that I interviewed young people who had experience of both primary and secondary education, and who would be of an age at which they could engage in some degree of recollection and reflection. I therefore decided that Key Stage Four: Years 10 and 11 (ages 14-16) would be an appropriate age group to approach, particularly also as offending behaviour is known to peak around this age (Farrington, 2005). Finally, due to the nature of narrative approach I had chosen and research suggesting that young people who offend tend to have higher levels of speech and language difficulties than

in the wider population, I considered it important to ensure that the young people taking part in the study should have a reasonable level of speech, language and communication skill. I felt that PRU and YOT professional judgement, as well as already completed speech, language and literacy assessments would be effective in identifying young people who would be capable of engaging in conversational interaction with me. I did not want to carry out speech and language assessments myself as I felt this would compromise the power-balance within the research relationship I was hoping to foster.

4.3b *PRU*

During meetings at the PRU, the Head and I engaged in lengthy discussions about my project. The Executive Head and two senior members of staff were consulted regarding which students in years 10 and 11 they felt a) might be capable (according to school assessment data on speaking, listening and literacy skill) and b) attended regularly and might be willing to engage in the study.

The staff at the PRU then drew up a list of potential research participants based on the above four selection criteria (age, speech and language skill, attendance and willingness to engage). Following this discussion more practical elements were considered, such as provision of information sheets about the research project and consent forms; locations for interviews; meeting with young people before carrying out any interviews; conducting more than one interview in order to develop rapport, and providing copies of what I write about them. The idea to return to the young people with the transcript of what they had talked about was felt to be potentially very powerful and transformative for them, and thus a good idea. However, also discussed and agreed was the need to ensure that key members of staff were on hand if sensitive topics were discussed and the young people wanted to talk further.

At our second meeting, the draft participant information sheet and consent form I had created with my university supervisor was discussed and copied, and the list of potential participants was developed and finalised. It was agreed that the young people's tutors would initially approach them regarding the project, read through the information sheet with them and invite them to speak further about it with me. Those that agreed then became the participants in the study.

Initially six young people were identified, approached and agreed to take part. However, due to circumstances beyond my control three of the young people initially approached and interviewed once were later unable to take any further part. However, their interviews were used as a 'pilot', enabling me to identify how to improve my data collection method (see section 4.5 Pilot Study).

4.3c *YOT*

I was unsure about seeking to gain access to young people through the YOT as I wondered whether I would be able to use the same selection criteria, particularly regarding regular attendance at an educational provision. However, from previous experience working at a YOT I knew that education would still be a significant aspect of the young peoples' lives and felt that it would be useful to listen to their stories of educational experience, whether they were regularly attending or not. The attendance criteria in this case therefore related to whether they attended their YOT appointments regularly, thereby showing a readiness to engage. Participants were selected using a similar format to selection at the PRU (see above).

In a similar manner to how I set up the study at the PRU, I met with the Deputy Head of Service at the YOT, again engaging in a lengthy discussion about the nature and purpose of my research, as well as about selection of potential participants and

practical considerations. My information sheet and consent forms were checked and agreed by the Speech and Language Therapist attached to the YOT for their clarity and comprehensiveness for these young people. Using the same selection criteria as at the PRU, five young people were then approached by their YOT Officers and invited to take part. Three eventually took part.

4.4 <u>Meetings</u>

In line with life-story narrative research where participants are interviewed over several sessions to enable a power-balanced interviewer / interviewee relationship to be developed, all six young people engaged in two 30 – 40 minute interviews. One young person met with me a third time as his first interview was cut short due to unforeseen circumstances. The first interviews were digitally recorded, and during the second interviews I made detailed notes on the narrative transcripts, working collaboratively with the young people to develop their story so it was told in their words.

The interviews with the young people at the PRU were carried out at the PRU in the School Psychologist's office, a warm and inviting room with comfortable chairs and refreshments. The interviews with the young people from the YOT met me either at the YOT Office or at the local Connexions Office (both familiar, comfortable and bright environments, again with refreshments), where rooms had been booked by the YOT Officers. Due to circumstances, one young person's second meeting was carried out in his home, with the YOT Education Officer in attendance. The YOT Officers or the Education Officer attended the second meetings. This was due to my interviews being arranged around existing YOT appointments because of the difficulties some of the young people had in travelling between home and the YOT office.

4.5 <u>Introducing the Young People</u>

Provided below are pen-portraits of each of the young people who agreed to take part in this study.

Adrianna

Adrianna, aged 14 years old, moved from Poland to England five years ago and currently lives with her strict Polish parents and one of her older sisters. Her other older sister is a hairdresser who Adrianna often helps in the shop.

Adrianna is a talented artist, speaks fluent Polish and English despite not having known any English when she moved here, and is very capable academically once she is engaged in a task at school. She enjoys her current placement at the PRU and the qualifications she is working towards. She found that at mainstream school she was regularly getting into fights and did not have many friends her own age; she tended to keep to herself and had great difficulty in trusting or confiding in adults.

Adrianna can be volatile if she feels that things are not going her way. She tends to associate with older peers and has on occasion gone missing from home for up to two weeks. Her attendance at the PRU at these times has been poor and her behaviour has resulted in her becoming involved with the Youth Justice System. She also sees a Psychologist regularly to help her learn how to control her temper.

Adrianna is looking forward to getting a job, settling down and starting a family of her own.

Cain

Cain is 15 years old and lives alternately with his father and stepsiblings and his mother and biological siblings. He has regularly moved home and school. His Dad runs a construction company and Cain has often helped out with some manual labouring jobs, which he has enjoyed because he has been able to banter with the older lads his Dad employs.

Cain really enjoys physical activity and does sports such as boxing and bodybuilding to keep fit. He prefers solo sports to team games although enjoyed playing ice hockey when he had the chance.

At primary school, Cain did not really have much fun but found that as he grew older and bigger he enjoyed school more, and particularly enjoyed fighting with his schoolmates. Cain was excluded from several schools for fighting his peers and assaulting teachers, but did not mind being excluded because he felt that the schools he attended were more concerned about their appearance than about the welfare of the kids. He did not like this attitude and felt happier at an education centre where he felt he was treated more like an adult.

Cain feels that he will not need grades or qualifications when he is older as he intends to work for his Dad. He plans to get his CSC Card, which is necessary to work on building sites, but feels that this will be enough for him.

Cain became involved with the Youth Justice System for possession of drugs.

Darnell

Darnell is 14 years old with Afro-Caribbean heritage. His closest family members are his Mum, Nan, Dad and Step-Gran. Over several years, he moved homes a lot and Social Services were involved to support with this. He likes living with his Step-Gran the best because she treats him like an adult, but he enjoys spending time with other family members. Darnell has an Uncle who is about four years older than him who he really looked up to and enjoyed living with for a time. His Uncle is in prison now and they do not have any contact now. Darnell misses him.

Darnell started changing schools because of moving to live with different family members due to his challenging behaviour. His Dad moved him to live with his Step-Gran because he struggled to discipline him. Darnell received several fixed term exclusions for 'naughty' behaviour at primary school. At secondary school, the disruptive behaviour continued, and he was excluded for fighting in Year 8. He later became involved in the Youth Justice System for phone robbery and assault.

Darnell found schoolwork easy – he got the hang of things quickly. His favourite memories of school are playing football and PE lessons. Darnell loves football and loved going training. Unfortunately, his football training was taken away from him when he was permanently excluded. Darnell was gutted about this.

Darnell feels that his attitude towards adults and school rules let him down, although he also feels that mainstream school teachers did not support him in resolving social, emotional and behavioural issues. His opinion of the teachers at the PRU is much higher – he feels that they have more experience and understanding of kids who have had many problems at home and they make time to care. Darnell has felt valued at the PRU and now has plans to go to college and train as a football coach.

Jay

Jay is a 14-year-old boy of mixed white / Black African heritage. He is currently in Year 10. He lives with his mother, twin brother, older sister and a niece, and has three other sisters who do not live with them. Jay and his siblings tend to argue a lot, which makes him very angry at times.

Despite being highly articulate, Jay has a statement of educational need and is enrolled at a school for children and young people with moderate learning difficulties, because he particularly struggled with literacy and other academic subjects. He spent two years of his school life being home-tutored by a qualified tutor at the local library, which he found much more beneficial than being educated in a classroom due to less distractions and a more positive relationship with the tutor.

Jay is very sporty and enjoys playing football, basketball and other sports. He also enjoys computer games.

In the past Jay has struggled with his behaviour, which he described as disruptive, lacking engagement, aggressive and posing a health and safety risk around school. He finds concentrating difficult because he struggles to sleep. Jay is very aware that he struggles to manage his emotions and see the consequences of actions and cites this as the reason for becoming involved in the Youth Justice System.

Liam

Liam, aged 15 years old, was born in Ireland into a travelling family. He was in Year 10 when I first met him at the PRU. He has moved home several times since moving from Ireland, but has always moved with his mother and her partner to live near to his relatives

and has cousins with whom he has close bonds. Liam's father recently committed suicide in prison and he has been going through a very difficult time recently.

Liam is passionate about riding and fixing motorbikes and loves animals. He also enjoys playing football. Liam speaks Irish and English.

School has always been boring for Liam and he has struggled to see the purpose of literacy and numeracy lessons. He was also bullied quite extensively which made school an unhappy place for him, particularly as he felt unable to trust the teachers to support him. He began to get into trouble both in and out of school for aggressive behaviour and theft and is currently on a Court Order. Liam has found working with the Youth Offending Team beneficial overall.

Sheyden

Sheyden is 16 years old, of Afro-Caribbean heritage. He originally lived in a large urban city with his Mum, where they moved around a lot due to multiple evictions. Social Services were involved with the family and Sheyden went into care several times. Sheyden has several siblings, nieces and nephews and was proud to tell me about two more nieces on the way. He recently moved out of the city to live with his sister and her children.

Sheyden described school as highly enjoyable, particularly the banter and play-fighting with friends, although this is what got him into trouble. He did not have any difficulties with learning, which came easily to him. He found that he was often getting into trouble for finishing work too quickly and then talking, or because he was bored. Sheyden got excluded in Year 8 and has not been in any form of education for any length of time since, which he regrets. He still misses his friends and wishes he had been able to go to school. At the PRU he found the work better as it involved learning through doing, such as Business Enterprise and apprenticeship type work, but his behaviour meant he kept being 'transferred' to different education placements. Sheyden did not understand the reasons why he was excluded and this made him 'give up' on going to school. Sheyden became involved in the Youth Justice System for possession of drugs.

Sheyden described being really into making his own music and regularly hires out music studios to record his own work. He would like to be a youth worker when he is older as he feels he has a lot of experience that he could draw on to support other kids going through similar difficulties to him.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines from the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2004) and the Institute of Education, University of London were followed in this study. Ethical approval was obtained from the Institute of Education, from my employing Local Authority and from the Executive Head of the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) in which I was conducting this study, prior to commencing the research. Data was stored on one encrypted data stick during collection and analysis, and I explained to the participants that their data could be available to them at any time. I also explained that data such as criminal offences

and Court Orders would also only be collected where relevant to the explicit research aims and would be treated in line with relevant data protection policies.

4.6a *Informed consent*

Participants were introduced to this project by an information letter and an informal discussion with appropriate staff at the PRU or the relevant YOT Officer at the Youth Offending Service. A further information sheet and consent forms (see Appendix A) were then discussed and signed with me before interviews commenced, and a de-briefing with each participant took place once the research was written up.

I chose to conceptualise informed consent as an on-going process because each time we met I gave participants opportunities to ask questions about, give opinions on or withdraw from the research project. Furthermore, explicitly stating that participants should discuss only the stories that they felt comfortable in sharing with me afforded the more open-ended interviews a sense of being participant-lead, which gave these young people the power to choose, and thereby consent to, the stories and experiences which they shared.

Following the initial interviews, I shared the Narrative Transcripts with the participants (see Appendix D), enabling them to comment, change or remove any sections, giving me further consent regarding the use of their words.

4.6b *Protection from harm*

It was difficult to predict which experiences or topics other than learning would be discussed in advance of our interviews, so I ensured that a member of staff was available if any distress arose during the course of the interview process. I was keen to

ensure that the risk to emotional health and well-being in this study would be no greater than the risk experienced in normal everyday life, and planned to check with them and offer to break or terminate the interviews if any difficult issues had arisen for them.

On returning with the transcripts, I offered to either read the transcript with participants or allow them to read. I provided a copy they could keep. I remained aware that reading or listening back to their words might have an emotional effect on them, and therefore tried to present them sensitively, with regular chances to reflect and comment upon the material.

I ensured that all the interviews were carried out in safe, familiar environments as described above and that I had available appropriate information on local support services, counselling and other advice centres.

4.6c *Confidentiality and anonymity*

I wanted to give participants the option of having some sovereignty over how their stories were presented within the research write-up, but was also concerned with issues of confidentiality and anonymity. I considered Parker's (2008) arguments that a) research can never be confidential because of its intention to make discoveries which are then presented to others, and b) although anonymity is possible within research it is not always the most ethical option; concealing the identity of participants can construct them as "fragile beings needing to be protected by others" (p17). I therefore asked participants to consider whether they wanted to choose a pseudo-name or use their first name only in the research write-up. I explained that I would be making all other potentially identifying details anonymous. All participants agreed with this and decided they wanted to use their first names, with all other details anonymised.

4.6d *Critical reflexivity and responsibility*

Critically reflexive practice embraces subjective understandings of reality as a basis for thinking more critically about the impact of our assumptions, values, and actions on others (Cunliffe, 2004). According to Phoenix (in Andrews et al, 2013), the holistic approach to understanding people afforded by Narrative Analysis requires a focus on narrators' situated presentations of themselves with recognition that research interviews are relational spaces where the researcher and the narrator co-construct interviews. Consideration should be given here to Bakhtin's (1981) polyphony of voices within a narrative research interview; that 'the self' of both researcher and narrator is assumed to consist of a number of relatively autonomous spatial positions (actual, remembered or imagined). Both self and society consist of a polyphony of consonant and dissonant voices (Loots, Coppens & Sermijn in Andrews et al, 2013). I therefore take responsibility for and transparently acknowledge that my beliefs and ideas might have influenced the narratives, analyses and interpretations within this study.

Hiles et al (2010) argue that reflexivity and the notion of transparency go hand in hand. Therefore, to help the reader gain some insight into my position I have included information about myself in an earlier section of this thesis and have attempted to write reflectively about this research process (Wareham, 2012). In addition, I diarised my thinking to help me critically examine and analytically reflect upon the nature of this research and my role within it. Through this reflexive process, I have tried to set out my research account as a narrative written from my own specific perspective, rather than a simple transparent representation of the research process (Elliott, 2005). However, Squire (in Andrews et al, 2013) cautions that however much we strive, we cannot be fully reflexive as there is always material that lies beyond the realm of our interpretations.

4.6e *Power*

Throughout this study I attempted to remain mindful of Billington's (2006: 161) assertion that "the effective practitioner needs some confidence that the ways we work with young people are neither harmful to the child nor to ourselves", and that "the sites of our investigations, therefore, should not only be the young people but the professional relationships we share with them". I acknowledge that as researcher I have had a privileged or powerful position within this study, and have understood that power can be viewed as inherent in all social relations (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). For example, it was in my interests to conduct two interviews with each participant, and, as Hollway and Jefferson (2000: 78) point out, "an understanding of interests should be accompanied by a consideration of power, since interests are accomplished through the exercise of power".

During the process of recruiting participants and prior to starting the interviews I attempted to address or equalise this potential power imbalance by viewing power as relational, dynamic and positive (Wareham, 2012), and explaining to the participants that I depended on their hospitality and co-operation in enabling me to complete my thesis. To further try to reduce the power differences between the participants, and myself I attempted to create an open and reflective relationship, in which the research process was as transparent as possible (Wareham, 2012). Additionally, by encouraging participants to select stories to talk about and to say as little or as much as they wanted to within our interviews I hoped that power differences might equalise within the interviews (Reissman, 2008). In this way, the participants were empowered to select what they perceive to be the most important information about their lives and experiences (Elliott, 2005).

4.7 Reflections on working ethically with young people

I felt overall, the young people in this study were invited to say as much or as little as they wanted, and they did. They were encouraged to give their perspectives, which at times seemed to me to be exaggerated and fantastical. Nevertheless, I did not want to dismiss their narratives because that would have altered the power dynamics within our relationships and would have positioned me as something other than the 'good listener' I was trying to be. By using non-judgemental questions to encourage them to talk, I hoped that they may have felt that their stories were valuable and interesting to me, and I feel that this will be an important aspect of my future work as a practising Educational Psychologist with this population.

4.8 Development of a Narrative Interview Guide

Phase One of my adopted NOI approach consisted of developing my research questions. In this study, I wanted to explore a) the narratives that developed within stories of school experience co-constructed between the young people and myself, and b) the narrative resources these young people drew on in order to relay the subjective impact of their school experience. With these is mind, I moved onto Phase Two of the NOI approach and developed a Narrative Interview Guide.

4.8a *Tree-of-Life*

I was keen to use visual aids to support the development of the narrative interviews because previous work with young people who have offended and current work with children and young people who have experienced adversity had suggested that having something to focus on other than the person talking to you often helped in developing rapport and trust. I adapted the Narrative Therapy Tree-of-Life tool ("Tree-of-Life",

2009; German, 2013) to establish a period of problem-free talk at the beginning of our interviews. The Tree-of-Life is a visual narrative method helping people to communicate stories of the past, present and future. I hoped to use it to enable the young people I interviewed to speak about their personal histories, strengths, values, significant people and their aspirations for the future. I presented a drawing of a tree and we collaboratively developed it with words and phrases that were important to them (see Figure 4).
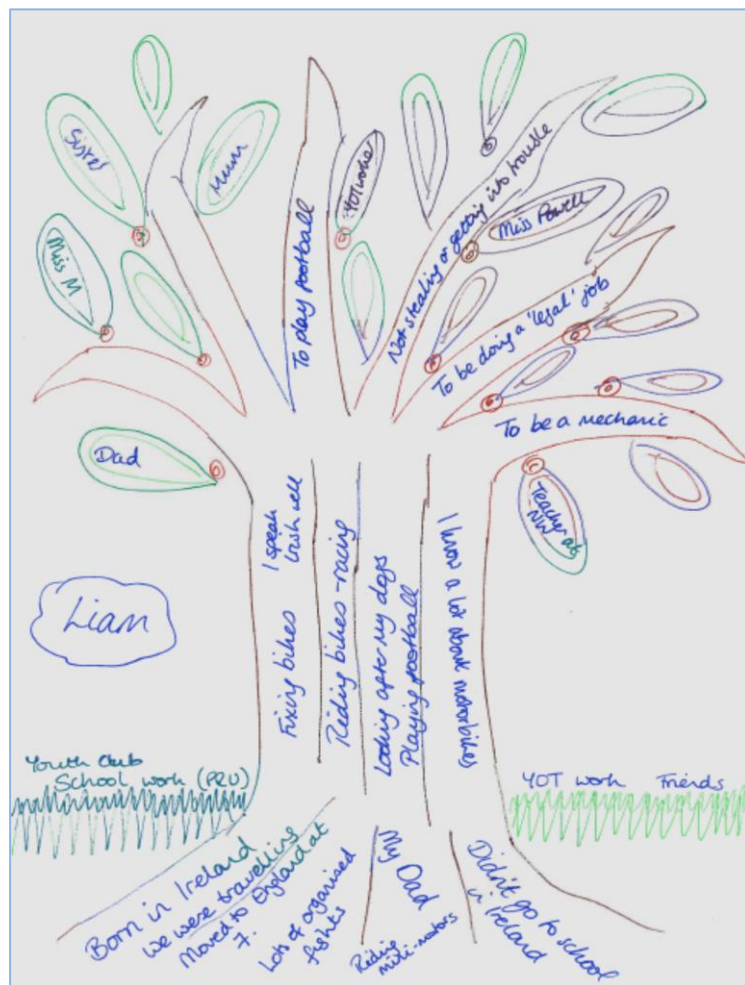
Figure 4: Liam's Tree of Life collaboratively developed during Conversation 1.

4.8b *School-History Grids*

Conscious that young people may feel anxious about speaking at length about their experiences, school-history grids were adapted from 'life-history' grids (Atkinson, 1998; Elliott, 2005; Reissman, 2008; Wareham, 2012) and used to structure my initial interviews with the young people. I hoped that the structure might provide a visual focus and support recollection of narratives from specific times and contexts. I introduced the school-history grids to participants by asking them to consider their time at school as a book or television series, and to break down their school history into chapters or episodes.

Figure 5: Darnell's School History Grid

4.8c *Other visual prompts*

I created and presented a mind-map of possible areas of life that participants might want to consider when telling stories of their school and learning experiences, which was simply used as an aide memoire (see Figure 6). The areas were derived from Bronfenbrenner and Morris's (2006) Eco-Systemic Model of the systems within which adolescents live and develop, and from my experiences in working with adolescents as a practicing Trainee Educational Psychologist on work placement.   Additionally, I prepared eight photographic prompts portraying school scenes of learning, lessons and social situations to aid recollections of school experiences. It was not in the end necessary to use these prompts in all interviews.

Figure 7: Mind-Map of possible areas to discuss, derived from Bronfenbrenner (2006)

4.9 <u>Initial Interview Schedule</u>

I adapted my initial interview schedule from Wareham (2012) who had used a similar school-history grid to structure her interviews with Looked After Children. I additionally utilised prompts suggested by Atkinson (1998), who had carried out extensive life-history narrative research, and adapted the wording to suit 'school' experiences rather than more generic 'life' experiences. I chose to structure my question prompts within themes relating to the narrative style of 'past', 'present' and 'future', which I believed at first would encourage the telling of stories, rather than the provision of 'answers'.

The initial interview schedule was as follows:

1. Introduction to interview and recap on right to terminate / withdraw at any point
2. "I am interested in your story, how you see things, how you think about things and how you say things in your own words. I'd like you to talk as much or as little as you want to".
3. "I have provided a mind map of areas that we could talk about, but you may think of other areas that are more important to you, and you may think that some areas are not relevant to you. Both of these are ok".

Narrative themes and prompts for initial interviews:

Theme: Overview – 'Tree-of-Life'

- What background information is important to include about you (e.g. birth and family origin; cultural setting and traditions; social factors; historical events and periods?). School-history grid – 'if your experience of school was written as a TV series, what would each episode be about?'

Theme: Past. Question prompts:

- What is your reason for starting / stopping this chapter / episode here?

- Can you tell me about this time (what are your best / worst memories of school then)? What was important for you? What was school like for you then? What are some of the things you did at school then? What did you / did you not enjoy then? Did you have any favourite teachers or any that you didn't like? In what ways did they influence you? Who helped you?
- Tell me about a significant memory or episode that you remember from this time.

Theme: Present. Question prompts:

- How is school life for you now? What feelings do you have about it now? What are some of the things you do now? How is school different for you now to how it was then? Does school feel different to you now than it did back then? Who helps you now? Is this help different to what you have experienced before? What is important to you now?

Theme: Future. Question prompts:

- What are your hopes and plans for the future? How do you feel about learning and education now and how do you think you will be able to use your education in the future? How do you think you might feel about learning and education in the future? If you could take one thing from school now into the future, what might it be?

Theme: Major life themes. Question prompts:

- What were some of the crucial decisions in your life so far? What has been the most important learning experience in your life? What did it teach you? Which people have been supportive / unsupportive?

Ending

- Have we missed anything?
- Is there anything that you would like to add?
- Do you feel that you have been able to give a fair picture of yourself?
- Next steps in the research?

4.10 Pilot

Due to difficulties in initially arranging to carry out my research at my local PRU, I was unable to give any time within the constraints of this doctorate to carrying out a planned, structured pilot study. However, three young people, following their initial recorded interviews, informed me via PRU staff that they could no longer participate for various reasons, and therefore their interviews could not ethically be included in the main study. As I had two weeks before my next initial interviews with other young people subsequently selected following the withdrawal of these three, I chose to gain their permission via PRU staff to use their interviews as a pilot study of the data collection method. I listened to and reflected upon the interviews before destroying the audiotapes, in order to inform my thinking about my data collection process and address any issues I felt had emerged from these first three interviews.

When I listened back and reflected on these three interviews, I felt that I had not given enough time to the young people to develop their stories about each section of the school history grid before I asked another question. The interviews sounded more like question and answer, semi-structured interviews rather than the open-ended, power-balanced, conversational, story-telling style I was hoping for. I felt that my questions seemed to restrict any potential topics that may have arisen, whereas if I had been using more Socratic type questions I may have been able to probe more deeply and elicited stories that were more explicit. I had difficulty when listening back in hearing 'stories' and found that I was asking myself 'where are the stories?' and 'how can I get them to tell stories next time?' It seemed that I did not allow enough time for silence before jumping in with another question or comment, and I appeared to be leading the interviews rather than co-constructing them.

These reflections also helped me to understand that in order to establish better rapport with these young people I needed to be open to them asking questions about me, in line with the giving and receiving of initiatives in attuned relationships. I therefore ensured that at the start of the interviews for the main study I shared some details about my background and the reasons behind my wanting to do this research with the young people. Furthermore, during the interviews I decided to offer viewpoints on stories they shared that they could either agree with or contradict, to develop further the co-construction of their narratives.

Upon listening again, I began to notice the more subtle, unspoken nuances of our interactions. For example, I could hear when I or the young person was smiling, which altered my initial impression that the interviews were awkward at first, and served to suggest that rapport developed, but more gradually through the interview process than I had expected. Increasingly I realised that although there were few long 'chunks' of narrative, stories were still developing through co-construction which seemed relevant to my research questions. The emphasis placed upon particular words also gave increased understanding of the interaction.

4.10a *Changes to the data collection method following the pilot study*

I was ultimately pleased I had had the opportunity to include this 'ad-hoc' pilot study of the data collection method, as it enabled me to change and better some elements of my original interview schedule for the main study interviews. For example, I included brief information about myself at the start of the initial interviews, such as my experience of moving home and changing schools when I was 12 years old and my career path to date. I invited the participants to ask any further questions about me or the research. Whereas in the pilot interviews we jointly created their Tree of Life and then moved on to the rest of the interview, I chose in the main study interviews to keep

the Tree of Life in view and add to them as and when it seemed appropriate during conversations about their school experiences. For example, if they talked about a person who had been influential on them that they had not initially thought about including, they were added at this later stage. I felt that this showed the reflective nature of narrative interviews and served to highlight perhaps previously unidentified positive influences on the school experiences of these young people. Regarding the school history grid, I endeavoured during the main study interviews to establish the facts first, such as names of schools, dates of attendance and ages, and dates of school / home moves, before returning to each section and developing the content and stories for each section using more Socratic type questions. The amended interview schedule (shown below) consequently became more fluid and less structured in an attempt to develop the interviews in a more conversational, power-equal and reflective style. At this point, I additionally chose to refer to the interviews as 'discussions' or 'conversations' with the young people, again attempting to align with an emancipatory, collaborative and co-constructive style of research.

4.11 First conversation: producing narrative data

Throughout this research, my guiding principal was to privilege the young person's voice – both their perspectives and their sense of meaning and understanding. I invited participants to say as little or as much as they wanted to within our conversations (Emerson & Frosh, 2009), and attempted to remain open to talking about what was relevant to them during discussions to encourage empowerment rather than compliance with my research agenda. As such, I did not develop specific questions to use in our conversations, instead I wanted to use prompts that would encourage and support the telling of stories.

Following construction of the Tree-of-Life and establishing facts for the school-history grid, I invited participants to 'tell me more' about each chapter or episode on the grid. When necessary, I prompted by repeating their words in an attempt to encourage further development of the story or I utilised question prompts as shown below to support participants in telling their stories. These prompts were not always used in the order outlined below and they were used within the context of the conversation that was developing rather than being stand-alone questions to be answered, because I attempted to follow the conversation rather than 'chase obvious stories' (Wareham, 2012). Words that were adapted to fit the context of the conversation are underlined below. The prompts included the following:

Socratic / reflective question prompts used throughout my conversations with the six young people:

- *Tell me more about that…*

- *What led up to when that happened?*

- *Could you explain further?*

- *Was this always the case?*

- *Did anyone see this in another way?*

- *Could you see this in another way?*

- *How did that affect you?*

- *What else?*

- *I was wondering about…*

- *You mentioned this – how did this influence your behaviour / learning / home life / school experience (refer to mind-map)?*

Theme: Past

- *(Referring to completed school history grid and mind-map) What was <u>this school</u> like (in terms of teachers / peers / environment)?*

- *What are your best memories of <u>this school</u>? What was enjoyable for you?*

- *What did you find difficult at <u>this school</u>?*

- *What sort of feelings did that give you? Why?*

- *Who helped you with that? (Add to Tree of Life if appropriate)*

- *<u>Which school / setting</u> did you find was better for you? Why?*

Theme: Present

- *(Referring to completed school history grid and mind-map) What do you think / feel about <u>your current situation</u> (in terms of teachers / YOT Officers / peers / environment)?*

- *How is <u>a good lesson / session</u> different from <u>a bad lesson / session</u> now?*

- *Who helps you now? How do <u>they</u> help? (Add to Tree of Life if appropriate)*

- *What is important to you now? Why? (Add to Tree of Life if appropriate)*

- *What qualifications are you working towards now? Why did you choose <u>them</u>?*

Theme: Future

- *What do you intend to do with the qualifications you gain?*

- *What is important to you for the future?*

- *What do you see yourself doing in a year / five years' time?*

Although I was aware that the chapter / episode format might have influenced what stories were told and how, I did attempt to keep the structure loose. I did not always rigidly following the interview schedule but tried to attend to emotional expressions and to focus on our conversations, sometimes returning to particular episodes in a non-

linear fashion to clarify or seek further information. I used an informal conversational style, everyday language and followed the lead of the participants. My questions, once the Tree of Life and School History Grid had been completed, attempted to elicit more detail about the stories the young people chose to share with me.

4.12 <u>Second conversation: returning to the participants</u>

After our initial conversations I transcribed the audio recordings using the method described below (see page 79), before creating Narrative Transcripts (see page 80). I took the narrative transcripts rather than the raw transcripts to the second meetings for the participants to discuss. I felt that this would highlight to them the idea that I was interested in their words, and believed that they would be more interested in reading it once it was easier to read. According to Myerhoff (1992), this protects the honour of the storyteller and is an act of respect.

With four out of the six participants, I was able to follow this plan. However, I returned to one participant three times, as his first meeting had had to be cut short so the Tree-of-Life and school-history grid elements were carried out on separate occasions. I returned to him a third time with one transcript that combined his two initial meetings with me. Another participant was unable to complete the first meeting and so I returned to complete the school-history grid with him. However, I was unable to meet with him again due to unforeseen personal circumstances, and he did not therefore see his narrative transcript.

I was aware when beginning this study that there were likely to be instances of non-attendance or changes in circumstance and I am aware of how this may have influenced upon the outcomes of this study. However, it does also appear to be a part of the narrative methodology that participants can speak and meet with me as much or

as little as they choose, rather than having to follow an interview length and number of meetings specified by me. All participants were initially reluctant to talk at great length with me, but during the second meeting they appeared to either enjoy looking back at their transcripts or be somewhat embarrassed by them. When questioned about this it appeared to be because I had written the narrative transcripts in a style as close to their spoken word as possible, which was unusual to see on paper. It was interesting that none of the participants wanted to amend or revise anything they had previously said, and I feel that my perceived experiences with these participants reflects both the narrative methodology which allowed them to make these choices and the ethical issue of consent. Each participant consented by selecting how much to talk, what to share and what to change, if anything. I was pleased that none of the participants requested to withdraw from the study, and I explained that I would return so they could see the study once it was finalised.

4.13 <u>Analysis</u>

As well as basing my data collection on NOI, I also drew upon Atkinson's (1998) life story interview approach to transcription, interpretation and analysis, both approaches contributing to a three-step analysis intending to privilege the participant's meanings within a categorical – content and form analysis (Lieblich et al, 1998).

Transcription as interpretation – an act of meaning-making

(Emerson & Frosh, 2009: 38)

4.13a *Step 1: Creating Working Transcripts*

Phase Three of the NOI approach (phase one being the development of research questions and phase two being the development of the Narrative Interview Guide and carrying out the interviews) consisted of creating raw transcripts of the initial conversations. I wanted these to privilege my social constructionist position that research is situated within a context, whilst attending to the co-constructed nature of the narratives and how the narrative is actually spoken. I therefore included pauses, emphasis and intonations in order to make interpretations. However, I did not want to transcribe the six interviews in the micro-detail suggested by Gee's (1991) linguistic approach, although this process of analysis is "anchored in the invitations and constraints of the text, as said" (Emerson & Frosh, 2009: 72) and is useful for Critical Narrative Analysis. However, I felt that it would not be accessible when I returned the transcripts to my participants.

In order to separate sjuzet and fabula, I transcribed the interviews in their entirety by adapting annotation from Gee (1991); Hiles and Čermák (2007a) and Emerson and Frosh (2009) to develop the following:

(…)	Pause
/	Change of tone, breath
[Coughs]	Word in [ ] indicates non-verbal action or event
???	I could not decipher the words spoken
Italics	Word emphasised by the speaker
<u>All I remember</u>	Sjuzet is underlined
But I just went to the same one because the Head liked me	Highlighting of word or phrase that functions as both Sjuzet and Fabula

To create the transcripts, the recorded conversations were downloaded onto my computer and erased from the digital recorder. I listened to them several times before starting, and began with transcribing just words. Subsequently, I listened at least twice to each interview to edit the transcripts to include pauses, intonation, words indicating non-verbal actions and emphasis. I then read the transcripts and broke the text down into segments by inserting extra lines where it seemed that the story was moving on. I transferred this transcript into what Hiles and Čermák (2007a) call a Working Transcript (see Appendix E): text was arranged down the left-hand side with a wide right-hand margin for annotations. Each segment was given its own row within the transcript table, and every line of the transcript was numbered for cross-reference purposes. Throughout this process I kept a reflective log of my thoughts, some of which I then transferred onto the annotations section of the working transcripts.

4.13b *Step 2: Developing Narrative Transcripts*

Although aware of my social-constructionist position of jointly constructing the narratives and desire to emphasise this, I was equally interested in ensuring that the young people I met with felt that their voice had been heard and that their story was told, in their words. The purpose of Atkinson's life story transcription method is to tell the life stories of the people being interviewed in their own words from what they have already said on tape. Transcription is explained as a vehicle for ensuring accuracy of meaning in what is said, through being clear, complete and concise. Editing is done to capture the intended meaning conveyed in the words used by the person telling the story. The 'interviewer's' words are edited out. Also important to remember is that the person's word usage, order or meaning should not be changed, which is where the sjuzet is useful. The final aspect of editing is ease of readability, and Atkinson (1998) suggests adding in bracketed words or phrases if an answer to a question is incomplete.

I began by examining the working transcripts and identifying and numbering each fabula within the entire transcript. The school grid structure was useful here in that the transcripts already roughly fell into past (background and primary years), present (secondary years and current provision) and future (aspirations and hopes) sections. I read and re-read each working transcript and used colour coding to highlight which sections of the working transcript broadly fell into past, present or future sections. Once I had the fabulas in chronological order I began the process of identifying the sjuzet for each numbered story, attempting to bring the transcript to life. Here I tried to follow the young peoples' ordering of narratives, use their phrasing and staying close to the meanings they gave their experiences, so that I ended up with a flowing narrative in the words of the person telling the story (Atkinson, 1998). Where answers were incomplete I used the surrounding text to complete an answer. For example, Adrianna did not use complete sentences at the start of our interview and therefore to create her narrative transcript I used some of my words to flesh out her words.

The raw transcript reads as follows:

> *JN: …So, what's your story, basically? Where do you come from? What...*
> *AD: Erm, Poland /*
> *JN: You're from Poland, are you?*
> *AD: Yeah.*
> *JN: Okay. [...] [Writing]. Okay, erm, did you, were you born in Poland?*
> *AD: [Quick response, almost interruption] Yeah. [...] / I came here / five years ago*
> *JN: [...] Okay. Who did you come with? This is...*
> *AD: [Interrupts] Erm / my parents and my two sisters /*

From this, the narrative transcript was constructed to read as follows:

> *I was born in Poland… I came here five years ago when I was nine with my parents and two older sisters…*

I chose not to add in too many words that were not part of the original transcript, instead choosing to use […] as punctuation, because I wanted it to seem as authentic

to the original raw transcript as possible and not too polished, which I felt risked diluting the words of the young person.

These Narrative Transcripts (see below) were taken back to the young people to discuss at our second meetings, to ensure that they felt I had written a true representation of what they had told me during our interviews. At this point, they were able to add, amend or correct details.

4.13c *Step 3: Categorical-Content and Form Analysis: exploring narratives of school experience*

Hiles and Čermák (2007b: 6) make clear that the perspectives within their framework:

> *…can be used singularly or in any combination, drawing upon the initial analysis into sjuzet and fabula, and feeding into further interpretive approaches where appropriate.*

I chose to combine categorical-content and form analysis in order to provide as rich a picture as possible.

Once I had created working transcripts for each interview and had identified where possible the fabula and sjuzet, I carried out the analysis, initially identifying broad content-categories from the narrative transcripts but turning to the working transcripts to reveal further refinement of the categories through analysis of the sjuzet.

For the categorical-content analysis, I firstly selected the subtext to analyse. My first research question was broad enough to allow me to explore a range of school experience related topics and themes that arose during the course of the interviews,

and I was therefore able to use most of the interview data for the categorical-content analysis. I initially analysed each narrative transcript separately, marking and assembling relevant sections of text into new files (see Liam's illustrative example below). This created broad content-categories into which I amalgamated sections of text from all the interviews.

4.13ci *Illustrative Example: Liam*

Narrative Transcript:

Liam

I was born in Ireland…and lived in caravans in a travelling community… I was home-schooled… my Mum paid for someone to come and teach me… all I remember is all the fights I had…just with other Irish people that was travelling with us… 'cause my Dad used to organise them… then since he went to prison I ain't done nothing… got myself arrested a couple of times… my Dad committed suicide in prison on Monday… I've spoken to my Mum obviously but I wanted to meet him when he came home… he used to take me for a ride in his Ferrari… my Dad would put his feet on the thing, innit, and I'd sit on his lap and steer…

I've got ADHD and I'm supposed to take tablets… I don't take them, I don't like them… but I'm going to go back on them because my social worker said I have to… because I'm a naughty kid… but I feel like I just want to go to sleep…

I went to primary school in W… I always used to get kicked out of primary school… but I just went to the same one because the Head liked me… because sometimes I could be good… so he just kept taking me back…

My head teacher I got on with best… and then there was a teacher called Miss M… she's the one who convinced the head teacher to let me go…I could talk to her that I had problems like at home and she wouldn't tell no one and that… I felt I could trust her… she was my teacher in Year 3 and Year 4…

I didn't really have many friends… I used to get bullied in primary… so I kept getting kicked out… 'cause if someone bullied me, I used to take the anger out on the teachers… 'cause they didn't even stop it when I used to tell them… they never used to stop it… they just kept, they kept bullied me and said like half, like half the playtime and then they took me and they let him back up, let him…but it was alright…

And then I went to high school there…I went there till Year 7… I can't remember much of that… I was only there for like a month…no one picked on me there 'cause like my cousins and all that were there…because when I was bullied there I could just get my cousin…

And then we moved to L in November… my Mum met my Step-Dad and wanted to move out for a fresh start… and that's when I started to get into trouble... I found it hard… because I never used to get in any trouble… I just used to stay in… out here, I just go out and 'cause I know the area… I didn't know the area in W and because my aunty only lived around the corner from me... now I ain't, just I ain't got no one's house to go to…

I got kicked out of CC for throwing a chair at a teacher and assaulting the head teacher… I just found the teachers difficult there… they got on my nerves… that's how the Head took me to Court and that's… when I got YOT for two years, and I can't return to the premises of my old

school… my YOT experience helped me not to get into trouble for at least a year… then I started back into it again… met new people… now I have to go to Court for that…

I got kicked out of CC and then I didn't go to school for nearly a whole year… 'cause they said the place would be in September so then my Mum went "Oh I'll leave him off till then and then he can come so that's okay"…

Then I went to NW… and was there until it finished in Year 10, 'cause you can't get excluded from there… it's a centre – a unit… I started like behaving more… I started behaving again after that and I got better… it was alright there… *when I first got there I got bullied but when I started to know people I never got bullied as much…* they listen to me, like what I want like, in the future and all that… so they done what they could…

I don't think they helped my education though… they used to just like, give me easy work that I already know… I asked them for harder work but they used to just say no…

Then my teacher in there said, "Oh, I'm going to try and get you back into mainstream" when he done that, and I come here, like… I've been back but that teacher don't work there no more… he's lucky 'cause I would have smashed his face in… he let me down, basically…

There's a couple of teachers I used to like there though… one of them was kind… he's the one who taught me like how to fight and all that and defend myself… *'cause I never used to defend myself like, 'cause I used to get bullied…* but here, if anyone tries bullying me, they'll get their face cut open after school 'cause I'm related to gypsies… so all I have to do is make one phone call and they'll go down there *and that police officer won't handle my cousins…*

Overall my school experience has been boring… maths is alright because **I'm good at maths…** *the only thing I do is adding and subtracting… I don't like division, I don't like fractions, I don't like multiplication… it's just the English… I just don't like English… I can speak English perfectly so why would I want to learn it? I could do more work on the computer…*

I've been here now for four months and I'm doing Year 11 here as well… I like the work I'm doing here…

I'm studying ICT… I've got a test today as well…to see if I pass or fail the course… I've got a feeling I'm going to fail… I ain't been studying… I have been studying, all night I was studying… that's why I've come in five minutes late… I'm not too worried… I'm not sure if I fail the course, or pass…

I wanted to do media but they wouldn't have me… there was no space… I got moved to ICT… I didn't want to be there… my first choice was media… my second was ICT and my third was construction… I like constructing things and that… I like taking things down…

There was one teacher I liked when I came here but I didn't want to be in his class… I haven't really wanted to talk to teachers about what I'm good at and what I like doing… no one really cares… *they'll go back to PC A the Police Officer who works here and then he'll go to my house and take all my bikes…*

When I go into Year 11 I'm doing sport… 'cause I'm one of them people who likes playing football… I also like motorbikes as well… fixing them… I want to be a footballer in the future… I want to get into a club soon… I might go to Millwall… play goalkeeper… If I don't succeed at football then I want to do my technical… there's not even nothing I want to do when I'm older… I want to be a mechanic… when I'm older I think I might be doing a legal job…

Table to show illustrative example of initial identification of colour-coded categories from within Narrative Transcripts and assembling of transcript extracts into category files

Name	Broad Categories identified	Sections identified from Working Transcript lines to enable analysis of sjuzet relating to the stories / broad categories identified in the Narrative Transcript:
Liam	Country of origin	6
	Culture	18; 23-28; 122; 210; 34; 234; 276; 278
	Home-schooled	391-393
	Fighting	29-34; 307; 519
	Family members in prison / in trouble	8-16; 220; 280; 282; 705-710
	ADHD / energy; not thinking through consequences	365-385; 680-699
	Getting kicked out / exclusion	22; 252; 266; 395; 425-443; 475
	Being given several chances	399
	Relationships with teachers	198; 254; 268-274; 276; 399; 461-465; 477-484; 516-523; 528-529; 650
	Bullying	276; 472-473; 495; 499
	Friendships	168-178; 264; 570-572
	Moving home	19-20; 413; 502-506; 508-509; 511-513
	Moving school	22; 252; 405; 425; 445; 455; 493; 535-545
	YOT	34-38; 40-42; 300-303; 521-527; 531-533; 662-671
	PRU as a last resort	446-451
	Being listened to / valued / respected	195-196; 266; 467-469
	Not being given appropriate school work (work was too easy)	260; 573-585; 644
	Subject option choices	232; 235-236; 586; 652-655
	Specific interests outside of school	44-52; 63-78; 86; 122-124; 150-156; 184; 224; 299
	Not seeing purpose of learning / not liking lessons / boredom	318-325; 327-339; 340-355; 356-357; 590-605; 633-634
	Relationship with police	60-62; 126; 130; 202; 204; 286-290; 291-298; 559-564
	Not liking school	246
	Strengths	636; 640
	Mother	700-710
	Future aspirations	100; 104; 108-110; 240-244; 630
	Attendance	258

See Appendix D for analysis of the narratives of Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay and Sheyden, and Appendix C for an example Working Transcript.

By examining the six Narrative Transcripts, I was able to identify which content-categories were common across the school experience narratives of each young person. I made a pragmatic decision that given the limited word-count of this thesis, these were the categories to focus on in the analysis: these categories featured in the experiences of all six young people and so I attempted to ensure that all six young people were as equally represented as possible in the analysis.

4.13cii *Categorical Content Analysis: broad content-categories*

There were stories across the six narratives relating to the following broad content-categories:

- Movement / Exclusion

- Fighting

- Relationships

- Educational options being restricted by systems

- Reflections on learning, including, for example, perceiving qualifications as irrelevant

- Interests outside of school

The table below provides an illustrative example of excerpts of the transcripts that related to these broad categories.

Table to Show Illustrative Example of Categorical-Content Analysis

Category	Example sentences (+ young person and transcript line)
Moving / Exclusion	*'I came here five years ago'* (AD: 8) *'I moved house 'cause I was living with my Dad and then I moved to my gran's house'* (DK: 14) *'I finished at DH, then I went to P, and then I moved here, then I went to C'* (LH: 411 – 415) *'Getting kicked out… or transferred'* (SM: 6) *'Then they kicked me out, moved me to HF'* (AD: 34) *'I had to change schools 5 times; they kept kicking me out'* (CP: 128 – 132) *'Got excluded a lot'* (JL: 10)
Fighting	*'There's a lot of fighting in school'* (JL: 16) *'I only had problems with fighting'* (AD: 34) *'I just wanted to beat everyone up'* (CP: 250)
Relationships	*'I don't think the teachers helped us; they were all shit teachers'* (SM: 247-249) *'I'd say they cared more about their appearance than they would the students getting their education'* (CP: 150) *'He'll just shout at you… really burst your ears… get really close… and spit in your face'* (JL: 98-108) *'They listened to me… done what they could… then they let me down'* (LH: 266-270)
Educational options restricted by 'systems'	*'I had an conversation to enrol at college but they never accepted me 'cause of YOT'* (SM: 315) *'I always miss the first lesson 'cause transport is a nightmare'* (CP: 180) *'I'd go if I could trust the taxi to turn up… I have to get 4 buses and it's too expensive'* (JL: 246-248)
Reflections on learning	*'It's just the atmosphere… it's just boring!'* (SM: 166) *'I didn't really have fun in primary school'* (CP: 240) *'I pick things up quite easily'* (DK: 399) *'I couldn't be bothered sitting there with like, 32 screaming kids…'* (CP: 292) *'You can never have one lesson without someone doing something…'* (JL: 86) *'Home-tutoring was much better because you get one person who's teaching you instead of the whole class… it's much better really'* (JL: 78)
Interests outside of school	*'I loved PE, and now I like anything that can build my body… I love going to the gym'* (CP: 360) *'Music… I can see myself doing that… I go to the studio'* (SM: 325-337) *'Fixing… the things I like doing most are fixing bikes… and riding my bike in races'* (LH: 44)

4.13ciii *Categorical-form analysis*

I then turned to categorical-form analysis, which I interpreted as involving further refinement of the content categories according to the sjuzet in the data. Identifying the sjuzet involved analysing speaker roles, genres, positioning, performance styles and reported speech, as well as use of various linguistic tenses and other literary devices such as asides, intonation and emphasis.

Writing about the data through using the technique of phronesis[2] was my vehicle for analysis of the sjuzet and fabula, which necessarily became interwoven and interactive in order to create a coherent narrative analysis. This iterative writing process enabled me to retain the richness and variation in the data and "descriptively formulate a picture of the content universe" (Lieblich et al, 1998: 114) from the stories of these young people. I began by creating a file of excerpts from all Working Transcripts relating to each content-category such as 'moving / exclusion', and began writing about the category, returning repeatedly to the Working Transcripts and the audiotape to develop my understanding of the sjuzet. Each time I returned to the Working Transcripts, I adjusted my written account of the category in order to demonstrate my interpretation more clearly. Throughout my analysis, I used referenced extracts of transcripts as well as indexing in order to trace my arguments back to the transcripts. I represented this as follows within the text:

(CP: 244)   Refer to Cain's transcript; line 244

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[2] Phronesis involves the ability to understand how complex and messy situations hang together and uses this to guide action: it is the practice of judging, based on the entire data corpus, which stories should be told and how (Holstein and Gubrium, 2012).

4.13ciiii *Theory to Practice: Linking the sjuzet and fabula identified in my transcripts to educational and psychological theory*

I found as I was engaging in the process of writing that the content-categories (the fabula) and the manner in which these were being described (the sjuzet) during our conversations were broadly relating to Illeris' Dimensional Theory of Learning discussed in my Literature Review. The categories of movement and exclusion seemed intuitively to relate to the Incentive Dimension of learning; my hypothesis was that if one is unable to focus on learning because of emotional / motivational issues such as moving home, moving schools or being excluded, then learning identity is likely to be weakened.

I hypothesised that the categories relating to fighting and relationships predominately related to the Interaction Dimension of learning, and that learning identity would be weaker where there were difficult relationships within an educational environment. The categories regarding restrictive education systems, qualifications and interests outside of school I hypothesised as related to the Content Dimension of Learning, which includes what is taught / learnt and how. I hypothesised that perceptions about the relevance of qualifications, perceptions about how one learns or is taught, would influence the strength of learning identity and thus engagement with education.

Re-drafting my written account of the narratives of school experience in terms of these Dimensions of Learning enabled my written account to develop in line with theoretical frameworks already outlined in educational research and provided a clearer structure.

4.13cv *Reflection on the process of analysis*

I am aware that I could have analysed many of the other, unique stories and categories within the data corpus, and I initially attempted to do this by analysing each young person's transcript in its entirety, in order to gain a depth of insight into the development and strength of their learning identities. However, after having completed an analysis of two transcripts I found that each analysis had taken approximately 15,000 words to analyse and interpret. Within the scope of this thesis, this in-depth method appeared to be inappropriate and untenable unless I only included two young people in the study, so I made the pragmatic decision to use categorical-content analysis to identify common, representative stories across the narratives of the six young people. I felt this was ethically important to do as these young people had been generous in their time with me and I wanted to include their contribution to this study.

I am aware that explaining the Phronesis technique in linear format is extremely difficult, as it is a cyclical, iterative and intuitive process. I found that it took me several attempts and re-drafts of each section to achieve what I felt to be a representative written account of the stories of school experiences told by the six young people. I returned to different category sections and re-drafted them where I felt necessary after having written other category sections in order to check that the overall narrative flowed and was coherent. I attempted to address contradictions within the stories by transparently referring to them in my written account and identifying where they were in the transcripts. I attempted to offer alternative interpretations of these contradictions based on my knowledge of the wider context of our conversations; my knowledge of the overview of the transcript; what else had been said during the course of our conversations and how it had been said (the sjuzet).

The process was difficult and although I was able to discuss my interpretations of the transcripts in supervision, my analysis would have benefitted from having had more time to discuss my various drafts and re-drafts in supervision and with the young people themselves. Unfortunately, it was beyond the scope of this these to be able to do this within the time and word-count available.

4.14 <u>Evaluation</u>

4.14a *Reliability; Validity; Generalisability*

> *Narratives do not establish the truth of… such events, nor does narrative reflect the truth of experience. Narratives create the very events they reflect upon. In this sense, narratives are reflections on – not of – the world as it is known.*
>
> Denzin, (2000: xii)

It was important that this qualitative research was conducted in a reliable and valid manner. However, the open-ended and highly personal nature of adapted life-story interviews is such that no two interviews will be recorded in a replicable way, suggesting that 'reliability' and 'validity' were not necessarily the appropriate valuative standards for this study. Reissman (2008) suggested that narrative truths are always partial: committed and incomplete. Therefore rather than searching for 'the truth', it was necessary to demonstrate 'the trustworthiness' of both the story as told by the participants and the story told by the researcher (the analysis).

> *Stories derive their convincing power not from verifiability but from verisimilitude: they will be true enough if they 'ring true'.*
>
> Amsterdam & Bruner (2000: 30)

Elliott (2005) suggests that the use of Narrative within research can increase the internal validity (the story told by the participant) and trustworthiness of a study. Narrative enables participants to talk about what they feel is most important to them, using their own words to describe their experiences. From a social constructionist perspective, I acknowledge that the narratives co-constructed for this study were told within a situated – occasioned action context, and as such were more than factual reports of events; they included perceptions and interpretations of stories of events as they were recounted and performed during the interviews. Within a different social context or at a different time, these narratives would have differed (Wareham, 2012). Additionally, I am aware that there is no universal form of transcription suitable for all research (Reissman, 2008) and therefore there are multiple possible interpretations of the transcripts (Emerson & Frosh, 2009). My interpretations must consequently be considered as tentative (Clandinin & Connelley, 2000).

I aimed to promote the trustworthiness and credibility of my data by providing descriptive evidence of the exact words which were spoken by participants within the context of their production (Reissman, 2008). I have included an example transcript to critically examine, accept and / or reject my interpretations. In this way, readers are able to make their own interpretations of the study findings, which remain unfinalised and subject to different interpretations (Polkinghorne, 1988).

My textual analysis is presented as illustrative of my approach and not comprehensive of what might be construed even from the given transcripts I subjected to analysis, let alone from young people who offend as a 'population' (Reissman, 2008). My particular interest in this study was in understanding the meanings created and in the narratives co-constructed. I aimed to strengthen the validity of my analysis by constructing links between excerpts of transcript data, rendering them meaningful and coherent theoretically. I did not intend to verify facts or generalise to the wider population.

Persuasion and corroboration are additional validity measures in qualitative research. Corroboration involved returning the transcript to the interviewee to confirm or dispute what was originally said. Persuasion involves demonstrating whether the narrative seems reasonable and convincing to others (Atkinson, 1998). Through both formal supervision and informal peer supervision I attempted to use the measure of persuasion to identify whether the study findings seemed reasonable and convincing. I also used supervision during analysis of the transcript data to establish whether it seemed acceptable and credible.

Chapter 5

5.1 Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter seeks to answer the first research question in this study:

- What narratives about learning identity develop within stories of school experiences co-constructed between the young people and myself?

Here I explore the narratives co-constructed between myself and the young people in this study – Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden, all of whom had had experience of both the youth justice system and exclusion from mainstream school. Whilst each young person's narrative was unique, there were commonalities shared amongst them. Therefore in order to structure my analysis, I chose to use Illeris's (2007) Dimensional Theory of Learning to highlight the importance of understanding the interaction between curriculum content, motivational and interactional factors. I felt that this would not only support exploration of the narratives the participants co-constructed with me, but would potentially demonstrate the strength of learning identity in these young people according to the various contexts they experienced within their school experiences. Additionally I drew on Phelan et al's (1993) Multiple Worlds Model, to demonstrate that transitions between worlds might be perceived as psychosocial, sociocultural, linguistic or structural borders affecting the strength of learning identity narratively constructed by these young people.

5.2 <u>Categorical-Content and Form Analysis</u>

It should be noted that learning dimensions can only be separated analytically and not in reality (Illeris, 2007). Similarly, holistic content (fabula) and form (sjuzet) readings of a transcript are interwoven and interactive (Hiles, Čermák & Chrz, 2010) and the analysis below should be read taking this into account. To be mindful of word count and for the purpose of creating coherent narratives I chose to remove most prosodic information from the presented segments of transcript.

What follows is a Narrative Analysis of the categories identified from the content and form analysis (see Appendices G & H), structured within the Dimensional Theory of Learning framework. Incentive and Interaction dimensions were analysed first as narratives relating to these dimensions were mainly co-constructed before the Content dimension during our conversations. This could have been due to imposing the school-history grid structure on the interviews. Taken together, this analysis intends to formulate a descriptive picture of the content universe of the six young people involved in this project.

5.3 <u>Incentive Dimension</u>

I begin with categories and sub-categories interpreted as falling within the Incentive dimension of learning. Here I argue that the worlds within which these young people live subjectively impacted on their strength of learning identity.

5.3a *Perpetual motion*

Moving was a confusing theme with Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden; all except Jay talked about having moved at least twice. Ensuring that homes moves,

alongside the associated changes in schools were recorded accurately was at times difficult, as demonstrated by the following extract from my conversation with Sheyden:

> JN:	So you had three or four moves in L then?
> SM:	Three or four?! Probably over 10!
> JN:	Really?!
> SM:	Yep
> JN:	So did they just keep transferring you?
> SM:	Oh, no! I thought you were talking about house moves, not school moves.
> JN:	Oh, so you had house moves on top of school moves?
> SM:	Yeah, I've lived everywhere in L.
>
> <div align="right">Sheyden: 208-215</div>

The reasons given for moving highlighted the complexity and unrest in the lives of these young people, and I felt this narrative offered a weak sense of learning identity – academia was not a priority. Cain's nonchalant comment about his parents living in different towns and the fact that he therefore 'always keeps a suitcase packed' (CP: 474), and Sheyden's description of 'sofa-surfing' (SM: 66) when his mother kept getting evicted, whilst delivered with a sense of humour, served to reinforce Darnell's image that 'each time you move it's like a new start' (DK: 166), and later: 'just you never got a chance to settle' (DK: 479).

5.3ai *From 'pillar to post'*

Darnell's reasons for frequent moves portrayed a subtle sense that he believed he was someone that nobody could cope with. He constructed the notion that he was inherently naughty and that nothing could change this. His narrative about his home life gave a feeling of perpetual movement, for example, when Darnell was in Year 4:

> DK:	I was naughty and my dad didn't know how to really discipline me so he moved me to my step-grandmother's house
> JN:	Okay.

Later when in Year 7:

> JN: So you stayed at the same school but you moved...?
> DK: Back to my dad's, yeah
> JN: Can I ask why that was?
> DK: 'Cause my, my dad wanted me to come back and live with him
> JN: Okay.
> DK: Yeah.
> JN: And you were happy with that?
> DK: Not really

No reasons were given for why his father wanted him back, which gave a sense that Darnell did not want to, or could not, talk about this. His comment that he was 'not really happy' with moving again was corroborated by Liam (LH: 504-507) and Sheyden:

> JN: How was that then? Moving around so much?
> SM: you'll have to ask my mother that one
> JN: Why? What do you mean?
> SM: Can't ask me that, I don't know; I was a kid, innit?
> JN: No, but how was it for you?
> SM: Oh.
> JN: Moving around?
> SM: It seemed alright but, if you think about it, it's not though, is it?
> JN: In what way?
> SM: Because a kid shouldn't be moving around everywhere; it
>   should be stable

This emotional impact of perpetual movement in their home-lives arguably served to reinforce the notion that whilst learning would have been undeniably occurring with regards to social-societal factors, their strength of self-identity towards academic learning constructed within their narratives was weak, even absent. I would also argue that this narrative constructed a psychosocial 'border' between home and school

contexts, preventing "their ability to focus on tasks or establish relationships with teachers or peers" (Phelan et al, 1993: 57).

5.3aii *Moving country and culture*

Moving country was significant for two of the young people I spoke with, which highlighted differences in education culture and served to reinforce the enormous changes these young people often face. Adrianna had moved from Poland to England at nine years old (AD: 111-115), speaking no English (AD: 80) and having only had two years of formal education (AD: 121-134), compared to the four years that her English counterparts would have had. Liam talked about having lived in a travelling community in caravans in Ireland (LH: 389) until about seven years old (LH: 17-21) and not having had any formal schooling there at all, instead being home-schooled (LH: 391-393). Liam was also keen to point out that he could speak fluent Irish (LH: 327).

Adrianna's and Liam's subjectively positioned ability to speak bilingually seemed important to them, perhaps positioning them as both identifying strongly with particular cultures as well as positioning them as strong in their ability to learn quickly and adapt. Adrianna constructed a sense that difficulty traversing the 'linguistic border' was reduced through her teachers not regarding her language as unacceptable or inferior whilst helping her to learn English:

> AD: *When I came here I learnt English at Primary School. It was*
> *really hard but they were helpful at that school – they helped*
> *me make friends*

<div align="right">Adrianna: 80</div>

I interpreted these narratives in relation to Phelan et al's (1993) sociocultural borders; their constructed narratives appeared to demonstrate their cultural differences as assets rather than difficulties, suggesting strength in their learning identities, and supporting Phelan et al's (1993: 57) findings that different ethnic groups perceived borders differently.

5.4 Interaction Dimension

The volatile nature of the school experiences of the six young people in this study was a common theme, which I interpreted predominantly in relation to the Interaction dimension highlighting social and cultural aspects of learning (although emotional aspects were evident). Liam and Jay portrayed these aspects within their narratives of fighting, which gave a strong sense of their attempting to construct an image that 'this was just the way it was'. Fighting for them appeared to be both acceptable and dominant in their lives.

5.4a *Fighting*

5.4ai *Part of the social life of school*

Jay particularly constructed a narrative that fighting was a way of life at school:

> JN: *Have you got any memories about school at that time?*
> JL: *There's a lot of fighting in school.*
> JN: *Okay. With friends or...*
> JL: *Yeah.*
> JN: *... teachers?*
> JL: *It was just a lot of fighting, in primary school everyone is just, a lot of fighting. You know? It used to be one year against the other year. It used to be like: my year. We were year 5. And then the other: year 6. And there used to be like: 20 people. There used to be like: 40 people on the pitch just fighting. A bit mad.*
>
> Jay: 15-20

He portrayed fighting as a habitual occurrence through his use of 'was' and 'it used to be' in line (20). In the extract below Jay then constructed a somewhat sinister impression of school, through his use of the phrase 'you just had to watch your back, really' (line 52). His use of 'just' and 'really' served to intensify this sentence; it seemed phrased to imply that this happened all the time. Yet they also appeared to serve to minimise the threatening aspect of the phrase; perhaps because it happened all the time it did not feel so bad once you got used to it.

> JN: *What did you think about the fighting? How did that make you feel?*
> JL: *I don't know. Just every day you had to watch your back, really, in the school.*
> JN: *Right. And do you know what the reason was for all that fighting? Was there something going on outside of school? Or...?*
> JL: *One year thought they were better than the other. And they think they've got stronger people in each years, and stuff. It's just ridiculous things like that, really.*
> JN: *Mmm. So you had to watch your back?*
> JL: *Yeah. [Laughs] Everywhere, you know? Corridors; hallways; everything; toilets.*
>
> Jay: 51-56

Later, when Jay talked about getting excluded for fighting at secondary school, he again constructed an intimidating and threatening school. His sentence in line (158) constructed a sense of the secondary school environment as more dangerous than the primary:

> JN: *So did you feel like you were kind of going back into...*
> JL: *I was, yeah.*
> JN: *... the same...?*
> JL: *And there's more people from different schools so it makes it even worser. Yeah. Harder.*
> JN: *How did that make you feel?*
> JL: *More of a challenge.*
> JN: *Why was that?*
> JL: *Because you've to watch your back even more because you don't know the people there. In school everyone just tested each other.*

Jay's use of the words 'harder' and 'more of a challenge' served to construct an image that watching your back really was almost a matter of survival, and the idea of everyone 'testing' each other gave a sense that there was constant rivalry between students, but also rivalry between staff and students. With this level of heightened vigilance in school, I interpreted this co-constructed narrative to demonstrate a weak self-identity towards academic learning.

5.4aii *Fighting as part of the young person's family culture*

Liam's narrative about fighting appeared dominated by a sense of rivalry, but for reasons based in his home life:

> LH: *At the age of three I was travelling like*
> JN: *Can you tell me about that?*
> LH: *Hmm, yeah*
> JN: *What do you remember about it?*
> LH: *All I remember is all the fights I had*
> JN: *Hmm. Who was that with?*
> LH: *Just other Irish people that was travelling with us. And er, and then 'cause my dad used to organise them*
>
> Liam: 28-34

Liam's memory of 'all the fights he had' gave the impression that for him, fighting had been a way of life from a young age. His explanation that his 'dad used to organise them' again served to reinforce that fighting, in this case apparently organised fighting, was a lifestyle choice. Liam appeared to be setting up his position from the start of our first conversation that he viewed fighting as part of his heritage, because later when he talked about getting arrested for assault, his style of speech reflected a nonchalant attitude towards the law, reeling off his offences like a shopping list:

> LH: One was the ABH, one was for attempted robbery; one was for
> robbery and ABH, and one was handling stolen goods. But I
> got away with them except for one: that's the robbery and
> assault, which I'm on YOT for.

<div align="right">Liam: 36</div>

Liam's use of 'but I got away with them' served to reinforce the image of a young person for whom fighting and offending behaviour were habitual; part of his 'lifestyle'. This culture was further reinforced by how Liam often spoke about his mother and father as either in trouble with the law or in prison (LH: 8; 34; 704-710).

5.4aiii *Fighting as part of self-identity*

I felt that our co-construction of fighting stories provided a strong sense of 'this is who I am' to these young people, which appeared to serve the function of defending their actions and reactions to both peers and adults. Whilst heavily influenced by emotion, I interpreted this as setting up a psychosocial border whereby emotions and perceptions of self-identity impacted upon their interactions with teachers, often ultimately resulting in exclusion within these narratives.

Darnell set up his narrative by starting his first story of moving from his father's to his step-grandmother's home with the sentence 'I was a bit naughty' (line 62), then repeating this in line (64) to reinforce the suggestion, implying that he was difficult to discipline:

> DK: I was a bit naughty
> JN: Okay.
> DK: I was naughty and my dad didn't know how to really discipline
> me so he moved me to my step-grandmother's house

<div align="right">Darnell: 62-64</div>

Darnell's use of the word 'felt' in the extract below created an impression that he was sensitive to perceptions of how teachers perceived him, and was ruled by emotion when speaking with teachers. His use of the phrase 'I would go over the top' served to portray him as a child with extreme reactions. This extract, repeated elsewhere during our conversations seemed to reinforce a sense of friction between him and teachers in mainstream schools.

> JN: Okay, so although there were a lot of things you enjoyed, did you find some of it a little bit difficult as well then, because you kept getting into trouble?
>
> DK: I think I was just a bit rude; I was rude to certain teachers as well; I had a bad attitude and my behaviour had an impact on school… I was always rude: if I felt like the teacher was being rude to me then I would go over the top and be even ruder…

Darnell: 109; 114; 253-255

Adrianna's narrative about fighting similarly positioned her as someone who got into fights because of the way she reacted to various situations:

> JN: Right. So what was going on there?
> AD: Fighting and that
> JN: What's that story?
> AD: Well, obviously I'm going to react if someone's, well if someone's provoking me; I just can't stop myself [Huffs]

Adrianna: 35-38

Adrianna did not provide a single story here and her use of the present tense implied that she was explaining or defending all the potential fighting stories she could have told me. Her use of 'well, obviously…' at the start of her sentence in line (38) served to intensify the sentence verb phrase 'I'm going to react' and demonstrated that she had internalised her reactions as 'normal'. Adrianna further intensified the likelihood of her reacting to provocation by implying that she could not control her reactions:

'I just can't stop myself' [Huffs]

This seemed to be reinforced by the dramatic [huff] and the use of 'just' to make the statement in line (38) stronger. It suggested that perhaps Adrianna was not ready or willing to engage in work with professionals that might help her to have more control over her reactions; in other words, Adrianna was identifying with a strong, foreclosed self-identity over how she reacted to people, which was not likely to change.

Later on during our conversation, Adrianna provided further detail about her reasons for fighting:

> JN: *So the fighting's always been a bit of an issue?*
> AD: *Yeah, because I just don't, well, I don't let people say things about me that I don't like and that aren't true and I just go mad if people lie about me. I don't like it. I hate it [quiet speech; eyes down]*

Her positive 'yeah', response (line 136) to my question suggested that her following words referred to both school and life experiences, possibly setting up her later reasoning for becoming involved in the youth justice system. Adrianna positioned herself as the subject of the story in this segment and therefore as in control over what people said about her…

'Well, I don't let people say things about me that I don't like and that aren't true'

…but also as someone out of control, who could only react one way:

'I just go mad'; 'I just can't stop myself'.

Over the course of our conversations, I developed a sense that either Adrianna had a strong desire or need to manipulate and control the people around her, or she wanted to present to me a strong, confident 'nobody messes with me' identity. Her dramatically simple yet powerful sentence 'I hate it', implied a passionate dislike of people lying about her but also conveyed emotional vulnerability. I could imagine that in school Adrianna may have been hyper-vigilant about conversations and interactions with her peers, possibly to the detriment of any learning, thus constructing a weak self-identity in relation to academic learning.

5.4aiiii *Enjoyment of fighting*

Cain's school experience story held for me a dramatic character twist and this next segment highlights the difficulties professionals may have in understanding the motivations, actions and self-identity of some young people. Cain had initially constructed a sense that school was no fun for him (CP: 244) and he temporally connected this narrative through his use of 'until' and 'I went up to middle school' in line (246) in the extract below. This suggested that the tedium of school ended at middle school because of the active choice he appeared to make in wanting to 'beat everyone up' (line 250). Although aware that many children fight to release tension or to express emotion, I had not previously considered that some young people might view fighting positively as Cain seemed to. His use of 'I was loving it' suggested that his wanting to 'beat everyone up' was a temporal and contiguous sequence of habitual occurrences of actions; he was not establishing event boundaries either side of singular events.

> CP: *Until I went up to like middle school*
> JN: *Oh, okay.*
> CP: *Middle school, I was loving it.*
> JN: *Yeah?*
> CP: *Because I wanted to just beat everyone up*
> JN: *Okay. So fighting seems to be a big thing with you?*
> CP: *Yeah, just like doing it*

JN: *You like...? Okay.*
CP: *I just, I dunno, like, I just looked for reasons to get someone…*
JN: *Why? What sort of feelings did it give you then?*
CP: *It gives out adrenaline innit, and I just like it! I don't know…*

<div align="right">Cain: 246-250; 264-272</div>

These narratives constructed about fighting inevitably progressed to exclusions for these young people, reinforcing the interpretation that fighting impacted heavily on the interaction dimension of learning by causing interruption and disruption to the development of a strong self-identity in relation to academic learning. Equally inevitably perhaps was that the high level of fighting in the narratives co-constructed with the six young people in this study lead onto narratives about how they became part of the youth justice system. Whilst narratives about exclusion and involvement with the Youth Offending Service were apparent in our conversations, they are beyond the scope of this study to analyse in detail here, although my analysis of these areas will be drawn upon in Chapter Six.

5.4b *Relationships with teachers*

'Engagement' is fundamental to appearing to succeed in various social environments, whether the motivation for engagement is extrinsic or intrinsic. The term 'engagement' inherently implies a relationship with something – an activity or a person. Relationships with peers and parents appeared to be important in the narratives of all six young people in this study. However, teachers were portrayed as key factors in their school experience narratives.

The perceived focus on the needs of the school over the needs of the child seemed to be dominant in the narratives of these young people. It seemed to build a psychosocial barrier of 'us' and 'them', narratively creating a rivalry dichotomy of 'superior' versus

'inferior', and despite some stories of positive relationships with teachers (discussed in Chapter Six), the overwhelming viewpoint of the young people in this study seemed to be that mainstream teachers were catalysts in creating escalating situations at school. I interpreted these co-constructed narratives as hindering strong self-identities in relation to academic learning.

5.4bi *Aggression and threat*

Although in the extract below Cain constructed himself as having little respect for teachers, he equally presented an image of angry teachers who constantly 'got in his face':

> *CP:* *…and the teachers, like, they don't talk calmly, they just sort of like walk up to you and yell in your face.*
> *JN:* *Oh!*
> *CP:* *I got screamed at three times because of just turning around and telling them to "fuck off", or something like that.*
> *JN:* *What was going on, then?*
> *CP:* *They'd just yell at you innit? You end up, like, if someone yells at me, I'm just going to yell at them back*
> *JN:* *Right.*
> *CP:* *If they got in my face, and they used to, you would either throw 'em backwards or something like that. They are shit...*

Cain: 160-168

Cain seemed to be referring here to the endpoint of an incident. I could not imagine that teachers would just 'get in his face' without good reason, but the point of this narrative I felt was the end result: Cain did not recall his own contribution to the untold incident; instead he recalled his reaction to the teachers' response. I interpreted this as highlighting the complex combination of emotion and interaction and the importance in Narrative Analysis of attending to what is not told as much as what is told.

Similarly, Jay did not provide much detail about events leading up to the escalation of conflict, but recalled, quite graphically and perhaps with an element of exaggeration for dramatic purposes, his memories of the teachers' reactions to his wrong-doing:

> JL: The class teacher sometimes shouted; it depends how much you tested her really. It was mainly the Head teacher, really
> JN: How do you mean?
> JL: If you did something wrong you would have to go and sit in his office and then he'll try to shout at you and stuff. Full on shout!
> JN: Right.
> JL: He could burst your ears.
> JN: Oh dear!
> JL: It didn't bother me because I was used to it.
> JN: Mmm. So was that his only approach? He just shouted?
> JL: Get really close to your face, like, and spit in your face.

Jay: 96-108

Again, the point of this narrative served for me a reminder that allowing a young person to choose the stories they tell during a narrative oriented conversation could provide a greater insight into what they recall and perhaps why they choose to tell it in a particular way. Jay, whilst perhaps exaggerating in the telling of this story, positioned himself as a young person subjected to an onslaught of superiority from teachers in positions of power.

Similarly to Cain, Jay showed a lack of respect for the teacher through his comment that it 'didn't bother me because I was used to it'. Jay's words 'because I was used to it' additionally served as a linguistic device to acknowledge that the story he had just told habitually occurred, suggesting that the conflict between him and the teachers was common.

Jay continued to position himself as a young person regularly threatened by teachers at his mainstream schools, as shown in the following extracts:

> JL: It was an alright school. It wasn't that bad. It was just the teachers really.
> JN: The teachers were the problem?
> JL: Worse at OG than the primary school bunch.

<div align="right">Jay: 138; 169-170</div>

Jay's use of the word 'bunch' to represent his primary school teachers served to reinforce his construction of limited respect for teachers. He continued in this segment with his perceptions and evaluations of teachers, which served to set up a keen sense of both tension and threat…

> JN: They were worse?
> JL: Yeah.
> JL: In that school they just threaten you and stuff; lots of threats all the time. It's annoying. They're always saying: "If you do that that again... If you, um, slip up one more time, I'm gonna chuck you out" and it's just annoying.
> JN: Mmm.
> JL: They swear and shout and stuff; in that school.
> JN: Right.
> JL: Threats and stuff…
> JN: From the teachers?

<div align="right">Jay: 171-181</div>

…and a battle for superiority between Jay and his teachers:

> JL: Yeah, they all say the same thing; the female teachers are just rude, but it's always the male teachers: "This is my school". All of them are like: "It's my school". "My school". And I say: "It's not your school. It's Mr B's School. He owns the school".
> JN: Right.
> JL: And it's like: "No, it's my school". Same stuff.

<div align="right">Jay: 182-184</div>

In the construction above, Jay adopted the doubled-voiced speaker role of interlocutor-narrator. In this role, Jay was able to advance his spatiotemporally distinct narrated event of an argument in school, whilst simultaneously inserting a 'here-and-now' non-neutral assessment of it. Additionally, his use of the historical present tense served to

make the story more engaging, inviting me to view it as both dramatic, but also humorous in the almost pantomime-like image it conveyed.

When asked who Mr B was, Jay both explained and provided his opinion:

> JL: He was the Head. He was a fair man; I had respect for him
>   'cause he listened. The others just used to think they could
>   chuck you out
> JN: So did you feel like they were trying to put themselves above
>   you, in a sense?
> JL: Yeah. All of them say: "It's my school". But blatantly it's not.

<div align="right">Jay: 186-192</div>

Jay's construction of the above extracts served to portray an image of the teachers constantly making attempts to affirm their power status over him every time he did something wrong. His use of the phrase 'but blatantly it's not' conveyed to me the sense that Jay did not respect the teachers because they were asserting their dominance by threatening him with exclusion when Jay perceived that it was not within their power to make those decisions.

In the above extracts, Jay did not attempt to deny the fact that he was regularly in trouble (Jay: 171-181). I felt that he was however drawing on the narrative resource of 'power over the weak', and was attempting to convey how he had tried to overcome this. With the narrative resources of rivalry, superiority and 'good versus evil' being drawn on, no room was given to constructing strong self-identities in relation to academic learning. Attending to the non-narratives within these co-constructions of relationships with teachers demonstrates that academic learning identity was not, arguably could not, be strengthened in those school environments, and that the psychosocial border of teachers asserting their authority to accentuate the

unacceptability or inferiority of these young people within these narratives was virtually impenetrable.

Liam constructed a strong narrative about difficult relationships with two teachers: one at a mainstream secondary school and one at a PRU. I interpreted the teacher in the extract below to initially show attempts to be supportive, through Liam's construction of the story using the phrase 'he tried to chat with me'. Had Liam chosen to use 'shout' or 'yell at me', this would have served to give a different impression of this teacher. The detail was developed through the narrative:

> LH: Now, I got kicked out the beginning of year eight; threatening a teacher
> JN: What happened?
> LH: The teacher tried to chat with me 'cause I told him, "No, I'm going," so I dashed a chair at him and then he called me in. He called my mum, told me to come in the next day then he tried to chat rubbish again so I done it again, and it weren't no nice chair either, it was a wooden one
> JN: Hmm. Were you frustrated with him?
> LH: No it was 'cause I used to bunk innit; I used to bunk my lessons.
> JN: Right.
> LH: And like go to other classes and do their work
> JN: Why did you choose to do that?
> LH: It's better 'cause I didn't like some of the people in my class
> JN: Oh, okay.
>
> Liam: 252-264

In the double-voiced interlocutor-narrator role, Liam added drama and a sense of dry humour to his story of throwing a chair at a teacher through his aside about the type of chair he threw. The impact of this was to suggest that he felt that the teacher was not worth throwing a 'nice' chair at. Liam's reason for throwing a chair at the teacher – 'cause he tried to chat with me' seemed at first to be an over-reaction to the teachers' attempt to 'chat' with him. Indeed, the temporal and spatial layouts of this story were initially confusing as I listened; I could not understand why Liam threw the chair at the teacher for wanting to have a chat with him. However, as the narrative developed,

Liam constructed an identity position first as a truant then as the perhaps less serious 'in-school truant', which explained why the teacher wanted to chat to him. Line (263) I felt served as Liam's justification for this truanting behaviour, particularly because a short while later in our conversation Liam constructed a narrative of being a victim of bullying (LH: 276).

Within this extract and by using the context around it, Liam apparently constructed three main identity positions for himself: 'aggressor'; 'truant' and 'victim'. Although he portrayed the teacher as his rival, the authority and superiority of this teacher only came through in his first construction 'I got kicked out…'

5.4bii *Betrayal*

Liam's second extract detailing a difficult relationship involved a teacher at an alternative education unit. His narrative constructed the sense that he had initially developed a stable relationship with this teacher:

> LH: *Then I got kicked out and then I went NW which they listen to*
> *me, like what I want in the future and all that.*
> JN: *Yeah?*
> LH: *So they done what they could…*
> Liam: 266-268

Liam clearly felt valued in this setting by acknowledging that 'they listened to him', yet somewhat sadly I felt he then implied that he perceived himself almost as a lost cause, by adopting a phrase often heard in stories of terminal illness or fatal injury – 'they did what they could but it was too late'.

Liam went on to construct what I perceived as a story of betrayal:

> *LH:*   *Then my teacher in there said, "Oh, I'm going to try and get you back into mainstream" but he didn't like, and I come here. I've been back to NW but that teacher don't work there no more*
>
> *JN:*   *Oh, right.*
>
> *LH:*   *He's lucky, 'cause I would have smashed his face in*
>
> *JN:*   *Yeah? How do you feel about him?*
>
> *LH:*   *I don't want to say this on the tape but there are no polite words for   it*
>
> *JN:*   *Do you feel like he let you down?*
>
> *LH:*   *Yeah, basically.*

Liam: 268-274

In the above extract, Liam used reported speech in a double-voiced narrator-character role, serving to narrate a conflictual event which was affectively charged and remained so during our conversation. This extract demonstrates clearly the functions of the sjuzet and fabula within narrative: it involved more than neutral description of a past event (the fabula), attempting to communicate the larger point that Liam felt let down, or betrayed, which was beyond the plot of the story. Liam's adoption of the interlocutor role to add the evaluative detail or sjuzet: 'he's lucky 'cause I would have smashed his face in' to the basic story that he got unwillingly moved from NW to his current educational placement, served to make different socially situated voices interact (Bakhtin, 1981).

The narratives of aggression, threat and betrayal co-constructed with these young people served to suggest that the development of strong learning identities in the school environment could not happen whilst relationships with teachers were perceived to be so negative. These narratives additionally served to construct an image of virtually impenetrable psychosocial borders between teachers and these young people.

5.5 <u>Content Dimension</u>

For the purpose of this study, I took the content dimension of learning to include the systems in place that structure how curricula contents were disseminated to these young people, because their narratives emphasised this over and above the specific content of their daily learning activities.   However, an interesting narrative was co-constructed with Cain regarding the content of his academic learning:

5.5a *Perceiving qualifications as irrelevant*

In the following extract, Cain talked about not needing grades; he constructed an intention to work in his father's building company. This suggested that Cain's sense of identity as a learner had possibly been foreclosed at an early age and that he may not be able to see the point in learning at school. This identity position was repeated later on, yet he had also commented that he had 'really tried' (CP: 308). His trying suggested to me that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors played a key role in Cain's sense of becoming a learner, but upon reading this several times I also wondered if he was suggesting that he had actually struggled with the work difficulty level, which had led to a lack of intrinsic motivation to learn and a weakened learning identity.

> JN: *Is it important to you to get through your education and to get*
>   *these qualifications?*
> CP: *Not really. 'Cause I've sort of got; I don't need grades for what*
>   *I'm doing when I grow up. I've always got a backup plan that if*
>   *I don't get good grades then I can work in my dad's company,*
>   *so they don't really matter to be honest*

Cain: 433-434

5.5b *Educational options restricted by 'systems'*

An interesting factor that emerged when reading through the transcripts of these young people was the barriers they faced, seemingly formed (perhaps unintentionally) by the very systems around them that should have been there to support them in developing a strong self-identity in relation to academic learning.

5.5bi *Restrictive subject options*

Adrianna and Liam constructed narratives illustrating that their attendance at the PRU meant that they were unable to participate in the subject options they wanted.

> JN: *You're in ten? So what are you doing at the moment?*
> AD: *I was doing hairdressing.*
> JN: *Yeah?*
> AD: *Well, I don't want to be a hairdresser, but I think that was the easiest thing to do, because my sister's a hairdresser so I know some things about hair, so yeah, and then in college I was going to do beauty. But they've cancelled the hairdressing 'cause everyone was messing around, except me. It doesn't bother me 'cause I'll do it next year… So now I'm doing Digital Art. It's easy, you design things on the computer, like, leaflets…*

Adrianna: 61-64; 75

Although there are clearly other issues at play in Adrianna's narrative here, including choosing options because they were easy and not being bothered about changing courses, (which implied that Adrianna did not have a strong learning identity at the time of our conversations) I felt it was important to highlight the issue of subjects being cancelled. For me, this clearly put the 'system' in control of Adrianna. Had she had a stronger conviction about her future employment prospects, the cancellation of the hairdressing course could potentially have had major implications for her future.

Liam had previously constructed a strong identity as someone who enjoyed repairing and riding motorbikes. He had spoken to me about his future; that he wanted to be working 'legally' as a mechanic (LH: 100-104), and he had already been proactive in finding help to support him in becoming a mechanic (LH: 110). However, the following extract summarised the difficulty and confusion often inherent in thinking about the future, primarily due to available subject options restricting opportunities to gain appropriate qualifications:

> JN: So all this interest in bikes; are you, what course, what are you
> doing here at the moment? Is it...
> LH: Sport.
>
> Liam: 229-230

I struggled to understand his response, which I think was clear in my next question:

> JN: Okay, so, how come you've chosen sport when it's, you sound
> so passionate about bikes and mechanics...?
> LH: [Interrupts, abrupt] because they don't do mechanics here. If
> they done mechanics, I'd be doing mechanics, you know? And
> I won't come out of lesson [laughter].
>
> Liam: 235-236

Liam's answer served to reinforce his passion for mechanics discussed extensively earlier in our conversation, constructing the sense that he had only agreed to talk to me because it gave him the opportunity to spend time out of his lessons. Liam's abrupt interruption of my question and adoption of the interlocutor role ('you know?') served to intensify and suggest that there was some affective charge in his answer. This helped me understand why he had constructed the narrative of using his initiative to find someone who could help him in becoming a mechanic (LH: 110).

I felt that Liam's narrative constructed him as positioned with a strong identity in relation to learning because he was proactively searching for ways to enable him to train as a mechanic. This was despite the education system establishing a structural border by restricting availability of this training.

5.5bii *Fragile funding*

Jay constructed a narrative serving to highlight the knock-on effect to young people when funding is withdrawn from valuable alternative education projects which may lead onto eventual employment:

> JL: I went to a project called WR
> JN: What's that?
> JL: Oh, it's a mechanics thing, a course. It's a project that helped me out with somewhere to go and study so you can be a mechanic. It's alright.
> JN: Okay. So, is that working towards a qualification?
> JL: Yeah.
> JN: Is that what you want to do? Be a mechanic?
> JL: I did want to do that, yeah, but I haven't really got my mind set any more. I attended for a long time but then the funding got pulled. I don't know why…
> JN: Oh that's a shame, so what will happen to all the stuff you were working towards there?
> JL: I don't know, it's annoying really

Jay: 272-284

The fact that Jay seemed unclear about what would happen to his work and his evaluative comment that this was 'annoying' served to construct a power imbalance between the systems around him and Jay himself: control over his life clearly was not in his hands. In relation to self-identity as a learner, this extract demonstrated that the strength of learning identity could be temporal as well as contextual; a strong identity, as Jay appeared to have for learning about mechanics, lasting only as long the funding was provided for the project. Availability of funding in this case had seemed to become a structural border, serving to impede Jay from engaging fully in learning.

5.5biii *YOT involvement restricting positive outcomes*

Both Jay and Sheyden constructed an image of their involvement with YOT as problematic because it created a structural border, restricting their options in a practical sense. In the extract below, Jay constructed a story demonstrating the difficulties he had in simultaneously managing, or 'bridging' (Phelan et al, 1993: 59) the requirements of both the education system and the youth justice system:

> JL: *I did have full attendance there but it's, it was YOT and wearing that tag that disrupted me. It wore me out. It was 7pm till 7am and it just got really tiring, yeah? It just got on my nerves; I couldn't do anything, like catching buses to get to school: I needed to leave earlier and I couldn't. When I got off tag and just stopped attending, I just couldn't be bothered anymore.*
>
> Jay: 246

Jay perceived that having an electronic curfew tag caused him problems with catching buses to get to school, which apparently in part led to his decision to stop attending before coming off tag. When Jay was telling me this, his body language was clearly frustrated and the construction of 'I just couldn't be bothered anymore' in this context gave me the sense that he felt let down by the systems around him. In a sense, the border between home and school had become impenetrable because of YOT.

5.5biiii *Risk of re-offending considered too high*

For Sheyden, the situation was slightly different. Sheyden had moved from City One to City Two because his offence had been carried out in City Two. His offence was originally 'intent to supply Class A drugs', but this was reduced to 'possession of drugs' and he received a 12 month Referral Order and was put on an electronic curfew tag (SM: 112-114). At this point, Sheyden was classed as 'Not in Education, Employment

or Training' (NEET), and so having moved to City Two to live with his sister, he attempted to enrol at the local college, with the support of YOT, to fulfil his ambition of gaining a qualification relating to music production:

> JN: *So when you came up here did you get enrolled in a school here?*
> SM: *No, I came up here because I got put on tag*
> JN: *Right, okay*
> SM: *And then I did have a conversation to enrol in the college but then they never accepted because of YOT, so since then I haven't applied for nothing else*

Sheyden: 312-315

The condition here that apparently gave rise to the structural border between Sheyden and the college was one of 'matching'. The college had available the course that Sheyden wanted, but they could not 'match' him or accept him onto that course due to their risk assessment; the college felt there was too high a risk that Sheyden may use or sell illicit substances on college premises. Consequently, Sheyden's self-identity as a learner was arguably weakened, evidence through his last comment in line (315).

5.6 *Interests outside of school*

The ignominy apparently attached to alternative education provision by these young people through their narratives I felt served to reinforce the borders implied between the education, youth justice and home 'systems' within which these young people navigated. Sheyden and Liam in particular constructed narratives of having strong extracurricular interests, in music and mechanics respectively, which revealed both strength in self-identity related to learning and inexcusably missed opportunities that could have been utilised to engage these young people in some form of training or employment. Liam's YOT Officer had attempted to find some mechanics type work for

Liam to complete in his spare time as part of his Court Order (LH: 40-42). With more effective structural bridging between education and youth justice systems, this could have translated into a feasible training and employment opportunity.

Liam later constructed a narrative that positioned him as actively engaged in finding ways outside of the education and youth justice systems to become a mechanic (LH: 110), and similarly, despite his setback with his college interview (SM: 315), Sheyden was adamant he would still eventually be working in the music industry, indicating that he had his own connections to that industry:

> JN: *So, what do you think you'd like to do?*
> SM: *I will definitely be doing something within the music industry, def-in-ate-ly! I know that for a fact!*
> JN: *Mmm…*
> SM: *I've seen it already!*
> JN: *Have you? Do you know people in the industry?*
> SM: *I know Labyrinth's brother*
> JN: *Yeah?*
> SM: *He lives near my mum*
> JN: *Okay.*
> SM: *He's got a studio and that, and obviously … that lives near my mum as well. I know a couple of people that do this music rubbish…*

Sheyden: 324-333

The determination to eventually succeed shown by these two young people, however improbable their aspirations might seem from their narratives and despite the apparent structural, psychosocial and sociocultural borders between them and the systems designed to support them, highlighted for me a sense of resilience and quest for a positive future.

5.7 <u>Summary</u>

In this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate the usefulness of the Dimensional Theory of Learning framework (Illeris, 2007) and the Multiple Worlds Model (Phelan et al, 1993) in structuring the school experience narratives of six young people to illustrate how content, incentive and interaction aspects of learning are inextricably entwined with the concept of transitions across psychosocial, sociocultural, linguistic and structural borders to create different strengths of learning identity within different contexts. The next chapters will extend these ideas to consider how these interpretations have implications for Educational Psychology practice.

Chapter 6

6.1 Further Interpretations and Implications for Educational Psychology Practice

Throughout this study, I have attempted to privilege the voices of the six young people in this study and respect their unique stories. The Narrative Analysis in the previous chapter enabled this to happen by fore-fronting their agency in deciding what stories to tell and how they told them (albeit with me as researcher retaining overall editorial power in writing about their chosen stories). Yet Narrative Analysis also acknowledges that their stories were composed by adapting and combining the finite number of narrative resources available to them within their worlds, which they perceived would be understood by their listener. This chapter intends to consider these narrative resources in more detail.

The following interpretations of my conversations with Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden aim to answer my second research question:

- What narrative resources do these young people draw on to relay the subjective impact of their school experience and to indicate the strength of their learning identity?

I hope to answer this by offering a typology of stories as told by these young people who have offended. I do not propose this typology as exhaustive or exclusive to one young person or another and I do not wish to risk creating a general unifying view subsuming the particularity of individual experience (Holstein & Gubrium, 2012). Rather, I hope this is viewed academically as a holistic-form analysis of the stories of my participants (Lieblich et al, 1998), and professionally as a strategy to aid listening

and attention to the stories of young people who have offended. I hope this helps in understanding and unpicking the complex narrative threads highlighted in the previous chapter, a key role for EPs. Offering this alternative method of active listening I feel may suggest implications for EP practice, and therefore potentially answer my third research question:

- How might Educational Psychology Services be best placed to support those working with Young Offenders?

6.2 <u>Development of a narrative typology of stories</u>

We are shown that kings would have no motivation to act as kings if poets did not provide the imaginative conception of kingship
(Frye, 1976: 178)

A narrative resource can be defined as the most general storyline that can be recognised underlying the plot and tensions of particular stories (Frank, 2013). The choice and use of particular narrative resources creates an imaginative space in which identities can be claimed, rejected and experimented with. Yet the finite number of narrative resources available within lived contexts ultimately delimits identity possibilities. This enables the development of a typology of stories, which can be justified through its organisation of what initially seems confused.

This typology proposes three narrative resources highlighted within my conversations with Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden. Each narrative resource is briefly discussed below in relation to the Dimensional Theory of Learning (Illeris, 2007). By linking my typology with this learning framework I hope to demonstrate how learning identity may have been temporally or contextually strengthened or weakened for these young people according to the narrative resources they chose to adopt to establish

their identity positions. This typology, whilst not empirically validated or reflective of an objective reality, seemed compelling enough within the stories of my six young participants that it could not easily be dismissed (Holstein & Gubrium, 2012).

6.3 <u>The Instability Narrative</u>

The Instability Narrative I argue has a plotline which imagines life as infrequently stable and a protagonist faced with multiple difficulties. Contrary to the traditional, Labovian style story structure with a setting, build-up, complication, evaluation and resolution, Instability Narratives provide multiple, simultaneous complications and few satisfactory resolutions. The sense of continuous activity and simultaneity suffocates opportunities to appraise the situation as the story progresses (Frank, 2013), limiting opportunities for dramatic anticipation in the form of hope for a positive resolution. Happy endings are hard to envisage.

The instability in the narrated lives of these young people suggested that they were bound in the moment and consequently had limited reflective grasp on it (Frank, 2013). Instability stories tended to be told with minimal detail about the past and an uncertain future. During my conversations with these young people I found it hard to elicit extended detail; they tended to be focused on their current situations, or pasts and futures were narrated quite incoherently, such as Cain's story of living out of his suitcase and Sheyden's story of sofa-surfing due to repeated evictions. Darnell's story of moving between various family members (DK: 14; 54; 64-68; 118; 128-138; 162-166; 209-293), partially summed up in line (475) also gives a sense of the difficulty in following these narratives as a listener:

> DK: Yeah, and then in like, year four, I moved to my step-gran's
>   house until year seven actually, and then year eight, like sort

> *of year eight-ish I got excluded and then, and moved to my*
> *gran's house and then moved to my dad's house*

<div align="right">Darnell: 475</div>

These stories could be interpreted as representative of stories drawing on the Instability Narrative.

Characters described within Instability Narratives seemed to struggle for control over unseen forces. Understanding these forces was difficult and it did not always seem as if a 'proper story' was being told. In this respect, Instability Narratives seemed anxiety-provoking, inhibiting my ability to hear the story. I found during conversation with Adrianna that I experienced this sense of anxiety; on hearing about her lack of control and consequent lack of trust in adults, I repeatedly attempted to reassert predictability into our conversation, as shown in the extract below:

> JN: *Hmm. Do you think there would have been anybody that helped at any point? Do you feel like you kind of were left on your own?*
>
> AD: *I think my parents, 'cause they've put pressure on me to be good and that. I've kind of understood but it took me time*
>
> JN: *Right. But at school, I guess was there?*
>
> AD: *No.*
>
> JN: *There wasn't anybody?*
>
> AD: *No.*
>
> JN: *You didn't feel like you could go to anybody?*
>
> AD: *[Silence].*
>
> JN: *Would there be somebody outside of the family you think it would be important for you to have to talk to about things, or...?*
>
> AD: *Yeah, well, I never… I can talk to my parents or my sisters but I just never do it; I just keep it to myself or talk to my friends*
>
> JN: *Right. Is there any reason for that?*
>
> AD: *No. It's just my choice. Sometimes it's hard, well, it's not easy but I can do it. I just don't trust people*
>
> JN: *If there had been something in school, you know; some person or some place that you could go to, to vent or to talk…*
>
> AD: *No, I wouldn't, 'cause when I go YOT, I'm meant to see my YOT officer but instead I see a psychologist and even when I talk to her I don't tell her everything, 'cause like I know that older people when you talk to them, they take it in differently and they might report it and get someone, not even me, but*

> *someone into trouble, and how can I be friends with a teacher?*

<div align="right">Adrianna: 181-198</div>

Reflecting on this extract I realised that I had succumbed to eliciting a 'thin description' (Morgan, 2000: 12); drawing one meaning or understanding from it: that I could never have got into her situation of having no control and nobody to trust. According to Frank (2013), professionals working with terminally ill people frequently fall into this trap of seeking to maintain the pretence of control at the expense of acknowledging suffering and what cannot be controlled. I appeared to be pushing Adrianna for the answer I wanted to hear, at the expense of giving her chance to provide meanings to her story other than what I had assumed.

Adrianna's narrative of her moves between different schools demonstrated a second aspect of the Instability Narrative:

> *AD:* *I've been at CR and then they sent me to NW for a trial… I came back after six weeks, I went, so I stayed in CR for like, another month, and then they kicked me out, moved me to HF, I was there for like four weeks and then I got kicked out, they sent me back to CR but CR said they don't want me, and then they sent me to NW, I was there for, till the end of the year, and I came here, it was fine though 'cause at least I had some time out of school*

<div align="right">Adrianna: 34</div>

Whilst her story established a coherent temporal flow through events being clearly marked as having taken place in the past, and had a clear event sequence, the way in which the story was narrated (the sjuzet) used a self-interrupting, syntactic structure of 'and then, and then, and then…'. The clipped pacing of words constructed a sense of upheaval; that one could not stop to take a breath. It certainly instilled a sense of

tension and urgency and was very confusing to listen to. All six participants in this study used this structure to some extent to narrate their stories of moving home and changing school. What was not told, the detail between the 'and then's', was perhaps the most important aspect of these stories. This made them stories that were difficult to listen to and engage in.

Instability Narratives from the six young people in this study constructed a sense of inaccessibility around them; their instability prevented them from being assisted in coherent, proactive ways, and ultimately, their motivation to seek help appeared reduced. In Adrianna's case, she became actively avoidant of assistance from adults.

The Instability Narratives in the stories of Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden highlighted a sense of dissonance, turmoil and transience between home and school 'worlds'. Change was often constructed callously and abruptly. I interpreted each of the young people's narratives about exclusion as constructing a sense that the agency of these young people was diminished, with the exception of Darnell who physically walked out of school before he was 'kicked out' (DK: 160). Sheyden, despite talking about 'waiting for it' (SM: 130), constructed a sense of being powerless to do anything about his exclusion, as shown by his phrase 'it was only a matter of time' (SM: 132). Their stories contained little about their subjectivity, suggested linguistically through their positioning of themselves as 'survivors' and 'victims' of the wider education system (although attempts were made to reduce the subjective impact of these constructions through evaluative comments such as 'it was alright though').

This narrative resource I suggest relates to Illeris's (2007) Incentive Dimension of learning. The young people in this study, when telling stories which drew on an Instability Narrative, constructed the sense of experiencing emotional and motivational states not conducive to learning, thus understandably demonstrating a fragile self-

identity in relation to learning. In other words, learning identity was weakened because of their need to adopt a 'survivor' identity to remain focused on managing their unstable, often unpredictable lives (for example: *'it was fine though…'*: AD: 34; and '*it didn't bother me 'cause I was used to it…'*: JL: 102).

6.3a *Implications of this narrative resource: new therapeutic directions*

Published research contains support for the notion that canonical narratives of disrupted and discordant home and school lives of young people like these young people are associated with difficulties of emotional well-becoming (Hughes, Williams & Chitsabesan et al, 2012). Other research suggests that negative discourses of exclusion, the impact of exclusion from school, social exclusion and a poverty of experience can result in young people being unable to articulate their views and make choices which would enable them to function effectively in both education and the wider community (Jones, 2013). The emotional impact of frequent change, however positively framed at times by the young people in this study, I interpreted as having the effect of weakening their self-identities as learners.

The government's Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL; DCSF, 2005: 1) initiative described by Hill (in Arnold, 2013: 133) sought to provide:

> *…a comprehensive, whole-school approach to promoting the social and emotional skills that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance, staff effectiveness and the emotional health and well-being of all who learn and work in schools*

Despite the nationwide implementation of this initiative, the well-being of children in the UK was still described as well below the standard aspired to in developed countries (UNICEF, 2007) and the government's response was to launch the Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS) programme (DCSF, 2008b). This aimed to transform

delivery of mental health support to the 5-13 age-group through school-based interventions, and it was recognised by the coalition government in the Green Paper consultation (DfE, 2011b:105) that "Educational Psychology Services could effectively work with schools to build their capacity to promote well-being and early intervention" (Hill, in Arnold, 2013: 134). Furthermore, the IAPT initiative (DoH, 2008) advocated the use of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) with children within the school context. UK legislation decrees that Educational Psychologists (EPs) are ideally situated to address emotional well-being therapeutically within community settings and consequently impact positively upon strength of learning identity and stability within education. Atkinson, Corban and Templeton (in Arnold, 2013: 135) report an increase in EP training in therapeutic work within initial doctoral training programmes and through continuing professional development, including such therapies as Solution-Focused Brief Therapy, Personal Construct Psychology and CBT.

In relation to this study, there has also been increased interest in EPs using Narrative Therapy to promote emotional well-being, and particularly to increase emotional and motivational states that are conducive to learning. It "seeks to be a respectful, non-blaming approach to counselling and community work, which centres people as the experts in their own lives" (Morgan, 2000: 2). EPs working with young people who have offended or the professionals around them could use the principles of Narrative Therapy to actively listen to the problem-saturated stories of instability and the meanings that have been reached about them – the 'thin' descriptions. By focusing on the thin description, thin conclusions are reached which are disempowering and obscure broader relations of power (Morgan, 2000). However, EPs could use Narrative Therapy to support people in revealing other possible meanings for the problem in the story, working narratively to find and richly describe alternative stories that do not support or sustain problems and which increase the emotional and motivational space to develop a strong self-identity in relation to learning. I believe this approach could be

effectively used in schools with students at risk of exclusion, to support them in remaining in the school and re-engaging with learning.

EPs could alternatively have a role in training staff to actively listen for Instability Narratives and in using the principles of Narrative Therapy with students experiencing emotional difficulties which reduce their capacity for learning. I believe it could be used in multi-agency Youth Offending Services to support young people in thinking about and reflecting on the narrative resources they draw on, so they can use the time with their YOT Officer to develop alternative, richly detailed, realistic aspiration stories about future education, employment or training. Ryrie (2006: 13) describes the EP position for multi-agency working with Youth Offending Services as an opportunity to utilise "skills and knowledge in the facilitation of positive teamwork and the development of productive problem-solving approaches" which "would serve to make purposeful interventions in relation to young people or specific issues and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the team".

6.4 The Incompatibility Narrative

This narrative resource appeared to dominate the stories of the young people in this study. It seemed largely correlated with Illeris's (2007) Interaction Dimension of learning and Phelan et al's (1993) psychosocial and sociocultural borders, particularly finding them difficult to traverse (type III adaptation) or impenetrable (type IV adaptation). Incompatibility primarily related to psychosocial relationships between young people and professionals, but also related to sociocultural conflict between 'worlds'.

The plotline for this narrative has the basic storyline (fabula): 'yesterday I was ok (i.e. living within societal norms and expectations), today I'm not, but tomorrow I will be ok

again' (i.e. returning to an approximation of how things were before the complication) (Holstein & Gubrium, 2012). This fabula is brought to life through the sjuzet: evaluative comments about the complication (the offence) and the resolution (the consequence).

The plotline is complicated by the manner in which the young person becomes 'ok' again and I suggest that this happens on individual and contextual levels. On a contextual level, 'becoming ok' is addressed through a sociocultural reparation narrative often learned from institutional stories that model how 'offending behaviour' is to be told (offending behaviour here is taken to mean criminal activity and behaviour leading to school exclusion). For example, government rhetoric and YJB publications about Young Offenders tend to use a reparation narrative as the framework for detailing their plans for tackling offending behaviour. The phrases 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' and 'hug-a-hoodie' represent their management strategies, all intending to prevent re-offending. Similarly, schools provide detailed behaviour management policies intending to reduce and prevent poor behaviour. The expectation for this reparation narrative is that for every offender there is a solution, yet this implicitly positions professionals and young people in different 'worlds', and establishes borders which are difficult for both professionals and young people to traverse effectively.

Whilst all professionals conceivably adhere to this reparation narrative with varying degrees of success in understanding the young person's perspective and world, the individuals in this study did not always engage with it. In this sense, 'becoming ok' occurred through denouncing institutional reparation narratives and adopting individualised identities such as 'independent' or the more pejorative 'offender' that positioned them as incompatible with institutionalised, canonical narratives. Herein lies the Incompatibility Narrative.

Liam demonstrated incompatibility in his constructions of YOT and police experiences. He constructed a generally positive tone around his YOT work partly because his Officer appeared to have understood what motivated and engaged him (it could be argued that his Officer took time to psychosocially and socioculturally understand Liam's world):

> LH: Yeah. I actually like my YOT work 'cause it's trying to sort me
>   things out to like do in my spare time and all that.
> JN: What sorts of things is he…
> LH: Like, fix up motorbikes…

Liam: 40-42

However his narrative about the police was driven by escape and avoidance, as shown through his repeated use of similar phrases: 'but I got away with them (those offences)' (LH: 36); 'my bikes have all got the same plates, so I can't get stopped' (LH: 58); 'because that's what I hate when they nick me for something I haven't done' (LH: 288) and '… they wouldn't catch me' (LH: 293 and 295).

During our conversations Liam demonstrated a sociocultural incompatibility with the police by positioning himself as 'an offender', but at times Liam equally appeared to adopt the canonical reparation narrative of 'becoming ok again' through proactive engagement in positive extracurricular activities, shown in his narrative about his YOT Officer.

In line (100) below, Liam positioned himself as having no 'legitimate' ambitions (considering his extended narrative transcript it could be inferred that he was positioning himself as an 'offender' and as having a weak learning identity) but he then immediately positioned himself as having ambition to be a 'legitimate' mechanic, indicating a stronger learning identity:

> LH: There's not even nothing I want to do when I'm older; I want to be a mechanic.
>
> JN: Yeah? I was going to ask you about the future.
>
> LH: [Laughter]
>
> JN: What do you see yourself doing in about a years' time, or...?
>
> LH: I think I might be doing a legal job. I'm not sure but I reckon I might be; I'll be doing a legal job.
>
> JN: Illegal or a legal?
>
> LH: Legal.
>
> JN: Legal.
>
> LH: Yeah, 'cause I want to work as a mechanic so that's definitely got to be legal

Liam: 100-108

This implied to me that Liam equally valued the two identity positions, which offers support to the notion that self-identity in relation to learning is temporally and contextually strengthened or weakened. Liam appeared to be acknowledging that in order to be legally employed he had to construct a self-identity which positioned him as aligned with the canonical reparation narrative 'I will be ok'; 'I will engage in pro-social activities'. To support this position, Liam continued by constructing a sense that he had actively sought support in becoming a mechanic:

> LH: 'Cause I know someone from my sister's school called Miss P that knows people that do mechanics so she might be trying to get me a job when I leave school

Liam: 110

The young people in this study, following narratives of conflict, constructed a sense of being expected to comply with additional responsibilities to those they already carried as young people, such as a Court Order or school detention, in order to 'become ok again'. But equally, I felt that professionals were constructed as having a reciprocal obligation to offer support in enabling the young people to comply with their responsibilities, such as enabling Adrianna to talk to a psychologist (AD: 198). These young peoples' narratives tended to construct this professional obligation as a form of

social control established by requiring the young person to comply with their authority. It appeared that this construction of professional obligation as social control was important within Incompatibility Narratives, creating difficult or impenetrable psychosocial and sociocultural borders between young person and professionals representing their respective systems, thus temporally or contextually strengthening or weakening their learning identities.

The narratively constructed obligation of teachers towards their students demonstrated potential incompatibility of perceptions regarding learning. Jay constructed a sense that teachers used their obligation to establish superiority over their students without attempting to establish rapport with them:

> JL: *In that school they just threaten you and stuff; lots of threats all the time. It's annoying. They're always saying: "If you do that that again... If you, um, slip up one more time, I'm gonna chuck you out" and it's just annoying.*

Jay: 173

> JL: *Yeah, they all say the same thing; the female teachers are just rude, but it's always the male teachers: "This is my school". All of them are like: "It's my school". "My school". And I say: "It's not your school. It's Mr B's School. He owns the school".*

Jay: 182

Compliance balanced by obligation seemed fundamental to the narratives of school experience constructed with the young people in this study. Extracts from Sheyden's narrative further demonstrated this. Whilst some parts of his narrative suggested that he battled with attempts by teachers to rather aggressively assert their authority over him…

> SM: They tried saying I was smoking on the school road after school. But the day they said I was doing it I was in at home for that whole day so it couldn't have been me, and the next day I went in; they tried to search me and I was like: "No" so they excluded me

<div align="right">Sheyden: 128</div>

…he constructed a sense that his incompatibility with school escalated in particular subjects, when the teachers had not provided him with appropriate work, or when he perceived the lesson as boring:

> SM: That's all I can remember getting in trouble in; maths, or science.
> JN: Mmm.
> SM: But I only ever got in trouble in science because I would do my work and then talk.
> JN: Okay, so what was it about maths?
> SM: It's not even the work; it's just the atmosphere, it's just boring! Maths is just a boring subject so I don't like it
> JN: Yeah?
> SM: If I'm bored I won't do it. I'll just find something else for entertaining me.

<div align="right">Sheyden: 158-168</div>

The desire for the young people in this study to engage in learning often seemed complicated by the professionals around them wanting them to comply with expectations, highlighting the narrative dichotomy of freedom versus control. For example, a student might want to learn, and those working with him want him to learn, but the routes the young person and the teacher take towards making that learning happen become incompatible through poor communication resulting in skewed perceptions of control. Liam's narrative arguably demonstrates this:

> LH: The teacher tried, the teacher tried to chat with me, 'cause I told him, "No, I'm going," so I dashed a chair at him and then he called me in, he called my mum, told me to come in the next day then he tried to chat rubbish again so I done it again and it weren't no nice chair either, it was a wooden one

JN: Hmm, so like with the lessons, so I'm just thinking like before that, were you frustrated with him? Was he not understanding what you were saying...

LH: Uh-huh [agreeing].

JN: ... or were you not understanding the lesson, or what was going on?

LH: No, 'cause I used to bunk innit? I used to bunk my lessons.

JN: Right.

LH: And like go, go to other classes like, and do their work

JN: Why did you choose to do that?

LH: It's better

JN: Yeah?

LH: 'Cause I didn't like some of the people in my class either.

Liam: 254-265

I interpreted Liam's narrative as constructing an image that he did not work well in his own class so attempted to rectify this by working in other classes. Presumably deemed as 'in-school truanting' by his teacher, Liam's actions (although perceived as appropriate to Liam) were perceived by his teacher as incompatible with the school system. Therefore his teacher 'tried to chat with him' in order to restore compatibility with the system. Liam appeared to be simultaneously constructing a strong learning identity in that he went to 'other classes to do their work', which was weakened by the incompatibility of perceptions about his actions. Conflict ensued. Within this extract, I interpreted Liam's narrative as positioning him within conflicting rivalries between teacher (representing the wider school system) and student, and between freedom and control.

The apparent regular clashes between these young people and the surrounding systems narratively created frequent complications, followed by superficial resolutions. 'Characters' within the Incompatibility Narrative appeared to represent literary rivalries between 'good versus evil'; 'superior versus inferior' or 'free versus constrained'. The over-riding feature of the Incompatibility Narrative was conflict, either real or perceived,

which served as a catalyst for the young people to position themselves as having stronger or weaker learning identities within their narratives.

The stories regarding relationships with mainstream teachers constructed a sense of teachers attempting to adhere to a 'life-as-normal' narrative, following school disciplinary rules and procedures rigidly whilst teaching these young people with complex, fragmented histories. This constructed a sense of teachers seeking to minimise student backgrounds whilst maximising the perception of these young people as inherently bad. By constructing this rivalry dichotomy of superior / good versus inferior / bad, these young people characterised relationships with the professionals working with them as lacking trust and concern and emphasising threat and harm.

6.4a *Implications of this narrative resource: applying psychological theory to EP practice*

Incompatibility Narratives included narratives of disrupted education. There was consistency between the narratives of these young people and those within government publications and research literature, which constructed 'Young Offenders' as having poor educational outcomes such as fewer and lower grades that their peers (Hurry et al, 2010). The Incompatibility Narrative findings from this study support previous research (Ashkar & Kenny, 2009: 363) suggesting:

> *…a need to change the learning context in which academic underachievement and failure occurs; fostering healthy relationships with teachers; providing curriculum relevant to students' learning and social needs; ensuring that all students feel acknowledged and supported within the classroom regardless of academic ability and providing additional support to students who are experiencing personal and family difficulties.*

Related to Illeris' (2007) Interaction Dimension of learning, there are important implications here for EPs within an early intervention framework; facilitating compatibility narratives by supporting students with complex backgrounds and needs and perhaps supervising (particularly) mainstream secondary teachers in developing trusting attachment relationships with young people. EPs working in a training/consultative way using evidence-based approaches such as the Staff Sharing Scheme (Jones, Monsen & Franey, 2013) or Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) (Shaw & Martland, 2014) would support this.

Beaman and Wheldall (in Wheldall, 2010) identified one of the most powerful factors in classroom interactions as teacher behaviour, particularly approval and disapproval. Indeed, Schwieso and Hastings (in Wheldall, 2010: 154) acknowledge that although "it is a little obvious that teaching is an interactive process", minimal research can be found into the interactive complexities of the classroom. The need to re-balance the superior / good versus inferior / bad narrative dichotomies identified in this study is therefore an important finding and is arguably crucial to creating and sustaining positive relationships, compatible narratives and stronger learning identities.

Hattie (in Wheldall, 2010: 154) found through meta-analysis of 7,827 studies of student achievement that the most powerful single moderator that enhanced student achievement was teacher feedback (either approval or disapproval). Nafpaktitis (in Wheldall, 2010: 154) stated that "in the feedback system of the classroom, students continually influence teacher behaviour and vice versa".

Whilst psychological theories of motivation are important in learner identity, the psychological theory of Intersubjectivity – the linking of subjects who are active in transmitting understanding to each other (Trevarthen, in Upton, 2010), is useful to consider in terms of the findings from this study. Intersubjectivity or attunement is a

well-established theory (see for example Stern, 2010; Trevarthen, 2014), and interpersonal communication is a core competency for applied psychologists. VIG is a method which aims to improve communication and relationships, and EPs now learn to use VIG on the initial training doctorate. VIG enhances and develops reflective practice while looking at the evidence of practice in the video. It fits with a Narrative framework for EP practice because Narrative methods "use all forms of communication (gesture, body movement, sound, images) to study meaning" (Reissman, 2008: 141). VIG gives those involved the opportunity to visually consider how they receive others and how they in turn are received, while thinking about their strengths, goals and working points (those things that they want to change, refine, or just do more of: Upton, 2010).

Narratives developed across the stories of the six participants in this study highlighting the importance of equal perceptions of power within the Interaction Dimension of learning. The narrative of equality, of mutual respect between professionals and young people (which was particularly described in narratives about alternative and special educational provision in this study), has arisen in previous literature. Hooks (1989: 8) argues for the oppressed to counter the various discourses of power by speaking out:

> *True speaking is not solely an expression of creative power: it is an act of resistance, a political gesture that challenges politics of domination that would render us nameless and voiceless.*

She sees speaking out as a threat to those in power and refers to this act of speaking out as 'talking back'. This has resonance with what the young people in this study referred to as 'back chat'; a way of challenging authority. 'Back chat' usually resulted in disciplinary action, but this small act countered the discourses of power and authority (Jones, 2013). In mainstream settings this 'back chat' was often the catalyst for an escalation in behavioural incidents and consequences reflecting dominant discourses

around Young Offenders. It represented inequality in discourses of power. Yet in alternative or special provision a sense was constructed that 'back chat' did not occur as frequently, and when it did, teachers did not resort to the superiority / inferiority discourse but instead created an air of normality, that it was ok to speak one's mind, thus constructing a sense of maturity and equality. This appears to have supported the development of mutual respect in these young people.

As Shaw and Martland (2014) found, I suggest that EPs could support and/or supervise teachers, school staff and students in using VIG to identify times during lessons where the Incompatibility Narrative arises, and use it to reflect on the principles of attuned interaction they observe (being attentive; positively responding to initiatives; taking turns; co-operation; guiding and leading: Upton, 2010). The visual examples provided by the films would provide a means of developing more accurate and balanced narratives; recognising existing skills; increasing confidence; facilitating discussion on extending skills, and considering alternative ways of communicating; in appreciative, collaborative, respectful and non-judgmental ways. Developing a shared sense of equality within educational settings I argue would strengthen learning identity in these young people.

6.4b *Incompatibility Narratives within 'The Inclusion Agenda'*

There is little consensus on what 'inclusion' denotes, consequently resulting in Incompatibility Narratives within this study. Educational inclusion was defined as being "about equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment and background", and as "much more than the type of school that children attend: it is about the quality of their experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school" by Ofsted and DfES respectively (in Lawson et al 2006: 57). Lawson et al (2006: 57) suggest that the term has become

something of "a cliché evacuated of meaning". It is therefore not surprising that attitudes towards inclusion vary and have a significant impact on its success or otherwise.

6.4bi *Incompatible Systems and Social Exclusion*

The youth justice and education systems were constructed within the stories told by the six young people in this study as being incompatible. Sheyden's story about not being accepted at college demonstrated the contradictions that exist within the dominant discourses surrounding Young Offenders: on one hand Young Offenders should receive support to re-engage in education (the welfarism perspective and the professional's reparation narrative that for every offender there is a solution) yet the risk was too great (the justice perspective); and Jay's narrative about funding being withdrawn from an educational placement demonstrated the two systems being unable to function together effectively. The constructed narratives here have political implications for the way that services work with or against each other (Wareham, 2012) and provide evidence on the reality of the government ideals of inclusion and multi-agency partnership working.

6.4bii *'Re-Storying' Alternative Provision (AP)*

Throughout the narratives of Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden, it became apparent that they perceived their current educational placement as their final 'move'; that they would not be able to go anywhere else. Somewhat sadly I felt this gave the sense that they believed there was nothing more that could be done for them. Cain, when talking unfavourably about his peers at the setting he attended constructed this belief:

> CP: But you can't, like, turn around and hit 'em because you know
>   you'll get expelled and that's, like, the last school you get to go
>   to

<div align="right">Cain: 192</div>

Darnell also appeared to hold the belief that once at an AP he could not go anywhere else, primarily because he perceived the threat of exclusion again from mainstream so a return was unlikely:

> JN: So how would you say that school is different for you being
>   here? Would you say it's better for you here?
> DK: Uh-huh [agreeing]
> JN: Yeah? Why would that be?
> DK: It's 'cause I know that I can't; I think if I was in a school I would
>   get excluded again. But now I know that I'm here, you realise
>   that you can't get in trouble once you're here
> JN: Kind of on your last chance almost, in a way?
> DK: And if you get kicked out of here then there's nothing for you to
>   do
> JN: Where do you go?
> DK: Exactly.

<div align="right">Darnell: 223-230</div>

Our use of the psychological 'you' in the above extracts constructed for me a narrative of the way APs are viewed by young people; a general rule for young people within this system. Adrianna made this narrative more explicitly canonical in the following extract:

> JN: So what do you think about it here?
> AD: It's alright, but I don't have a choice to move out of here

<div align="right">Adrianna: 53-54</div>

Her use of the construction 'I don't have a choice' explicitly highlighted the power imbalance between young people and the systems around them. It additionally served to highlight for me the perceptions of these young people that they had ended up in AP

because there was something inherently wrong with them; they could not cope in the mainstream environment.

These narratives support the institutionalised image of AP as 'dumping grounds' or 'juvenile detention centres' (Kim, 2011), despite the young people in this study having experienced positive teacher-student relationships within them. I feel that this institutionalised narrative served to reinforce weakened self-identities as learners in these young people. McCoy and Banks (2012) reviewed research literature about the inclusion of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and found that despite much research highlighting the impact of the inclusion agenda as increased social exclusion, reduced academic achievement and increased disengagement; government discourse around inclusive education has tended to focus on increasing the inclusion of SEN children within mainstream settings. The entrenched assumption has been that all children would benefit from mainstream provision. Yet on a practical level, mainstream inclusion often requires using identification and assessment to differentiate SEN children, resulting in these children being viewed by both peers and professionals as qualitatively different; a feeling these children have reported as being acutely aware of (McCoy and Banks, 2012). Furthermore, providing for convicted young offenders on a mainstream school site is unlikely to be an ideal selling point to prospective parents and carers in this increasingly free-market educational system, even if it is a socially desirable objective (Hayden, 2008).

I would argue that EPs have an important role to play in supporting professionals, families and young people narratively re-imagine special and alternative provision (including AP on mainstream sites) as "ideal havens" for those who are unlikely to succeed in the traditional school settings, for whatever reason (Kim, 2011: 90). In this alternative narrative of AP, young people would perceive themselves as being treated

like adults within a fairly relaxed learning environment, where break-times are more flexible and there is acceptance and tolerance towards wandering around, listening to music and engaging in learning activities which offer a degree of autonomy (SfLQI, 2010). Additionally, greater emphasis should be placed on Lavé and Wenger's (1991) performative roles when learning, offering students chances to experience different levels of responsibility and interaction other than 'subordinate statuses'. AP should be viewed by society as a valuable "systemic intervention that helps students recover lost hope; self-esteem and belief in themselves, the school and the society while developing their academic skills, knowledge and talents" (Kim, 2011: 90). Avramidis and Norwich (in Lawson et al, 2006: 57) suggest that future research around attitudes to inclusion:

> *…would benefit from employing alternative methods, such as life history, narrative or autobiography to examine [teachers'] attitudes. These methods focus on participants' own narratives… and can lead to an improved understanding of the complex and interrelated processes of personal experiences, attitudes and practices.*

I believe that future EP research and work of this type with both professionals and young people would facilitate compatibility narratives over the negative Incompatibility Narrative highlighted in this study, and would strengthen learning identity in young people.

6.5 The Reformation Narrative

The plotline in this narrative resource, adapted from Frank's (2013) 'quest narrative' employed within stories told by ill people, is based on the journey metaphor. In this narrative, the protagonist encounters a sequence of obstacles and gains wisdom through the process of overcoming them. The suspense in this narrative derives from whether the protagonist's original attitude (towards their school experiences) will

translate into an understanding of the transformative potential in those experiences (Holstein & Gubrium, 2012), and whether they will become 'reformed characters'. In this study, the Reformation Narrative provided as yet unformed resolutions; it left the young people 'unfinalised', but in a position whereby they were beginning to be able to reflect on their past experiences to consider how these had contributed to their present, and how they would likely influence their futures.

When adopted, this narrative resource enabled these young people to construct a sense that they knew how they best engaged within the systems they lived in and a sense that they actively sought positive relationships with adults. This narrative resource warranted consideration because when identified by professionals whilst talking with young people, it could enable purposeful exploration of the more positive and transformational elements of experience.

This narrative resource I felt provided the clearest sense of self-identity as a learner; the young people were able to reflect on effective engagement strategies and relationships within schools that had been most supportive. In essence, this narrative resource constructed strategies for successfully traversing psychosocial and sociocultural borders between contexts.

Sheyden constructed a sense that he felt that he had had good relationships with some of his teachers, particularly PE teachers: a subject he had earlier explained that he particularly enjoyed and was good at (SM: 22):

> SM: …the teachers at the school loved me! Especially the PE
> teachers, 'cause it was a sport college they were good and
> you could have a joke with them!

Sheyden: 311

Engagement with his teachers on an equal footing in a subject genuinely enjoyed by both parties apparently reduced the impenetrable psychosocial and sociocultural borders between teachers and Sheyden, offering him space in which to demonstrate a strong learning identity within the Content Dimension of learning.

Liam reflected on his positive teacher-student relationships, and seemed to construct a sense of respect for teachers who showed genuine interest in him and supported him practically through difficult situations:

> LH: There were a couple of teachers I used to like in NW though: one of them was kind, and he's the one who taught me like how to fight and defend myself. 'Cause I never used to defend myself, like, 'cause I used to get bullied

Liam: 276

Although it is unlikely that this teacher literally taught Liam to fight, he clearly felt supported by this teacher apparently caring for him in a manner which Liam understood. This seemingly offered Liam space in which to demonstrate a strong learning identity within the Incentive Dimension of learning.

Darnell shared recollections about the teachers he got on well with at primary school, constructing an overall sense of 'connection' to these teachers because they appeared to value him (albeit for seemingly questionable reasons – DK: 86); they made him feel like he was part of the school. He also constructed these teachers as knowledgeable, calm and respectful:

> JN: And what, what were the teachers like with you?
> DK: I had my favourite teacher, she was in year six.
> JN: Why was...
> DK: Quite, I don't know, it was… maybe because I was leaving she was nice to me compared to the rest. And my first teacher in

> *year four she was the best as well because she was new and I*
> *didn't really know her and I got to know her better.*
> JN: *Oh, okay. So how, how did they help you then?*
> DK: *They just like, they showed me around and stuff, and then*
> *they… made me feel like I had been there since nursery*
> JN: *So you felt valued, kind of thing?*
> DK: *Yeah they just, they just explained it better if I ask for help;*
> *they knew stuff; they were calm; they just talk to me…*

<div align="right">Darnell: 83-94; 455</div>

I interpreted the extract above as offering Darnell a space in which to demonstrate a strong learning identity within the Interaction Dimension of learning.

Reported speech in Cain's extract below had the dual function of replaying the situation by reproducing the exact words spoken and of shifting the authority from the narrator to the person quoted. It was used here additionally as a method of creating a meta-discourse, whereby the exchange of words was the focus of the narrative rather than the content, and it arguably gave a sense of how Cain perceived the on-going relationships he had with staff at the AP to be on a more equal footing. Perhaps here he felt treated in a more adult manner than at other settings, again offering Cain space to develop a stronger learning identity through improved interactions with staff:

> CP: *I've got a lot more freedom*
> JN: *Okay. How do you mean?*
> CP: *Well, if I want to walk out of a lesson, they'll just say: "Leave*
> *the lesson"; like, if I say I'm walking out of the lesson they'll be*
> *like: "Alright. See you later"*

<div align="right">Cain: 394-396</div>

The narrative extracts above demonstrate both the implicit nature of the Reformation Narrative (it is not obvious that it is a narrative of overcoming adversity unless one has an understanding of the wider context in which these young people lived) and its link across all dimensions of learning (Illeris, 2007). The young people were not explicitly stating that they had overcome any difficulties, this was unfinalised; but they were

reflecting on times and contexts that supported a stronger learning identity. Using Narrative Analysis arguably enabled exploration of their stories to identify how the Reformation Narrative could support the development of opportunities to further strengthen their learning identities in environments compatible to their learning needs.

Whilst I had positioned my research study as being about the school experiences of those participating, several narratives did not directly relate to school. The fact that these young people chose to tell me stories outside of my research remit I interpreted as Narrative methodology at work: they talked of their perceptions of what had been important to them throughout their school life; what had helped them overcome adversity. Using the Reformation Narrative, they constructed narratives of normality – of socialising with friends at the local youth club, playing football, engaging in activities or hobbies they enjoyed or experimenting with smoking weed. They also constructed narratives positioning them as having strong self-identities as learners through stories of enjoyment in engaging in business enterprise opportunities and apprenticeship type schemes. Within these narratives, the young people in this study were choosing not to define themselves as 'Young Offenders' or 'excluded students', but as capable of reformation; transformation as a result of reflection on past experiences and anticipated or preferred futures.

Resiliency theory posits that the above narratives of normality "can be protective factors helping young people overcome stress and adversity" (Wareham, 2012: 109). These Reformation Narratives present professionals with opportunities to consider how best to enhance the protective factors present in these young people. For example, Liam constructed a sense that school was a world of no real relevance to his life and experience, so his passion for motorbikes and consequent preferred future occupational identity (i.e. mechanic) failed to embrace relevant curriculum subjects, such as Level 2 Maths. Liam's strong, highly motivated extra-curricular learning

identity in relation to 'fixing things' could have been utilised more effectively by professionals to support him onto a more productive life path.

There were instances throughout the narratives of the young people in this study whereby disrupted education was not perceived as a disadvantage; they did not always construct themselves as unsuccessful learners, which therefore challenged canonical narratives about disrupted education. Liam constructed a strong learning identity in relation to fixing motorbikes and aspirations to be a mechanic, whilst Sheyden demonstrated agency in developing his skills in music production. Cain, Darnell, Jay and Sheyden constructed narratives suggesting they had enjoyed school when they were there, and Sheyden created a sense that he regretted his exclusion and had missed school since leaving. The stories they told supported the notion that learning identity strengthens and weakens according to psychosocial and sociocultural factors, including intrinsic motivation to learn and positive relationships with teachers. These stories illustrate that not all school experiences were negative, and in Narrative Therapy terms, the young people in this study were beginning to formulate alternative, rich, thick pictures of their futures.

Narratives about the future were 'unfinalised' within the stories of the six young people in this study. There were mixed, often contradictory feelings about the future, such as Liam's assertion that there was nothing he wanted to do when he was older, followed immediately by his statement that he wanted to be a mechanic. Adrianna too constructed an uncertain narrative – hairdressing was an option because it was easy and her sister did it, but she did not really want to do it. Sheyden narrated a sense that he would get into the music industry despite the college not accepting him on a course. Narratives were cautiously optimistic; constructed to portray a tentative view of the future. Whether positive or ambivalent, the narratives co-constructed were Reformation Narratives of unfinalised futures, and for professionals working with these

young people they represent opportunities to actively listen for and recognise this narrative resource help co-construct preferred futures through clearly structured conversations about the curriculum subjects and practical steps needed to form strong learning identities and pursue specific occupational identities.

6.5a *Implications of this narrative resource for EP practice: giving voice*

The Ministry of Justice (2013) set out its desire to reduce offending and improve life chances through rehabilitative processes including education, and I believe that professionals working with young people who have offended have a powerful opportunity when actively listening for and identifying these Reformation Narratives to support the process of re-engagement with learning. EPs have a vital role to play in supporting both professionals and young people with this.

Maruna (in Lieblich & Josselson, 1997: 59) documents the reform narratives of adult repeat offenders and how autobiographical construction was an important, positive behaviour in the process of re-integration and rehabilitation. Maruna suggests that "developing a coherent story can integrate past faults into a generative script for the future, which may contribute to the process of desistance from crime" (in Lieblich & Josselson, 1997: 88). Using a narrative methodology advocating sensitive co-construction and an emancipatory role for professionals in enabling young peoples' voices to be heard as intended would offer opportunities to redress the power imbalances and smooth transitions between the incongruent worlds illuminated through the stories of the young people in this study.

In reality however, the above will be hard to achieve without consideration of the language and learning abilities of young people who have offended. Talbot and Riley (2007) suggest that offenders with learning difficulties are not routinely identified and

consequently do not always receive the support they need. Furthermore, "they become involved in a criminal justice system process that neither recognises nor supports their needs, adding significantly to their vulnerability" (Talbot & Riley, 2007: 156).

Empirical research into the narrative language abilities of Young Offenders has demonstrated that in standardised assessments of oral language competence, young offenders performed significantly more poorly than a typically developing group of young people who were on average two years younger and had one year less formal education (Snow & Powell, 2005). This was taken as evidence that young offenders are at high risk for previously undetected oral language deficits. Talbot and Riley (2007: 160) found that the young offenders participating in their study identified that often they were "unable to understand the words used in court, what was happening during their court appearance and what the outcome of their court appearance might be". They also reported being told by solicitors how to plead without understanding the consequences.

Snow and Powell (2005: 240) described the language abilities of young people who offend as including "poor skills in turn-taking, conversational repair, comprehension; use of irony / metaphor, and the ability to 'code-switch', i.e. adjust communicative style to the demands of the context". They associated these difficulties with other neuro-developmental disorders and influences prevalent in this population, such as chaotic home environments, conduct and attentional disorders, learning disabilities, truancy, substance misuse, executive (cognitive) difficulties and poor social skills (Snow & Powell, 2005).

The lack of recognition and identification of these difficulties has huge implications for issues of power within investigative and evidentiary interviewing by professionals when

discussing incidents or offences with these young people. EPs could have a vital role here in working within YOTs and AP settings, establishing the extent of learning or language difficulty young people have through the myriad of assessment and therapeutic tools they are trained in, which could inform forensic interview and cross-examination procedures to reduce the disadvantage attached to the invisible yet pervasive handicaps associated with language disability (Snow & Powell, 2005). Indeed, Taylor's (2012: 24) first recommendation in his report *'Improving Alternative Provision'* is that "AP policy and practice should have an increased focus on effective assessment and identification of children's needs".

6.6 Summary

The notion of a typology of narrative resources could be described as a heuristic tool to explore the ordering of the multiplicity of voices within one young person's described experiences. My intention in interpreting the narratives of the six young people in this study through a typology has been to help enhance professional listening by providing a simple structure outlining what to listen for, and for young people to reflect therapeutically upon. I believe that applied EP use of Narrative Psychology offers a more sensitive and emancipatory mechanism for young people to construct their stories and to direct professionals to the important aspects of these.

Chapter 7

7.1 Final thoughts and conclusions

In this chapter I return to consider the purpose of this research study. I will then discuss its limitations and future opportunities before summarising and concluding this study.

7.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the narratives of school experience co-constructed between myself and the six young people in this study – Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden. I was interested in the stories these young people chose to tell me and how they were utilised to create and position their self-identities in relation to learning. I was equally interested in the narrative resources they drew on to support their identity positioning within their stories. I wanted to explore the implications for EP practice of their positioning and use of narrative resources in conforming with or challenging the canonical narratives that I identified in the research literature about 'Young Offenders'.

7.3 Seeing Beyond Statistics

My professional experiences to date compelled me to explore the voices behind the circulating statistics relating to Young Offenders; this study enabled me to start that exploration. Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden were all of a similar age and all had experienced school exclusion and the youth justice system: published statistics report that up to 89% of male and female young people in the youth justice

system have experienced school exclusion (MoJ, 2013). Furthermore, they were all accounted for within other statistics about 'Young Offenders': Jay was part of the 25% with a statement of special educational need; Liam was part of the 12% with diagnosed ADHD and Sheyden fell into the 36% of young men who were aged under 14 when they last formally attended school. All six young people contributed to the 46% statistic related to underachieving at school and all were reported by the professionals working with them to have speech, language and communication difficulties to a greater or lesser extent, in line with the statistic that approximately 60% of young people in the youth justice system have some form of communication difficulty (Berelowitz, 2011).

These figures construct bleak narratives for young people who have offended and offer little hope, serving to position these young people as a vulnerable and high-risk group (Berelowitz, 2011). Statistics tend to ignore the percentage population that does not fall within the reported data and give little consideration to the actual experiences of these young people and what they would select as applicable to their lives. Similarly, research discourse and government rhetoric surrounding excluded students includes terms such as disaffected, socially excluded and vulnerable, or the more pejorative: delinquent or criminal (Jones, 2013). These are powerful and negative discourses. Armstrong and Moore (2004: 5) note:

> *By identifying and naming a particular group as 'vulnerable' or 'at risk*
> *of exclusion' we may, implicitly, be contributing to the construction of*
> *an identity of 'the excluded other'.*

This narrative study provided an opportunity to see beyond the published statistics. The unique, complex and rich descriptions of the school experiences of Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden were explored using a narrative method which facilitated a demonstration of the limitations of statistical labelling when engaging with this population of young people.

7.4 <u>Limitations</u>

> *What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning.*
>
> Heisenberg (in Reissman, 2008: 183)

Defining, categorising and assessing the meanings given to both event and experience-centred narratives is difficult and controversial (Squires, in Andrews et al, 2013). My questions and responses within my interviews with Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay, Liam and Sheyden, and the stories I both helped construct and then chose to tell in this research report have been determined by both my own understanding of the world (White and Epston, 1990) and on the basis of phronesis (Holstein and Gubrium, 2012).

In using phronesis as one of my tools of analysis I acknowledge that the narrative interviews could have been assembled in multiple ways, yielding different analyses, akin to patterns in a kaleidoscope (Frank, 2013). However, I believe this was moderated through my close adherence to the NOI framework posited by Hiles and Čermák (2007a), where I systematically and transparently identified and analysed the fabula and sjuzet before assembling the narratives in a way which I felt most closely constituted the stories the young people told me.

I chose to represent the stories of these young people within a framework of learning dimensions and as a narrative typology. I acknowledge that typologies could be subjected to judgements about which are 'good' narrative types and presumptions that 'good' narratives are associated with successful life adjustment (Squire, in Andrews et al, 2013).

Bakhtin (1981) argued that people bring with them a multiplicity of voices, histories and expectations to any social interaction. In a research interview, it is therefore inevitable that both participant and researcher will make assumptions about each other's cultural identity and consequently modify what they say and how they say it, in line with these assumptions (Phoenix, in Andrews et al, 2013). If the same process was undertaken again, either with me or another researcher, the narratives would differ. I therefore offer this study as an unfinished opportunity to create further representations rather than as a finalised presentation of the objective truth about the school experiences of young people who offend.

I acknowledge that there were limitations to my data collection method and I felt that time constraints, my limited experience in conducting narrative interviews and the necessity of recording them impacted upon my attempts to create informal, power-neutral, participant-led conversations (Wareham, 2012). Research highlighting language and communication difficulties in Young Offenders initially seemed incompatible with the Narrative Method (Snow & Powell, 2005), so I attempted to rectify this through using visual approaches to speaking and listening.

The interviews differed from my personal expectations of what a narrative interview would look and sound like. At times, although in some places stories flowed with less input from me, the interviews often sounded disjointed and incoherent. However, I noted Squire's (in Andrews et al, 2013: 56) assertion that co-construction can feel like engaging in conversation and Reissman's (2008) reminder that it can be difficult to put ambiguous or jumbled thoughts into words. Reflecting back, I now believe that each experience was different because of social, environmental, imagination, willingness and personal agency differences given to the process of co-construction both by me and my participants.

Finally, I believe it would have been beneficial to this study to have returned to my participants with a first draft of my completed analysis and typology of narrative resources. Inclusion of the discussion and reflection on my interpretations would have lent verisimilitude to my findings and may have strengthened the credibility of this study.

7.5 <u>Future opportunities</u>

Extensions of this research might include analysis of interviews with professionals involved with Young Offenders, exploring how the narratives constructed around them resonate with, challenge and extend their narratives. This may help triangulate findings and increase verifiability and credibility.

It would be interesting to utilise alternative methods of Narrative Analysis to extend this study. Knowing that Young Offenders are over-represented within the SEN population and a large percentage have language and communication difficulties, visual analysis using forms of communication including artwork, photography or video diary might be an alternative, more powerful method of representing the experiences of young people who offend and who have complex backgrounds and needs.

My Narrative Analysis could be developed into a therapeutic intervention involving further development of the rich, thick narratives of the young people in this study to include alternative futures which could be shared with the professionals involved with them. Greater utilisation of the Tree-of-Life and School-History Grid within therapeutic sessions would enable this. Experiences young people perceived to be oppressive could be 'externalised', an approach in Narrative Therapy which encourages the personification or objectification of a problem (White & Epston, 1990). Focus group Narrative methods or multi-modal methods as suggested by Harrington and Bailey

(2005) might be an alternative therapeutic intervention which may encourage personal and social development and self-empowerment.

7.6 <u>Summary</u>

I hope to have demonstrated the usefulness of Narrative Analysis in providing an alternative method to consider the learning identities of the six young people in this study. Rather than aligning with separate identity statuses, I have argued that Narrative Analysis enables acknowledgement that different situations, moment by moment, provided opportunities for these young people to actively promote or resist a particular strength of learning identity. This analysis suggests that social, canonical and individual agency factors were involved in learning identity formation, and that strength of learning identity depended on how these young people made meaningful interpretations, responses and actions in the present, on the social events of their school experiences in the past.

Narrative offers possibilities for research, assessment and therapeutic intervention (Wareham, 2012). Narrative Oriented Inquiry, with its focus on both content and form of narrative, offers EPs a framework to advocate the events, experiences, rights and views of young people who offend without constraining their voices within the dominant discourses surrounding them. The iterative process of co-construction and returning to the participants used within this research represents ethical practice – enabling and empowering those that EPs work with to voice their opinions regarding what is written or said about them.

7.7 Conclusions

This study has aimed to contribute to the growing body of research where participants are valued as co-researchers and where participant voice is central to the study. In learning about the lived educational experiences of a vulnerable population such as Young Offenders it is hoped that this will contribute to an enhanced understanding of how EPs can utilise their research skills into seeking and analysing the views of young people (Ryrie, 2006); work more effectively with YOTs and APs in order to support the identity development of Young Offenders as learners, and help them foster and maintain secure attachments to their learning communities. With the introduction of new SEN reforms, work with this population up to 25 years old and the associated services around them is likely to become central to EP practice.

7.8 Reflections on how this research will inform my practice as an Educational Psychologist, and how it has developed my understanding of the experiences of young people who have offended

On a personal level, I believe this study has afforded me the opportunity to embrace the messiness of real lives. I have become more aware of how my expectations, understanding and language inexorably help to create the told experiences of the young people whom I work with. This research has also enabled me to address Billington's (2006) questions of how I speak with and of children, how I write of them and listen to them, and how I reflect on my work with children. Working narratively has demonstrated to me how language can be used to limit or expand possibilities, and has consequently helped me to realise the importance of seeking out alternative narratives and developing rich pictures rather than accepting thin, problem-saturated stories at face value. I actively question interpretations I and others make both in my verbal and

written communication, and reflect carefully on the stories created for me about young people in referral forms or in reports from other professionals.

I am now developing my practice so that my starting point in future work is the rights, needs and views of the children and young people I engage with rather than the systems they live within and between. I endeavour where possible to check my interpretations of the views of young people and offer them opportunities to amend or comment upon my words. I feel particularly that my awareness of the need to work ethically with young people in a way that helps them to feel that their views and hopes are valued is evolving at a crucial time in the development of the government's recent SEN reforms. I feel that my research is highly relevant to developing the understanding of other professionals in eliciting views and hopes from young people and to this end I have embarked on developing guidance about seeking the views of young people for my Local Authority.

Learning about working narratively has given me great insight into the experiences of young people who have offended. In particular, I have learnt that it is not the truth of the actual event (a behavioural incident or a criminal offence) itself that is important necessarily, but it is the perceptions of that event, as told through the sjuzet in the story of that event, that is important. I have learnt that how an event is experienced and then told can be very different; identifying and understanding the event (fabula), and distinguishing this from the perceptions of the event (sjuzet), and managing these differences in objective reality and perception has dramatic implications for the lives of the young people in this population. For example, how a young person explains their perception of their involvement in a crime to a Police Officer may have implications for later prosecution and conviction. Learning how to use narrative analysis to unravel the perceptions of events seems to me to be an important part of developing an understanding of how and why they happened, and could be used to offer alternative possibilities and perceptions.

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Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Young Person: _____   **Date:** _____

I want to tell you about some research I am undertaking and to find out if you would like to take part in it.

This project is interested in finding out about the educational experiences of young people who are known to the Youth Offending Service. The hope is that in hearing about your views and experiences, I can understand those experiences and do a bit to help other young people in similar situations.

I would like to interview you personally to find out about your learning experiences so far and your hopes for the future. The interviews are one to one conversations that take about 45 minutes. I will be asking questions, taking notes in a visual format that I hope you will help me with and recording the process using a digital voice recorder. You do not have to answer all of the questions if there are some things you would rather not talk about. I may ask you to take part in more than one interview in order to make sure that what you have said has been correctly understood and recorded and to ask further questions about your experiences. I hope to work collaboratively with you, constructing the story of your experiences.

During the research process, it will helpful if I am able to see background information about you which has already been collected by your school and the Youth Offending Service. It will also be helpful for me to talk about your education to the person responsible for managing your education.

If you agree to take part in the research, you will be doing so voluntarily and therefore may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. You will be able to decide if you wish for your information to be anonymous in the final written report.

Any data collected will only be accessible to those working on the project and will be treated as confidential at all times. Data will be destroyed at the end of the project.

_____

Please put a circle around your answers and sign your name on this form to let me know if you would like to take part in this research.

- **I would like to take part**   **YES / NO**

If you would like to take part, please confirm that you understand and agree to the following conditions:

- I may be asked to take part in one or   YES / NO
  more interviews

- I am free to stop taking part in the study at   YES / NO

any time

- I do not have to tell the researcher anything I would rather not   YES / NO

- My background information from school and the Youth Offending Service will be shared with the researcher   YES / NO

- The researcher will talk to the people managing my education   YES / NO

- All information about me will be treated as confidential   YES / NO

- The researcher will destroy all data about me once the project is finished   YES / NO

Researcher: _____

I confirm that I have read and explained the information above and consent form to the young person named above, and that he / she understands what is involved.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Young Person: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

De-brief and thank you letter to Young People

<div align="right">

Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way
London
WC1H 0AL

</div>

<div align="right">

18th July 2014

</div>

Dear

This letter is just a short note to say a big thank you for participating in my research project for my doctorate in Educational Psychology, which I have now completed.

I was privileged to have the opportunity to speak with you throughout the past year and I enjoyed listening back to the stories you told of your school experiences; I found them moving, very interesting and extremely thought-provoking. You have helped me to learn a great deal about the many complex issues you have often had to face and I admire how you have coped with them.

Through this work with you, I hope that I will now be able to work with other young people like yourself in a supportive way that is useful for them and for me. I hope too, that through having had the courage to share your stories and experiences with me, you will feel that you have contributed to supporting other young people who may have had similar experiences to yours.

Thank you again and good luck for the future, I wish you the very best.

Warm regards

Jennifer Newton

Appendix C

Example Working Transcript – Liam

The raw transcripts were initially read through and separated into approximate segments or episodes, where the narrative appears to be moving forward. Analysis of the fabula and sjuzet took place in the comments column, where events and identity positions were commented upon.

Segments / episodes	Line	Raw Transcript		Comments
1. I come from Ireland	1	JN:	I'm interested in *your* story, how *you* see things, how *you* think about things and how you say things in *your own words*. Basically, what I wanted to do was just like a, a visual thing with you today, if that's alright? It's called a Tree-of-Life. I'm just going to start with kind of roots, which are sort of your roots, your background, your history [quick speech] and I was wondering if you could share your story about sort of where you come from, who's important and your background. Does that make sense?	Story 1 – born and living in Ireland in a travelling community IP – 1: identifies self as a member of the travelling community
	2	LH:	Yeah.	
	3	JN:	Yeah? So [mumbles] over to you.	
	4	LH:	[.....] What, where do I actually come from then?	
	5	JN:	Yeah, where? Yeah.	
	6	LH:	[...] I come from *Ireland* [proud tone].	
	7	JN:	Okay.	Pride in family background
2. My Dad committed suicide	8	LH:	<u>And like, [.....] / the most important person in my family right now is *my dad* [...] 'cause he committed *suicide* in prison like Monday.</u>	Story 2 - death of father
	9	JN:	On Monday?	
	10	LH:	[….....].	
	11	JN:	So you're having […]?	
	12	LH:	Problems. Yeah.	
	13	JN:	Yeah.	Quite matter of fact but head was down; sat on hands when he said this, indicating likely inner turmoil despite outer calm.
	14	LH:	[.....] <u>But obviously,</u> I've *spoken* to my mum like / [mumbles] my step dad and my older sister, <u>but […]</u> / I *wanted to meet* <u>my dad when he *came home* like</u> /	
	15	JN:	Right. [….....]. That must be quite difficult for you at the moment.	Story 3 – wanting to be with father IP – 2: Helpless / unrequited wishes??
	16	LH:	[…] [Quiet speech]. <u>It *is*. [……]</u> / [Tape switched off at this point – Liam asked if he wanted to continue. He wanted to continue]	

				Finding Dad's suicide hard to comprehend – theories of bereavement / loss
3. I was born in Ireland then moved to England at 13	17	JN:	[.......] [Writing]. Were you born in Ireland, or did you…?	Story 4 – moving to live in England
	18	LH:	Born in Ireland	
	19	JN:	And how old were you when you came over […] to England?	
	20	LH:	About what / 7?	Not clear on when they moved
	21	JN:	Okay.	
	22	LH:	And then I went secondary, and then I got *kicked out /* Then I went New Woodlands, then came here.	Story 5 – being excluded from Secondary School IP – 3: Fighting / getting into trouble (as a way of life?)
4. I was travelling in Ireland	23	JN:	Yeah. What about when you were in Ireland, [quiet speech] because if you were 7, you must have been at school over there as well?	Story 1 – born and living in Ireland in a travelling community
	24	LH:	[Mumbles] Weren't /	
	25	JN:	Oh, you weren't?	
	26	LH:	I was / *travelling*	
	27	JN:	Oh, okay.	
	28	LH:	At the age of three / I was *travelling* […] like [.....] /	
5. All I remember is all the fights I had	29	JN:	Can you tell me about that?	Story 1 – born and living in Ireland in a travelling community IP – 3: Fighting / getting into trouble (as a way of life?)
	30	LH:	[...] Hmm / yeah /	
	31	JN:	What do you remember about it?	
	32	LH:	[...] All I remember is / all the *fights* I had /	
	33	JN:	Hmm. Was that, who was that with?	
	34	LH:	[...] Just other Irish people [...] / that was travelling *with us*. [.....] / And er, and then [...] /'cause my dad used to organise them / then since / he went in prison, [...] / I aint done *nothing* / Got myself arrested a couple of times.	Focus on fighting rather than travelling – no mention of how he lived or what daily life was like, straight into recounting memories of fighting.
6.	35	JN:	What was that for?	Story 6 – offending;

I got arrested and I'm on YOT	36	LH:	One was the ABH, one was for attempted robbery / One was for robbery and ABH / and one was handling stolen goods / <u>But</u> I *got away* with them / except for one / <u>That's the robbery and assault / and that's all [...]</u> / which I'm on YOT for.	getting involved with YOT IP – 4: being an 'offender' Getting away with it – avoiding / escaping consequences of offending behaviour – PRIDE at this?
	37	JN:	And that's at the moment?	
	38	LH:	<u>[Mumbles] Got to go there today</u> /	
	39	JN:	[Quiet speech] Have you? [.....] So you've got this place, you've got school and you've got YOT at the moment. Are they kind of [staggered speech] the most significant [...] sort of...?	
				Aside
7. YOT is helpful	40	LH:	<u>Yeah. [Louder, high pitch] I *actually* like* my YOT work / 'cause it's trying to sort me things out / to like do in my spare time / and all that. [.....].</u>	Aside to the actual event being recalled (offences leading to being with YOT) * The word 'actually' perhaps signalling surprise that he likes this element of his life.
	41	JN:	What sorts of things is he...	
	42	LH:	<u>Like / fix up *motorbikes*, like, / because a place I went / to do my community service / it was one of the places that I live near / so he might be sorting something out / for like this Saturday and / we'll take a bike down there / and just, and just / *fix it up.*</u>	
8. I like fixing things	43	JN:	That leads me nicely onto the next bit I was going to ask you about, which was the sorts of things that you're good at and things that you like doing.	Positive experiences of being good at something
	44	LH:	<u>Fixing... / The things I like doing *most* are fixing bikes / like *peds* and all that and [...] / riding on my / riding on my dirt bike. [.....] / On like, *in races* / and all that.</u>	IP – 5: being someone good at 'fixing' things (especially mechanical things)
9. Racing my bikes	45	JN:	Oh, you actually race?	Story 7 – racing his bikes
	46	LH:	I've injured myself / a couple of times.	
	47	JN:	Oh! That doesn't sound so good.	
	48	LH:	But that was the s.../ that was messing about / <u>in my area / on the bike / on my hill.</u>	Messing around on bikes, speeding, crashing, fixing bikes
	49	JN:	Right, what happened there then?	
	50	LH:	[Tuts]. I was going down the hill too fast / and a car side swiped me / that was coming from [quick speech] / the other direction / <u>it side swiped me /</u> and I spun off the bike.	
	51	JN:	Hmm.	

	52	LH:	[...] And then I got back up / and sorted it out <u>and I said</u> / "Take it back up the hill" / 'cause he damaged <u>it</u> and I / had to fix it up for a race the next day.	Performing the story – dramatizing it with speech as remembered from the actual event (Reissman, 2008)
	53	JN:	Oh god! [...] That sounds a bit stressful.	
	54	LH:	<u>Not really / I've got like / four dirt bikes.</u>	
	55	JN:	Oh right, okay.	
	56	LH:	<u>But they're all the same colour / and they've all got the same plates.</u>	IP – 6: staying cool under pressure
	57	JN:	[High pitch] Was that your choice? [...] Why, why did you choose that?	
	58	LH:	<u>So I didn't / if they've all got the *same plates* / I can't get stopped.</u>	
	59	JN:	You can't get stopped?	Rel. with police poor?
	60	LH:	<u>[Laughter]. [.......] 'Cause they're all the same colour and they're all the same / make and that. They've all got the same plates and [...] / they've all got the same chassis number / so if they search that bike / it's *legit.* [...] / So they think it's *not stolen* / and that.</u>	IP – 4: being an 'offender' Avoiding / escaping consequences of illegal activity – element of planning to escape getting caught indicates real affinity with this identity and a choice to identify with this community. Learned behaviour through father / family? An 'identity position' as opposed to a 'subject position'.
	61	JN:	Oh, okay. [.....] Hmm.	
	62	LH:	I never *stole* bikes / I ride them / They're off friends like / <u>but I don't know where / *they've got* them from.</u>	
				Contradictory response to previous statement, possibly in response to my response? Denial of IP – 4? Such a swift change in position suggests affinity with identity as offender, but wants to proffer a different, contradictory subject position, i.e. that of victim, if caught?
10. My dogs are	63	JN:	Oh right, I see what you mean. Yeah. [...] Is there anything else that, erm, you think is important to you?	Story 8 – dogs Laughter suggests a)

important to me	64	LH:	Yeah, [louder speech] my *dog*. [Laughter]	not taking my question seriously or b) distancing himself from the fact that his dogs really are actually quite important to him or c) subject positioning – his dogs shouldn't be important to him but actually they are???
	65	JN:	Your dog?	
	66	LH:	*Four* of them / actually.	
	67	JN:	Four?	
	68	LH:	I've got an English bull mastiff and three Irish Brits and they're all fri... / [stammers] all friendly except for one [...] / that used to have a bad past /	
	69	JN:	Oh, okay. [...] I guess that's...	The fact that he goes on to list his dogs suggests that they really are important to him, and that the fact that I'm showing interest in talking about them gives him encouragement to continue talking about them – narrative methodology in action??
	70	LH:	I used to have six dogs but one / one died and one got / shot by police.	
	71	JN:	Oh right. [.....] So you've got your dogs. Is it just you that looks after them or is it a family thing, or...?	
	72	LH:	[Quiet speech] Me.	
	73	JN:	Just you?	
	74	LH:	I *like* dogs / I'm *supposed* to look after them /	
	75	JN:	Oh right.	Not expanded upon – should I have asked more? My remit was school experiences though, although I was asking at this point about background and things that are important. IP – 7: responsible person Emphasising IP – 7.
11. My Dad's flat	76	LH:	I don't *really mind* [quiet speech] / 'cause I get to like go to *my dad's flat* / and do it 'cause I live / I wanted to / *live* with my dad [...] / *Basically,* they live in my dad's *house*, yeah / but I *always go up* there / like to *feed* them / and everything.	Story 3 – wanting to be with father Aside – Dad and feelings about him?
	77	JN:	Hmm.	
	78	LH:	Sometimes / I sleep there / if I want to [.......] / and then [high pitch] / *I just go home* /	Emphasising autonomy in own life – able to make own choices – continuing IP – 7: responsible for own actions and choices?
	79	JN:	Hmm. So you must have [...] certain values then that are important, like looking after dogs, there's a lot of things you've got to do there, isn't there?	
	80	LH:	Not even that / my PS3's / in his house /	

	81	JN:	You what?	Clarifying and reinforcing his sense of responsibility to his dogs, but…
	82	LH:	[Amused] My PlayStation 3's in his house /	
	83	JN:	[Laughter]. Oh, so there's a motivation for going there as well.	Contradictory response – suggesting now that he is not so responsible – that he only goes to his Dad's house to play his PS3 (motivated by wish to play PS3 rather than see dogs), and just happens to feed the dogs whilst he's there??
	84	LH:	Yeah.	
	85	JN:	Yeah. [...] But you still...	
	86	LH:	Mainly / it's just to *look after* [stammers] / just to *play with* *my dogs* / basically.	
				Back to IP – 7.
12. Getting more dogs	87	JN:	Yeah?	Story 8 (continued) – dogs
	88	LH:	'Cause I *might be* getting / another one / soon /	
	89	JN:	Oh right.	
	90	LH:	Like a little puppy / a puppy, [mumbles] / 'cause one of my female dogs / like, one of *my Irish Pits* / are pregnant / so I might be getting a couple more dogs /	
	91	JN:	Oh.	
	92	LH:	But I might *sell them* […] / and just keep the one.	Reflection on the situation
	93	JN:	Hmm. [.....] Right.	
	94	LH:	*Don't ask me* which dog's did that / I don't know.	
	95	JN:	[Laughter].	
	96	LH:	I've got two girls and two boys /	
	97	JN:	[Amused] So it could be any combination. Yeah.	
	98	LH:	Could be my English bull mastiff / I'm not sure.	
13. I reckon I'll be doing a legal job…	99	JN:	[Chuckles]. Okay. So those are, those are your bikes and your dogs. Those are things that are important to you. [...] What about in school? Anything important to you here?	Story 9 – future employment
	100	LH:	[...] There's not even *nothing* I want to do / when I'm older […] / I want to be a *mechanic.*	Contradictory response – perhaps he is initially answering my
	101	JN:	Yeah. You've very good at leading onto the next thing 'cause I was going to ask you about the	

				question about 'here' specifically at school, then giving me his ideal job, unrelated to my specific question about school. If this is the case, this is the first hint that school is not providing the necessary training / qualifications he wants or needs in order to learn to do his preferred job, or what is most important to him.
			future.	
102	LH:		[Laughter]	
103	JN:		I was going to ask you that. What do you see yourself doing in about a years' time, or...?	
104	LH:		I think I might be doing [stutters] / a legal job / I'm not sure / but I reckon I might be [stutters] / I'll be doing a legal job.	
105	JN:		Illegal or a legal?	
106	LH:		Legal.	
107	JN:		Legal.	
108	LH:		Yeah / 'cause *I want to work* / as a mechanic / so that's *definitely* got to be legal /	Cautious about suggesting he might go into 'legal' employment, suggesting that the 'illegal' way of life is the one he is most familiar with.
109	JN:		Yeah. [Laughter]. Yeah, you're not going to get anybody to trust you, are you?	
110	LH:		'Cause I know / 'cause I know someone / from my *sister's* school [...] called Miss P / that knows people that do mechanics / *so she might* be trying to* / get me a job when I leave school /	
111	JN:		Right. So what's going to be important to you know, for a legal job? You know.	
112	LH:		Get there on time / [Quick speech] Don't get fired /	Confirming and sounding more definite that he would like to enter 'legal' employment in the future, suggesting a subject position here – society has positioned Liam as 'illegal' / an 'outsider'?
113	JN:		[Laughter].	
114	LH:		And try not to steal all the bikes. [Laughter].	
115	JN:		Yeah. [Laughter]. That's probably going to keep...	
116	LH:		Unless / I can ride it home.	
117	JN:		Well, [...] I think that's, don't you get to drive them anyway as a mechanic because you have to test them, don't you, and stuff like that? So...?	Use of connections – people known to him, rather than trying to get a job on his own merit. Is this way of doing things, i.e. vouching for people or being vouched for, the only way he knows? Is this why he does not sound like he is willing to rely on his own skill and ability to persuade or demonstrate his ability?
118	LH:		You need a *license* [...] / but I'm getting my license / when I'm 16 *anyway* / so…	
119	JN:		Okay, so that's new for the future. [Quick speech] That's an ambition for the future, isn't it, to get your license?	
120	LH:		[.....] Getting my license / I've already *got a ped* / I've got a 200CC.	
121	JN:		Yeah. [.....].	

				* be trying to – does this suggest that Liam is not optimistic that she or anyone can get him a job? Insecurity / uncertainty / external locus of control / attribution theory Laughter deflecting reality / truth of that statement that actually it will be hard for him to resist temptation to steal?
14. I love my bikes! It runs in the family…	122	LH:	So that, and it, and / I bought it from *some shop,* [...] / like some shop /that buys them *fresh* / bought it from that shop / for *two grand*.	Story 10 – buying a bike legitimately
	123	JN:	Okay.	
	124	LH:	And it was old and everything, [...] / pushed it up my hill, filled it up and then just took it for a *test drive* / Just like, round the back where I live / 'cause like round the back where I live / that's where *my Nan lives* and it's like / *private land* so she lets me* ride my bikes there / sometimes.	IP – 7: responsible person * 'She lets me': Nan in charge? Different from earlier positioning of Liam as autonomous over own decisions. Nan must be an influential person in his life?
	125	JN:	Because you wouldn't be legal out on the road yet, would you? [Laughter].	
	126	LH:	No / They can't catch *me anyway.* [Laughter].	
	127	JN:	I'm sure they couldn't. [Laughter].	
	128	LH:	Not on my bike / 'cause not on my superbike.	IP – 4. Us against them subject positioning here? Also identity positioning in that Liam is making a choice – agency, to have that identity of 'offender'.
	129	JN:	Hmm.	
	130	LH:	My old one, 100, *1000CC* / They can't catch me.	
	131	JN:	It sounds like you've got a lot of knowledge about those bikes. [.....] Have you had to...	
	132	LH:	I actually *tell the truth* / I've got *four* scramblers, five dirt bikes and [slow speech, thinking] seven [slow speech] 1000CCs.	Story 11 – riding bikes
	133	JN:	Well, you're going to have to educate me now because I don't know what the difference is. I know what...	Repetition of 'they can't catch me' suggests Liam is often / always on the lookout, looking over his shoulder??
	134	LH:	A superbike's like one of them [...] / see them like MotoGP things?	

135	JN:	Yeah, yeah.	
136	LH:	Yeah, that's that.	Aside regarding bikes – how many he has; explaining the differences to me, generally demonstrating his knowledge of bikes and giving a sense of how important they are to him. This conversation, whilst not about school experiences or learning, does give a strong sense of what Liam wants to be seen as in life (a mechanic; knowledgeable about bikes and able to fix them). This story, although an aside to the purpose of the research interview, serves to emphasise the point that school and the education system have not provided Liam with what will be essential tools for his future – training and preparation for life as a mechanic. This aside offers Liam a subject position
137	JN:	Like on a race, the races on the TV?	
138	LH:	Yeah.	
139	JN:	Okay, yeah.	
140	LH:	It's like that / but the ones on telly are like 250 and mine's 1000 / And my dirt bikes are like what they race / on like muddy tracks.	
141	JN:	Okay, yeah.	
142	LH:	And so's my pit bikes.	
143	JN:	Are they the ones that [...] seem quite springy?	
144	LH:	Yeah, the dirt bikes are the ones where you rev / it digs into the ground.	
145	JN:	Oh, I know. I see it on telly. Yeah.	
146	LH:	So you get more grip.	
147	JN:	Yeah. So you, is it the dirt bikes you race then?	
148	LH:	[...] Dirt bikes and my pit bikes.	
149	JN:	Yeah.	
150	LH:	[.......] The only reason why I like racing, I like going over the big jumps.	
151	JN:	I bet. They look amazing on telly, I've seen it.	
152	LH:	It's scary! [Laughter].	
153	JN:	I bet, yeah.	
154	LH:	'Cause I've, I've almost *broken my back* trying to land one of them / *because* I was practicing, [...] / I went up and my bike *cut out and just dropped* / and as I landed, I landed funny on the back, *back of the bike*. [.....] / I've done that thing, you see like [...] / jump things, *them ramp things*.	
155	JN:	Yeah.	
156	LH:	[High pitch] I've done them. I've done them before and / I'm not scared of that.	
157	JN:	Right.	
158	LH:	I was prob, it was probably 'cause the bike I was on when I was racing / it was a bit faulty 'cause it kept like *conking out*.	

159	JN:	[Gasps].	
160	LH:	But I had another one / <u>back in the garage there</u> / already fixed up / <u>that [...] one that's not faulty</u> [Quick speech] / I left the faulty one there / and <u>just</u> bought a new one.	
161	JN:	Oh, you didn't feel like fixing it?	
162	LH:	No.	
163	JN:	Would it be old...	Explaining love of bikes and racing
164	LH:	<u>I think [stutters], yeah, because no</u> / my step dad took it, he fixed it and I just told him to ride it / <u>'cause he's got a license.</u>	
165	JN:	Okay, yeah. Yeah. [.....].	Laughter indicates enjoyment in being scared: physiological – adrenaline: relate to fighting / neurological impact of fighting at a young age??
166	LH:	<u>But all my, my [slow speech] dirt bikes are, I think they're 250CC</u> / And they're not that fast.	
167	JN:	I was going to ask, are they fast or are they just pow...	
168	LH:	<u>They're just powerful. They've got just, it's got a powerful rev [...]</u> / but it's cheating because [mumbles] when I go into races, I have to say my bike's 150 / 'cause at my age I only can ride 50 to 150 / They don't know that my bike's 250 / That's how I always, that's why I'm always leaving them.</u>	Pride in getting injured – a sense of being active / engaging in something / achieving something or at least attempting to push towards a goal??
169	JN:	Oh, I see.	Relate to learner identity…
170	LH:	<u>I'm always leaving. I'm like, and I've raced my R1 on a track where my R1s on a track</u> / I've rode it on Silverstone.	
171	JN:	Have you? That must have been a good experience!	
172	LH:	<u>It actually was / except</u> I almost crashed, 'cause I was racing with some other friend of mine / that's got their R1s.	Suggests practice at something he is interested in is possible – overcoming fear and failure – all relate to school somehow – theories of learning in Lit Review??
173	JN:	Yeah.	
174	LH:	As I went round the corner / I clipped one of my friends / he went down and then <u>accidently,</u> [stammers] / I <u>accidentally</u> rode over him.	
175	JN:	Oh!	
176	LH:	He was alright though.	Reasoning as to why the bike would cut out – again suggests the ability to problem solve when interested in the activity – relate to learning theories in Lit Review
1177	JN:	Is he still a friend? [Laughter].	
178	LH:	[Slow, thoughtful speech] Yeah. [Laughter].	
179	JN:	Oh, so it sounds like you've got quite a lot of really	

	180		positive, good things going for you really. [.....] And it's not...	
		LH:	Well, my bikes are at my house / <u>I don't know how my mum fits them in there though. I don't know how I fit it all in there</u> / All my bikes are in the living room.	Cheating in races; leaving the others behind. Aware that cheating is wrong by bringing the fact out in conversation?
	181	JN:	Wow! [Laughter]. And she doesn't mind?	
	182	LH:	[High pitch] No.	
	183	JN:	Is she into it as well? Is it kind of a family [quiet speech] type...?	Story 12 – riding at Silverstone
	184	LH:	My mum used to ride bikes back, [stammers] ride bikes like me back in the day / She's still got her license though, if she goes to <u>work I just tell her to</u> take one of the bikes, in 'nit? / <u>She takes one, she crashes it, she pays for it.</u>	
	185	JN:	[Laughter].	
	186	LH:	[Mumbles].And kind of... / On one of my superbikes, the one that she rides [...], if she's on it now / I paid ten grand for it / Just have to pay for repairs which were 500.	Repetition of 'accidentally' suggests he wants to make sure I know he didn't do it on purpose – identity positioning at play – he doesn't want to be seen as someone who hurts someone else? Contradictory to his offending behaviour – ABH.
	1 187	JN:	They're expensive, aren't they?	
	188	LH:	Uh-huh. I don't mind though / <u>'cause it's like</u>, 'cause I got it from a dealer [.....], like 'cause I like / you see them like bike shops? [.....] / I bought it from them.	
	189	JN:	Right.	
	190	LH:	'Cause it's not like a normal superbike / *Normal* superbikes, you have to [...] like put the key in and start it / <u>Mine's just, [stutters]</u> my superbikes, they kick start / So you just kick it and it starts straight away. [.....].	
	191	JN:	You sound really knowledgeable about these bikes.	
	192	LH:	Except for, except one of my ped's *not a kick start* / Yeah, my ped is a kick start / except when I tried to kick it, it went *straight through* my window.	Keen to continue talking about his interest in bikes and how they are important in his family life
	193	JN:	Oh!	
	194	LH:	[Laughter]. *Straight* through my living room window / because I forgot to hold the back break.	
				Suggests control

				within the home – Mum does what Liam tells her? Confidence
				Story 13 – riding bikes as a family interest IP – 8: family as members of the biking community
				Emphasising that he does do some things legally / legitimately?
				Continues to demonstrate his knowledge of bikes – relate to learner identity – he is able to learn providing it is something that interests him?
				Recounting a difficulty with a bike and acknowledging that he does not always get it right?
				Contradicting himself – incoherent narrative; trying to recall – see Snow and Powell article???
15. No one cares…	195	JN:	Oh. Whoops! [.....] So this sounds like [...] you've got loads of [...] you know, skills and strengths and stuff like that, and [...] did, have you ever had the opportunity at school to talk about you know, what you are actually you know, really good at and really passionate about?	Story 14 – telling people about his interest in bikes
	196	LH:	Yeah / but no one really cares. [Laughter].	IP – 2: unrequited wishes?? Subject positioning – oppressed by society because interest in bikes / racing is not what society wants from him??
	197	JN:	So how, who's... I'm just intrigued because you've got all this life going on, you know, outside of school...?	

	198	LH:	I don't really *want to tell* teachers / 'cause they'll go back to Ant.	Liam wants to talk about his interests but feels that a) no one is interested and b) if he does there will be repercussions for him and his family because not all his bikes are 'legit'. Identity positioning – Liam then makes a choice about not telling people about his interests because they will tell the police. Also indicates lack of trust in those around him.
	199	JN:	Who's Ant?	
	200	LH:	PC Ant.	
	201	JN:	Okay.	
	202	LH:	The police officer that works in our school / and then he'll go, er, [quick speech] / to my house and take all my bikes like / then I'll start going / I'll start going *ape* on feds.	
	203	JN:	Oh, right. Is that the way it [...] works?	
	204	LH:	Yeah / that's how them something / if like they know I've got like a ped in my home or something / and they'll go back to Ant […] / Ant'll go check my yard / see if it's legit […] / I don't really care 'cause all my bikes are / all my bikes are legal anyway / so you can't take any of them.	IP – 9: outsider / sense of disconnect to school community because of the presence of the police? Sense of 'us vs. them' again; feeling out of control (compare to comments about the biker who damaged his bike and his mother – Liam asserted his control in those situations through the way he told those stories)
	205	JN:	So in a sense, it wouldn't [...] matter [...] but it's just you don't want that to happen?	
				Re-emphasising his bikes are legal (or at least his interpretation of legal)
16. My Dad	206	LH:	[Quick speech] The only thing they probably can take / is my dad's *Ferrari*.	Story 15 – Dad and his Ferrari
	207	JN:	Wow!	
	208	LH:	Which they won't find in the yard / 'cause only I know where it is.	
	209	JN:	Hmm. [...].	
	210	LH:	He stole it / from […] / Camberwell Estate.	Positioning father as a thief; legitimising his own position as a thief? Justifying why he is with YOT?
	211	JN:	Right. [.......].	
	212	LH:	And it's the fa / it's the fastest Ferrari you can get / as well.	

	213	JN:	Wow.	Exaggeration? Wanting to impress?
	214	LH:	I've drove it / once or twice [.....] / when I was little.	
	215	JN:	[Laughter].	
	216	LH:	No, 'cause my dad was like / putting his feet on *the thing innit* / and I was *like steering it*.	
	217	JN:	Oh I see. Yeah.	
	218	LH:	I was only little.	
	219	JN:	Well, that's...	
	220	LH:	I was only at least like [.....] / *eleven* when he first got it / when he first got it / that's when I started *driving it.* [louder speech] / but *my dad's* the one who learnt me how to ride / like *ride bikes.*	
17. My first bikes	221	JN:	Oh okay, so it's always...	Story 16 – first bikes
	222	LH:	Since the age of five / that's when I got my first mini motor / my first 125 mini motor.	Emphasising the importance of bikes in his life and how he has grown up with them – relating to something he and his Dad were interested in together? Emphasising again that bikes are a family passion?
	223	JN:	Yeah.	
	224	LH:	And then I got a quad / which I don't know what happened to that / I left that in Leysdown.	
	225	JN:	[.....] Right.	
	226	LH:	And erm, then I got [.....], erm, [.....] / a mini scrambler / which I don't know where it is / I *don't care* 'cause / actually it's probably / at my little cousin's house.	
	227	JN:	Yeah. So all this...	
	228	LH:	[Over speaking].	
18. I like sport, but I really wanted to do mechanics	229	JN:	So all these bikes, are you, what course, what are you doing here at the moment? Is it...	Story 17 – wanting to be a mechanic
	230	LH:	Sport.	
	231	JN:	Is that it? How come you came sort of do sport here?	IP – 10: being good at sport; active person
	232	LH:	[...] 'Cause I *like playing football.* [Quick speech] / 'cause that's what I *mostly* do / in my spare time / I just play football.	
	233	JN:	Right. So [...]...	
	234	LH:	Or / I'm getting up to *no good* / you know. [Laughter].	IP – 4: acknowledging his 'offender' status, but offering this as a second option for his
	235	JN:	Okay, so what erm, [.....] I'm just trying to kind of get an idea of [....] what would, what would have helped	

			in school or you know, how come you've chosen sport when it's, you sound so, you sound so passionate...?	spare time suggests a weakening of this identity position, especially if related back to 'story 6' (offending / getting involved with YOT)
	236	LH:	[Interrupts, abrupt] Because they *don't do* mechanics here / if they done mechanics / I'd be doing mechanics / you know / And I *won't* come out of lesson [laughter].	
	237	JN:	Yeah, [high pitch] so in a years' time...	
	238	LH:	Ten minutes till sport / yeah?	IP – 11: Interested in learning / training to be a mechanic
	239	JN:	In a years' time, if they [.....] would you ever go for a sort of, a qualification in mechanics or something like that because that's what you see yourself doing?	Implication that by not wanting to leave a mechanics lesson he would have a strong sense of being a learner and wanting to learn something. Abruptness of the way Liam talks at first suggestive of being annoyed / disappointed that his interest is not addressed through school. The fact that he wouldn't come out of a mechanics lesson also suggests that he would see that as very important to him.
	240	LH:	Yeah / I want to go college / when I... I want to go college / when I leave here.	
	241	JN:	And do you think you would do mechanics at, over sport, or...?	
	242	LH:	*Mechanics.*	
	243	JN:	Yeah. It just sounds like you're so passionate about it. [High pitch] You've got so much knowledge about it. [...] Yeah.	
	244	LH:	I know *too much* about mechanics / that's what *everyone* says.	
				Very definite about what his ideal choice of subject at college would be.
				Suggesting that he has some kind of reputation as very interested in mechanics – a positive, strong learning identity here.
19. I didn't like school…	245	JN:	Hmm. Do you feel like, [...] I'm just wondering you know, about your past experience with school...	Story 18 – Getting excluded at secondary school
	246	LH:	[Abrupt] I *didn't like* school /	
	247	JN:	You started, you said you started about 13, was it?	Very clear; abrupt in speech – no thought needed.
	248	LH:	Year seven.	
	249	JN:	Year seven.	

	250	LH:	*The end* of year seven / <u>that's when I started school.</u>	
	251	JN:	Right.	
	252	LH:	<u>Now,</u> I got *kicked out* in year [slow speech, thinking] [...] / the beginning of year eight / <u>threatening a teacher [.....]</u> / I got Connisborough.	
	253	JN:	What happened?	
	254	LH:	<u>The teacher tried</u> / the teacher tried to chat with me / 'cause I told him, "*No,* I'm going," / so I dashed a chair at him / and then he called me in / [stutters] he called my mum / <u>told me to come in</u> the next day then / he <u>tried</u> to chat *rubbish* again / so I done it again [...] / and it *weren't* no nice chair / either / it was a *wooden one* /	IP – 12: A young person who gets excluded from school
	255	JN:	Hmm […] So like with the lessons, so I'm just thinking like before that, were you frustrated with him? Was he [...] not understanding what you were saying...	The initial part of this story is not shared – why was 'he going' in the first place? Was it to do with learning? Friendships? Bullying?
	256	LH:	Uh-huh [agreeing].	
	257	JN:	... or were you not understanding the lesson, or what was going on?	Emphasising the force used to hurt the teacher; suggests premeditation? Difficulties with managing anger?
	258	LH:	No / 'Cause I used to bunk <u>innit</u> / <u>I used to bunk</u> my lessons.	
	259	JN:	Right.	
	260	LH:	And <u>like go /</u> go to other classes <u>like /</u> and do their Work	
	261	JN:	Why did you choose to do that?	
	262	LH:	<u>[.....] It's better /</u>	
	263	JN:	Yeah, just you...	We now find out the reason for the exclusion – the teacher tried to talk to him because he was bunking lessons or go and work in different classrooms because of some of the people in his class. Narrative about exclusion is not coherent but jointly constructed here
	264	LH:	<u>'Cause I didn't like / some of the people / in my class / either.</u>	
	265	JN:	Oh, okay. Yeah.	
	266	LH:	<u>Then I got / then I got kicked out</u> / and then I went NW /<u>which they listen to me / like what I want like / in the future and all that.</u>	
	267	JN:	Yeah.	
	268	LH:	<u>So they done what they could /</u> Then my teacher in there said, <u>"Oh, I'm going to try and get you back into mainstream" / but he didn't like / and I come here, like /</u> I've been back to New Woodlands / but that teacher don't work there no more /	
	269	JN:	Oh, right.	

	270	LH:	He's lucky / 'cause I would have smashed his face in /	Story 19 – experiences at NW unit after being excluded from mainstream school
	271	JN:	Yeah, because do you feel, well, how do you feel about him? What did he [...]...?	
	272	LH:	I don't want to say this on the video but no / there are no polite words for it […] /	This teacher said he would do one thing but something else actually happened which Liam did not want or like.
	273	JN:	Do you feel like he […] let you down?	
	274	LH:	[Softly spoken] Yeah / basically.	
	275	JN:	[.....] Yeah. [...] So I just can't imagine...	
	276	LH:	No / there's a couple of teachers I used to like in Woodlands though / one / one of them was [stutters] kind, [...] and / he's the one who taught me like how to fight / and all that / and *defend myself* / 'Cause when I was in New Woodlands / I never used to defend myself / like / 'cause I used to get *bullied* / But here / if anyone tries bullying me / they'll get their *face* cut open […] / after school / 'cause I'm related to gypsies / so all I have to / do is make *one phone call* / then they'll / go down there and that *police officer* won't handle my cousins / [Quick speech] All my cousins live in Gypsy Hill /	This appears to have given rise to a very high level of anger, although Liam tempers this with a story about one of the teachers being kind to him and teaching him to defend himself.

Liam appears to be giving both his reaction to getting bullied over the years and his opinion on what should happen to bullies. He strongly appears to be asserting his status within the travelling community again here and his control over what happens in his life: IP – 1; IP – 13: in control of his life. |
	277	JN:	Hmm. [.....].	
	278	LH:	Because if my cousins / *come down* here / they're either coming down *with guns* / or they're coming down *with knives* / and I know my cousins, [...] / I know my cousins. [High pitch] / even my *little* cousins / like five year olds / even my five year old cousins got a 48 revolver / real [...] / he's *mad* for them /	
	279	JN:	Hmm. [.....].	
	280	LH:	My 21 year old / my 21 year old cousin has been in prison *four times* [...] / for manslaughter.	
	281	JN:	Right.	Story 20 – Cousins
	282	LH:	One when he was ten / and he went juvenile / Felton juvenile [...] / then he went back / then he went back in [.....] maybe Belmarsh / three more times / and he's *seen my dad* / ah [grunt like pain].	Mixing fantasy with reality or is this genuinely Liam's reality at home? Exaggerating for my benefit, asserting strength in his position as a result of feeling bullied / victimised in school environment? IP – 14: Victim

				Again, asserting IP – 1 and IP – 3. Relate back to learning theory – how can Liam focus on learning at school when such significant events are happening outside of school?
				Referral back to father. The 'ah' almost appeared like a physical reaction to referring back to his Dad, suggesting he is feeling the loss of his father more significantly than he is showing.
20. Coping	283	JN:	[.....] And how are you coping with everything that's going on?	
	284	LH:	What, at school? [...] or...?	
	285	JN:	With all this?	
	286	LH:	Alright. <u>I wouldn't necessarily get stopped and searched.</u>	Although Liam gives very little away in terms of expressing his feelings directly, the stories he is telling here suggest several different identity and subject positions, and perhaps a very confused and incoherent view of how he should present himself within this interview.
	287	JN:	Hmm.	
	288	LH:	<u>'Cause that's what I *hate* when they nick me for something that I ain't done, like. [Quick speech] I even told a police officer that, "Stop nicking me for [stutters] nothing I ain't done," like. [...].</u>	
	289	JN:	Hmm. [....] So that's frustrating?	
	290	LH:	Uh-huh. [...] [agreeing]	Dramatizing his life – performing (see Reissman, 2008)
21. Getting nicked and going on a rampage (as a way of coping?)	291	LH:	'Cause when I got nicked / <u>for the attempted robbery and the stolen goods</u> / I was sitting in that... / No [Slower speech] / for the attempted robbery / I was sitting in that cell for like / from four till / <u>I think it was *about* eight</u> [...] / and then / then they let me go / <u>'cause apparently it was mistaken identity</u> / but for the stolen goods / I was only in the cell for an hour / 'cause I got nicked at my house /	Demonstrating how frustrating it was

Story 21 – getting nicked

Suggesting Liam is in control telling me the police were lucky?? Or portraying self as victim or unlucky, as the police were the |
| | 292 | JN: | Right. So you've got a lot... | |
| | 293 | LH: | <u>The police officers are lucky</u> they didn't / nick the | |

			guy downstairs / 'cause I would have just ducked out the window / and just gone out / they won't catch me [Amused] / I'm too quick /	lucky ones? Suggesting he is aware of his skill set – being too quick for the police, if he gets the chance to get away (locus of control theory here?). Also suggesting the 'guy downstairs' should have got nicked – was he involved in this story?
	294	JN:	That's why you…	
	295	LH:	Especially 'cause I've got one of my / especially 'cause I've got one of my / dirt bikes / outside my garden / ready to get kick started up. [....] / they won't catch me / I'll be ducking down the hill / the other way [...] / and then I'll go pick up my cousin.	
	296	JN:	[Chuckles].	
	297	LH:	Pick them up from school / drive them home and then just start [quick speech] / going on a rampage.	Story 22 – what would have happened if he had not got caught
	298	JN:	Hmm.	
				Language being used is quite extreme, i.e. guns, knives, manslaughter, rampage. Is this his real life or is he mixing fantasy with reality?
22. Fighting, boxing, sports	299	LH:	Mostly yeah, after school, mostly, I chill in Turnham, got a youth club there.	Story 23 – chilling; spare time
	300	JN:	Oh right. And your YOT officer… you said your officer's trying to find you things that you might like to do?	
	301	LH:	He might be trying to find me out / like boxing / like something to / take my anger out on.	
	302	JN:	Yeah. [...] You agree with him? You think that's going to be good? Something useful?	Admitting to needing an outlet for anger, although if on ADHD medication, is it anger i.e. PTSD or ADHD need for adrenaline?
	303	LH:	I managed to take my anger out on *the trainer* / weren't it? [Laughter].	
	304	JN:	You need one of those big punch bags that you can just...	Reference to IP – 3 again
	305	LH:	They've got one in the gym but / they don't let me use it / I'm too *rapid*.	
	306	JN:	Yeah. Is it technique or something? You've got to learn the technique or something like that, or is...?	Reference to being too quick again; need for speed – racing bikes, running away from police, boxing speed balls links to ADHD / needing to
	307	LH:	[Mumbles, quick speech] I've been fighting for too long!	
	308	JN:	What about one of those little ones then? Is that the one you mean, where you just keep [...] going like that?	

	309	LH:	I've got a boxing bag.	channel energy
	310	JN:	Okay.	Reference to IP – 3 again
	311	LH:	Except I punched the wall.	
	312	JN:	[Sighs].	
	313	LH:	Actually no, I prefer a brick wall.	
	314	JN:	[Chuckles]. So is there anything else that you think erm, [...] you know, in terms of 'cause it's nearly lunchtime, no, not lunchtime. Where have you got to be?	
	315	LH:	Sports.	
23. I don't like school	316	JN:	Sports. Okay. You know, in terms of your experience, what [...] else do you think you could add to your story?	Story 24 – discussion about different school subjects
	317	LH:	[Mumbles] Nothing much. [.......] Nothing I can think of. No.	
	318	JN:	Well, things like maths and English, which...	
	319	LH:	I don't like / *them subjects*.	IP – 15: Not a 'scholar'; dislike of academic subjects
	320	JN:	No, I didn't...	
	321	LH:	[Laughter].	
	322	JN:	You find them hard?	Laughter implies that academic subjects are not important to him?
	323	LH:	No, I just don't like them.	
	324	JN:	Hmm.	
	325	LH:	That's, that's the / I don't care about like / in my old school [stutters] / the maths teacher / I just don't like / English / I can speak English perfectly / so why would I want to learn it?	Reiterating IP – 15. Doesn't find them hard, just doesn't like them.
	326	JN:	Yeah.	
	327	LH:	That's me / I can speak Irish perfectly as well / if I wanted to.	Justifying reasons for IP – 15. Dislike of maths appears to stem from the teacher primarily in his old school rather than the subject per se. Does not see relevance of learning English, especially as he feels he can already use the language to communicate. Use of
	328	JN:	Right. So you're bilingual? [...] You speak two languages!	
	329	LH:	Three, actually.	
	330	JN:	What else do you speak?	
	331	LH:	I [stutters] speak / no / I used to speak *Spanish*.	
	332	JN:	How did that happen? [...]	

	333	LH:	I used to do Spanish classes / back in my old school / <u>my old school.</u>	
	334	JN:	Oh, right.	Further justification – is able to learn and use languages, therefore does not need to demonstrate this to anyone else, i.e. school or getting qualifications.
	335	LH:	<u>At CC.</u>	
	336	JN:	Okay. Did you like that?	
	337	LH:	[Quick speech] That's the only lesson I used to go to!	
	338	JN:	So did you enjoy them? [...] So languages is something that you're good at as well then? [.....] That's always a good skill to have.	Story 25 – learning to speak languages
	339	LH:	Yeah.	
	340	JN:	So is it just kind of the reading and the writing? Is that what you mean by...	Suggests he enjoyed learning languages
	341	LH:	Uh-huh.	
	342	JN:	Yeah. I suppose it's one of those things that you'll always need it to a certain degree but not all of it, you need. What about maths then? Your maths or science?	
	343	LH:	I don't like 'em.	
	344	JN:	Nothing about it?	
	345	LH:	[Silence].	
	346	JN:	No.	Explaining about using maths
	347	LH:	<u>The only thing</u> that I do is adding and subtracting. <u>I don't like division. I don't like fractions. [...] I don't like multiplying.</u>	
	348	JN:	Yeah.	Suggests an unwillingness to talk about school subjects that he doesn't like.
	349	LH:	[Breaths out, deep sigh].	
	350	JN:	Have you ever had a need to use it outside of school?	
	351	LH:	[.....] / outside of school is *my time* / I'm not going to no *extra lessons*. [Huffs].	Keeping very separate boundaries between school and home 'worlds' (reference to Phelan here).
	352	JN:	Yeah. No, I mean like you know, with your mechanics or anything. Do you have to add anything up, or [...] do anything? No?	
	353	LH:	[...] Just fix bikes.	
	354	JN:	Yeah.	
	355	LH:	Which I'm *good at*.	Refers back to what he feels good at, added evidence for

				strength of this identity position. Learner identity appears to have a spiky profile – love of language lessons and speaking languages, fixing bikes, but dislike of learning in areas where he cannot see the relevance. Liam does not relate what he learns in e.g. maths lessons to the outside world, although it is highly likely he does use maths and science to a certain extent (e.g. quantities; forces etc) in fixing up bikes. IP – 5; IP – 15.
24. The only thing I like about school is the sports	356	JN:	[Quiet speech] Yeah. So there's things in school that you feel are completely [...] not, they're useless for you, for your life?	
	357	LH:	Except for sports / I like playing football and basketball / [...] and volleyball /	Sees relevance of sport in school to outside world
	358	JN:	And they're all team games.	
	359	LH:	And cricket [over speaking].	
	360	JN:	You like team games then?	
25. I was good at cricket	361	LH:	I won a [slow speech, thinking] / medal for cricket.	Story 26 – playing cricket
	362	JN:	Oh right.	
	363	LH:	But I was only playing / in like a little cage thing / where I live like / just some man called Graham that teaches like little / little ones from down near the primary school / like how to play cricket / and all that / he let me join one of the sessions but I had to take it easy on them.	
	364	JN:	[Laughter].	Playing cricket with younger children: appears to have been a happy memory in that Liam chose to talk about it
	365	LH:	And then this guy / just told me / just, *just play* / how you'd normally play / in 'nit / so I just started getting like / a fair few people out. [Laughter].	
	366	JN:	So it's just because you practiced then?	
	367	LH:	I used to play cricket / yeah [quick speech] / in CC / I used to be / on the cricket team.	IP – 10.
	368	JN:	[.....] Did you like that?	

	369	LH:	[....] [Silence - nodding].	
	370	JN:	Yeah? [clarifying]	Reinforcing identity position that he is good at sports by talking about being on the school team. Agency in choosing what to tell me.
26. The cricket match	371	LH:	It was alright / except for the cri... / the *actual* match we played. [...].	Except for… - does this suggest that he enjoyed playing but not competitively? Or is this just because the story he tells is one where he gets hurt?
	372	JN:	What about that?	
	373	LH:	I got hurt / [Laughter].	
	374	JN:	Oh no! [High pitch] How come?	
	375	LH:	As the bowler bowled the ball / it hit me / right in my ribcage.	IP – 16: Survivor against the odds
	376	JN:	Oh.	Describing relative brutality of what is historically known as a 'gentleman's game'?? Juxtaposition of violence in a gentle game – is Liam overlaying his identity position as a fighter (IP – 3) on the game of cricket to reinforce how 'different' he is??????
	377	LH:	Except I just played on / then I got hit in the head. [Laughter] / [.....] then I got smacked and I / swung the bat and *smacked myself* / in the back of the head.	
	378	JN:	[Gasps]. Cricket's not supposed to be dangerous like that!	
	379	LH:	No! [Laughter] / And then the wicket keeper had it in for me as well / 'cause I just swung the bat / like back / I let go of it / yeah / it *hit him* /	
	380	JN:	Oh no!	Retaliation; immaturity; sense of danger
	381	LH:	And he weren't wearing a helmet / so it / I knocked him out / but [stutters] he didn't like / no 'cause / he came around / and like / the teacher asked him that was like teaching me / "Do you want to press charges or anything?" / like / and he was like / "No, no it's alright. It was only a game." /	Not wearing a helmet – in telling me this is Liam trying to deflect responsibility for his actions? Goes against IP – 7.
	382	JN:	[Quiet speech] Yeah, just an accident.	
	383	LH:	'Cause the boy I hurt / [slow speech] I used to know him /	Performance dialogue – dramatizing again (Reissman, 2008).
	384	JN:	Oh, okay.	
	385	LH:	It was an *accident* / It weren't my fault we went separate schools / was it?	Seems to be offering another reason as to why the cricket match got out of hand and possibly implying that Liam's letting the bat go was in retaliation to the wicket keeper and bowler hitting

				him. Going to separate schools – did this split the friendship group and the others thought this was Liam's fault? But Liam did not believe it was his fault. Mismatch of perceptions and shared understanding here possibly leading to difficulties. IP – 17: Not in control of his life
27. I was home-schooled in Ireland	386	JN:	[.....] So going back to like before you were, going back to just before you were, you came over from Ireland [...], how, you said you were travelling? [...] Can you just tell me just a little bit about what you can remember about that?	Story 1 – living in a travelling community
	387	LH:	I can't [.....] / I can't remember.	
	388	JN:	Would you move from house to house, or were you...?	
	389	LH:	No / caravan.	
	390	JN:	You were in caravans, were you? [...] So was your family, you didn't go to school so was it just like a, was it...	
	391	LH:	No / I used to get home schooled /	
	392	JN:	Home schooled. Right, okay. And who did that?	Story 27 – being home-schooled in Ireland
	393	LH:	[Deep breath] My mum paid / paid like for someone to come and teach me / but I *don't remember anything* about that /	
28. I used to get kicked out of primary school	394	JN:	[.....]. [Quiet speech] Okay, so I thought one way of recording your story about school which would be quite a help, we'd have like a grid to work down. School starts right down from primary school, doesn't it? Can you remember much from primary school?	Story 28 – primary school experiences
	395	LH:	Not really / 'cause I <u>used to always</u> get / *kicked out* of primary school.	
	396	JN:	Did you go to the same primary school?	
	397	LH:	No / [Mumbles] <u>I nearly *missed out* on primary school</u> / I went to primary school in W.	Getting kicked out meant that he missed out – did he actually enjoy primary school then? Is you feel that you've missed out, it
	398	JN:	Oh, W. Okay. [.....] And how many [...] primary schools do you remember going to?	
	399	LH:	[Quick speech] I just went to that one / 'cause the	

			head teacher *liked me*, 'cause sometimes I could be good / so he just kept taking me back.	suggests that it was something you wanted to do…???
	400	JN:	Oh, okay. [High pitch] Can you remember what it was called?	
	401	LH;	[.....] DH Primary School.	
	402	JN:	DH?	
	403	LH:	Yeah.	IP – 18: sometimes able to be good
29. From Wolverha mpton to London…	404	JN:	[.....] So you were there sort of from...	Story 29 – moving from Wolverhampton to London; changing schools
	405	LH:	[Interrupts] and then I went to / erm, *high school* there as well / so I think it was P.	
	406	JN:	P?	Completing 'factual' details in the school-history grid at this point.
	407	LH:	Yeah.	
	408	JN:	[....] and that was still in W as well.	
	409	LH:	[Quiet speech] Yeah.	
	410	JN:	So you were at, you went to DH up to year six...	
	411	LH:	I finished DH / Yeah.	
	412	JN:	[Writing].	
	413	LH:	Then I went to [slow speech, thinking] P from / [stammers] I went P till year sev / yeah / year seven / and then I moved here.	
	414	JN:	And then you came to L? [Writing].	
	415	LH:	[....] Then I went CC.	
	416	JN:	CC	
	417	LH:	CC [Quick speech] / CC.	
	418	JN:	[Slow speech] CC...? I've got rubbish spelling. [Laughter].	
	419	LH:	Yeah / it's like that.	
	420	JN:	Something like that?	
	421	LH;	Yeah.	
	422	JN:	So you came down in...?	
	423	LH:	Year seven.	
	424	JN:	Year seven.	
	425	LH:	Then I got kicked / out of there and went / NW	

426	JN:	NW?	
427	LH:	Yeah / in D.	
428	JN:	[Writing]. Okay, were you still in year seven then?	
429	LH:	No / year eight / 'cause I missed a whole year of school.	
430	JN:	Oh! Okay.	
431	LH:	[Louder speech] Not like a whole year / like a whole... I got kicked out of there / and then I didn't go to school / for a year.	
432	JN:	This one? You got kicked out of this one?	
433	LH:	I went back / in the start of year eight.	
434	JN:	So was this quite near the start of year seven then?	
435	LH:	[...].	
436	JN:	Sorry, it's quite near the start of when you moved?	
437	LH:	Yeah.	
438	JN:	Yeah. [Writing]. [.....]. Okay. [...] And...	
439	LH:	Then...	
440	JN:	So you, you didn't go back?	
441	LH:	Until a year / a year of school like / I went back in September.	
442	JN:	Yeah. So you started NW.	
443	LH:	'Cause that's when they said that the place would be in September so then my mum went, "Oh, I'll leave him off till then and then he can come so that's okay."	Suggests family attitude towards school education is that it is not the most important thing; suggests Liam is positioning himself so that it makes sense to me why he is not interested in school subjects, or why he has got kicked out and moved schools so many times????????
444	JN:	[Quiet speech]. Right, okay. And how long were you at this one for?	
445	LH:	Erm, [.....] I was there till it finished / in year ten / then I came here.	
446	JN:	Year ten. So you didn't get excluded from this one?	
447	LH:	You can't get excluded from there.	
448	JN:	Oh!	
449	LH:	[Stammers] it's, it's like this / […] a centre.	
450	JN:	Oh, okay, like a PRU.	
451	LH:	Or a unit.	No-where else to

				go?? No choice?
30. I've been here 4 months	452	JN:	Or a unit. Yeah. [Writing]. Okay, and then so from year ten; [quick speech] so how long have you been here then?	
	453	LH:	Er, [...] only for like [.......] a year on July the 22nd.	
	454	JN:	Right.	
	455	LH:	<u>I think</u> I've been here for four months / [...] And then I'm doing year eleven here as well.	
	456	JN:	Yes. So you're in year ten at the moment aren't you?	
	457	LH:	Yeah.	
	458	JN:	So year ten, year eleven and you're stopping here.	
	459	LH:	Yeah.	
31. Helpful teachers	460	JN:	Okay, well that's really helpful because that kind of shows a, a picture of things. [Louder speech] Can I ask you, erm, some questions first of all about, I know you probably can't remember a huge amount but can you remember anything significant about primary school? [.....] [High pitch] Were there any teachers that you got on with, or...?	Story 30 – relationships with some teachers
	461	LH:	Yeah / my head teacher I got on with best / I got on with her. [...] / I've forgot her name but...	Second interview – saying same thing as first interview four months earlier, adds internal consistency to story and suggests that Liam is generally being honest with me in the stories he is telling. The fact that he contradicts himself so often in our two interviews suggests to me that he sees himself in one way, but knows he should be seeing himself in a different way that is more compatible with how society thinks he should be. Is this the interplay between subject and identity positioning – bring theory in here???
	462	JN:	Yeah, so she let you back.	
	463	LH:	Yeah / and then there was a teacher / called Miss M.	
	464	JN:	Yeah. And how did she help you?	
	465	LH:	<u>She said / [stammers] she said in an interview that / "Yeah, he can be like, like," / and she said / she's the one who convinced the head teacher to let me go /</u>	
	466	JN:	Ah, okay. [.....] So what do you think was good about your relationship with her then? How did you; were you able to talk to her? Were you able to...?	
	467	LH:	<u>Yeah, [quick speech] / I could talk to her / that I had problems I had / like at home / and she wouldn't tell no one / and that.</u>	
	468	JN:	Yeah. So you felt that you could trust her?	
	469	LH:	Yeah.	
	470	JN:	Yeah. And what year was she your teacher, or did you, did you have her for a while? Do you remember?	
	471	LH:	She was [slow speech, thinking] my teacher when I	Felt able to trust this

			was in year three / [Louder speech] and year four [...] / 'cause it's not like this school where the <u>teachers stay in the same place / they move [stammers] / they move around.</u>	teacher
				Comparing different methods of organisation in schools
32. Bullying at primary school	472	JN:	Did you, erm, was there anything else [...] that you liked about primary school? Did you have [staggered speech] good friends there, or...?	Story 31 – getting bullied
	473	LH:	[Abrupt] Not really / I used to *get bullied* in primary.	
	474	JN:	Okay. [Writing] Was that one of the main difficulties that you had why you kept...	IP – 9; IP – 14?
	475	LH:	Yeah, so I kept getting *kicked out.*	
	476	JN:	Kicked out. Yeah. [Deep breath]. I guess you were [...]...	IP – 9.
	477	LH:	'Cause if someone bullied me / I used to like take *the anger out* on the *teachers.*	
	478	JN:	Oh, I see. Okay. So you weren't angry towards the children, you were...	A way of coping? Didn't view the children as the problem, but felt that the way the teachers handled bullying was the problem??
	479	LH:	No.	
	480	JN:	... it was the adults you were...	
	481	LH:	'Cause they *didn't even stop it* / when I used to tell them / <u>they never used to *stop it*</u> [high pitch]	
	482	JN:	Yeah, so I guess you found that quite frustrating.	Explaining why he was angry at the teachers. Telling the teachers is one of the strategies taught to children, but Liam's experience of this was very negative. Repetition of 'they never used to stop it' suggests that this really hurt him emotionally?? IP – 9?
	483	LH:	Until I went back for my final year / they just kept / they kept a boy that bullied me and said, [...] like half / like half the playtime / and then they took me / and they let him back up / let him out.	
	484	JN:	Right. [...] So I guess you felt that was a bit unfair.	
	485	LH:	<u>Hmm? [...] [Quick speech] I didn't mind...</u>	
	486	JN:	Okay. Er, [...] so they kept you there, so that must have been [...], how did you feel about that?	
	487	LH:	<u>It was alright.</u>	Explaining how the teachers managed the situation
	488	JN:	Yeah? So even though you were having a few difficulties, you felt quite sort of supported by them, in a way?	
	489	LH:	Yeah.	IP – 16? Is this also where Liam is

				showing that although he was bullied he felt supported because they tried to do something even though they didn't stop it? Is this again identity positioning (i.e. victim / survivor) versus subject positioning (school environment can be tough??)
33. My cousins were there so I didn't get bullied	490	JN:	Yeah. Okay, and then what was your high school like then, that you moved to after year six?	Story 32 – having cousins at the school meant less bullying
	491	LH:	<u>Erm, [...] / I can't remember much of that. [...] /</u>	
	492	JN:	I guess you weren't there for very long actually, were you?	
	493	LH:	No / [Quick speech] I was only there for / like a month.	
	494	JN:	Right. [...] And what sort of experiences did you have when you were there? Can you remember?	
	495	LH:	[Mumbles] nothing really / <u>'cause</u> no one picked on me there <u>/ 'cause like *my cousins* and all that</u> were there.	Actively seems to be avoiding talking about learning experiences? Should I have recapped or is this an example of narrative methodology in action – Liam is choosing his most significant experiences of school, which do not relate to lessons or learning??
	496	JN:	Oh, okay, so you had family there.	
	497	LH:	Yeah.	
	498	JN:	So there was less bullying.	
	499	LH:	<u>Yeah. Because when I was bullied there, I could just get my cousin.</u>	
	500	JN:	Right. [...] So you had a bit of support?	
	501	LH:	Uh-huh [...] [agreeing].	
34. A fresh start in London… or not??	502	JN:	So you started there, I guess in the September, so you moved to L...?	Story 33 – Moving as a fresh start
	503	LH:	[Slow speech, thinking] in [...] November.	
	504	JN:	Hmm. [Writing]. Can I ask what reason that was for?	
	505	LH:	'Cause my mum met my stepdad / and then she wanted to move out / for a fresh start.	
	506	JN:	Oh, I see.	
	507	LH:	And that's when I started to get into trouble.	
	508	JN:	So you, did you find the move down to L quite	Implication that

			difficult? [...] Yeah.	Mum's decision to move caused Liam's starting to get into trouble (subject position) IP – 17?
	509	LH:	I preferred it in W or Ireland [...] / *one of them…*	
	510	JN:	Why was that though? Can you [...] tell me?	
	511	LH:	Because I never used to get in any trouble [high pitch] / I used to just *stay in* / out here, I just go out and / 'cause I know the area.	
	512	JN:	Right.	
	513	LH:	[Loud speech] I didn't know the area in W / and because my auntie only lived / round the corner from me / now I ain't / just I ain't got no one's house to go to / my auntie's house to go to like, and...	IP – 19? Implying that 'going out' means 'getting into trouble' and 'staying in' means staying out of trouble??
35. Getting kicked out of secondary school	514	JN:	Yeah, so it's quite difficult and so you've got less support network really, around here.	Story 5
	515	LH:	Yeah [.....] /	
	516	JN:	[.....] Okay, so what, what happened at school then? Can you tell me?	
	517	LH:	Which one? CC?	
	518	JN:	Yeah, ok.	
	519	LH:	CC / I got kicked out for [...] / throwing a chair /at a teacher and / assaulting a teacher.	
	520	JN:	You threw a chair at a teacher?	
	521	LH:	Yeah / and I assaulted the head teacher [...] / I couldn't put no different words / that says that / that's how she took me to Court / and that's...	
	522	JN:	So that was what...	Story 6
36. The first time I got YOT	523	LH:	Yeah / and that's when I started to get / [...] that's when I got YOT / Yeah.	
	524	JN:	Yeah. Okay.	
	525	LH:	And I got three / I got YOT for a year / no / two years.	
	526	JN:	Two years.	
	527	LH:	And I couldn't / I can't return back to the premises of my old school.	
	528	JN:	Alright, okay. So what was difficult for you there then?	

	529	LH:	[...] Just the teachers. They got on my nerves.	
	530	JN:	Yeah?	
37. Behaving better but then things changed	531	LH:	[Mumbles]. Then in NW, I started like behaving more, I was behaving more.	Story 34 – better behaviour once out of mainstream school
	532	JN:	Why do you think that was?	
	533	LH:	No, I started behaving again after that and I got off the YOT and then like after I got on the YOT here and now here, now I'm getting in some more trouble.	Rollercoaster of being in and out of control – getting into trouble
38. I wanted to go back	534	JN:	[Quiet speech] Oh. Okay, well let's go back to CC then, because you got excluded near the start. You threw a chair... I'm just interested in what sort of feelings and experiences you had there that made you so angry?	Story 35 – liking the challenge of mainstream school work
	535	LH:	[Quick speech] I wanted to *go back* there /	
	536	JN:	You wanted to go back there?	Subject positioning – wanted to go back but unable to as was banned from premises IP – 14? IP – 17?
	537	LH:	Hmm [......].	
	538	JN:	Why was that?	
	539	LH:	I wanted to try / and get out of NW / and go back there, [...] / because I liked the school.	Wanted to be back at mainstream school because he knew he was more likely to get a good education leading to a 'legal' job??? Fits with what he was saying in earlier interview about gaining legal employment…??
	540	JN:	Right. What did you like about it?	
	541	LH:	[...] Good education /	
	542	JN:	The level of challenge […]?	
	543	LH:	Yeah.	
	544	JN:	But you just found the teachers difficult to get on with?	
	545	LH:	Yeah.	Clarifying that he liked the work (contradictory to what he said about maths and English in earlier interview) but he didn't like some of the teachers
39. My stolen bike	546	LH:	[…] I'm gonna put these on my two bikes / (magnetic clips)	
	547	JN:	Oh.	
	548	LH:	My two BMXs.	

	549	JN:	Oh, is that something you're interested in?	
	550	LH:	Except one's at the station.	
	551	JN:	Oh, why's that?	
	552	LH:	I don't know why, but apparently it came back stolen.	
	553	JN:	Oh, right.	
	554	LH:	I have to get it back.	
	555	JN:	So they've confiscated it.	
40. Me and PC Andy	556	LH:	Yeah / I was told by AD.	Story 36 – relationship with school police officer
	557	JN:	Who's AD?	
	558	LH:	He's the officer downstairs /	
	559	JN:	Oh, okay. You get on alright with him?	
	560	LH:	[Quiet speech] Kind of [Laughter] / he arrested me for ABH / which I got a Court date for / on the 16th.	
	561	JN:	Oh. [.....] So you've got a love-hate relationship with him then?	
	562	LH:	No / I liked him / but when he nicked me / I did *not* like him for that /	
	563	JN:	No, he was doing his job though, I guess, wasn't he?	
	564	LH:	[Quiet speech] Yeah.	
41. Moving schools and being bored	565	JN:	Yeah. [.....]. Er, [...] okay, so you got excluded from CC.	Story 37 – not getting bullied once I got to know people
	566	LH:	Yeah.	
	567	JN:	Was it just the once? They didn't let you back in, even though you wanted to go back?	
	568	LH:	Hmm. [...] And I went NW after / yeah.	
	569	JN:	Yeah. What's that like then?	
	570	LH:	It was alright / when I first went there [louder, cleared speech] / I got bullied / but when I started to know people / I never got bullied as much / that's not / that's some boy called Billy Bloggs.	Suggests time needed to settle and make friends; but also suggests that going to this school
	571	JN:	Right.	
	572	LH:	[Mumbles] that's the one / that I done the robbery	

			with […] /	did not give Liam the role models he needed…??
	573	JN:	Right, so you got on better with them but...	
	574	LH:	Yeah.	
	575	JN:	[.......] Do you think they've [...] helped you with your...	
	576	LH:	[Abrupt] No.	Story 38 – reduced level of challenge at the alt. ed. School
	577	JN:	... education?	
	578	LH:	[Abrupt] No.	
	579	JN:	No?	
	580	LH:	No [...] / They used to / just like [......] / they used to just / give me easy work that / I already know /	IP – 20: capable of gaining knowledge; has already learnt a lot. Does this also relate to a subject position – because of Liam's behaviour the staff automatically assume that he is not capable of harder work?
	581	JN:	Right.	
	582	LH:	I used to ask them for harder work but they used to just say no. [...].	
	583	JN:	So you needed more of a challenge?	
	584	LH:	Uh-huh [agreeing]	
	585	JN:	So were you bored there?	Actively trying to take control and demonstrate IP – 20? IP – 11?
	586	LH:	Yeah […] / [Quick speech] I like the work that I'm doing here.	
				Found the easier work boring (research relating to boredom at school in adolescents)
42. My current school	587	JN:	Okay, tell me about the work you're doing here then?	Story 39 – current educational provision
	588	LH:	I'm studying ICT.	
	589	JN:	Oh right.	
	590	LH:	I've got a test today as well.	
	591	JN:	Oh, have you?	
	592	LH:	To see if I pass or fail the course. [.....] / I've got a feeling I'm going to fail.	Doesn't seem to be a fear of failure, more of an acceptance that it is likely to happen. Resignation of the fact? This relates to development of learning identity –
	593	JN:	Why?	
	594	LH:	I ain't been studying.	
	595	JN:	[High pitch] Why not?	

				foreclosed??
	596	LH:	Erm, I have been studying / _all night_ / I was studying / that's why I come in five minutes late.	
	597	JN:	Okay.	
	598	LH:	[.....].	
	599	JN:	So are you worried about this afternoon or are you not, not too worried, or...?	
	600	LH:	No, not really.	
	601	JN:	Do you feel like you've done enough work that you'll be able to get through it? Yeah. So you might not fail then?	
	602	LH:	No. [...] / I'm not sure if I fail the course / or I pass / I don't know if / I'll fail or pass the course.	
	603	JN:	Yeah. [Quiet speech] and what do you intend to do with it after that? Have you got any ideas?	
	604	LH:	No / I'm going to do sport.	
	605	JN:	Okay.	
	606	LH:	[...] because / I'm one of them people that likes playing football.	
43. Thoughts about the future	607	JN:	Okay, so I've got this picture of you actually, you love your bikes, you like your football, you like being outdoors...	Story 40 – hopes for the future
	608	LH:	I like cars.	
	609	JN:	You like your cars. So there's a lot of outdoorsy kind of stuff going on there. Yeah. So reading and writing, and maths are not...	
	610	LH:	I also like motorbikes as well / I've got a pit bike / which I don't ride no more.	
	611	JN:	Okay, why's that?	
	612	LH:	I gotta puncture / in the tyre.	
	613	JN:	Oh, you're not going to get very far, are you? [Laughter].	
	614	LH:	I was driving it yesterday / and got a puncture in the tyre.	
	615	JN:	Oh, so what are you going to do about that?	
	616	LH:	I'll fix it. [Laughter] / It's easy / I've got a spare tyre / in my shed at home.	
	617	JN:	That's alright then. Okay, so you're doing ICT, you're doing sport and [high pitch] have you got any	

			thoughts about the future, what you want to do?	
	618	LH:	I want to be a footballer /	
	619	JN:	Okay, are you in a club or anything at the moment?	
	620	LH:	No.	
	621	JN:	No. So what's your plan? Have you thought it through?	
	622	LH:	I want to get into a club / <u>soon. [....].</u>	
	623	JN:	Like one attached to here, or just a local...?	Is this realistic? Relate to John Head (1997) book on working with adolescents to construct identity – entering the world of work chapter
	624	LH:	Local.	
	625	JN:	Local club. Yeah.	
	626	LH:	I might / I might go to Millwall.	
	627	JN:	Oh yeah?	
	628	LH:	Play for them / [....] <u>I've played goalkeeper /</u>	
	629	JN:	[Over speaking]. Yeah, so that's good that you've got plans, you know what you want to do...	
	630	LH:	Or if I don't succeed / at football / then I want to be a mechanic...	
	631	JN:	Yeah, that's, I'd say that is...	Relates back to Liam's earlier discussion about being a mechanic
	632	LH:	<u>So that's what I *want* to do in class...</u>	
				IP – 5; IP – 11; trying to be pro-active, but…
44. I could do more work	633	JN:	I was going to say, yeah. It sounds like that's what your interests are, isn't it? So overall, what do you think of your school experience?	Story 41 – what Liam is good at in school and what he likes – learning style preferences
	634	LH:	[.....] Boring / [Laughter].	
	635	JN:	Yeah. [Laughter]. Is that like the reading and writing and that sort of stuff?	School has been boring – not surprising given the topics and stories he has chosen to talk about with me despite my initial explanation that the interviews were about school experience
	636	LH:	<u>No, maths is alright 'cause I'm good at maths.</u>	
	637	JN:	Oh, okay.	
	638	LH:	It's just the English.	
	639	JN:	Yeah?	
	640	LH:	Things I like doing / is work on computers.	Slightly different emphasis here re: maths to what Liam
	641	JN:	So you're okay on computers? [...] Yeah. So it's a	

				was saying about maths earlier – the teacher was the problem then, but actually he feels he is good at maths.
	642	LH:	Playing games. [Laughter].	
	643	JN:	Or playing games, yeah. [High pitch] Well, it's all learning, isn't it?	I think here Liam is referring back to his earlier implication that he cannot see the relevance of English if he is already able to speak it??
	644	LH:	I could do more work /	
				ICT important to adolescents now
				Does Liam feel that he is still not being sufficiently challenged, or is this a reference to doing more English work on the computer – is it the writing he doesn't like? I should have checked this out.
45. Who has been helpful at school?	645	JN:	And who do you feel that's been really helpful for you?	
	646	LH:	[Loud speech] what, here?	
	647	JN:	Well, through, just throughout your schools. I mean, you mentioned one teacher at primary school.	
	648	LH:	Miss M.	
	649	JN:	Yeah. Is there any other teachers that you, you did feel that you had a connection with and you were able to...?	
	650	LH:	[Loud speech] When I first came here / yeah, I liked O / but I didn't want to be in his class.	Despite my asking, this was not elaborated on, instead Liam chose to move on to talking about his subject options and the story of that negotiation
	651	JN:	Why was that?	
46. Choosing my subject options	652	LH:	I wanted to do media but they moved me, [...] because there was no space.	Story 42 – choosing subject options
	653	JN:	Oh, so it wasn't a [stutters] sort of directed at you; it was just because the situation [...] [quiet speech] sort of thing. Yeah.	
	654	LH:	[Quiet speech] and then / I got moved to ICT and I didn't want to be there. [.....] / Because my first choice was ICT / no media, my second choice was sport [.....] / my third choice was [.....] I've forgotten /	Suggestive of being in and out of control again – being given

			construction.	'options' but then not being able to get first choice. However, first choice does not appear to be at all related to his strengths at fixing things, so perhaps this was the school's way of helping to steer him down a path that might be more fruitful in terms of future employment? But sport?? Jobs in sport for a young person who struggles with competitive aspects of games (see cricket story – story 26)
	655	JN:	Oh right. Yeah. [....] Construction. But you're not doing that one.	
	656	LH:	No.	
	657	JN:	No. Okay.	
	658	LH:	I like constructing things / and things like that. [Stutters] It's my / I like taking things down. [Laughter].	
	659	JN:	Yeah, not building them up again. [High pitch] Mind you, you do kind of do that with the cars and the bikes though, don't you? So it's kind of construction in a different way though, isn't it?	
	660	LH:	[Laughter; agreeing]. Uh-huh.	
	661	JN:	Yeah. Mechanics more.	
				Story of the negotiation of his options on entering this school.
47. YOT experience	662	JN:	[….] Okay, and thinking about your youth offending experience, how do you feel that's [...] helped you [...] or not?	Story 43 – YOT experience
	663	LH:	It helped me not to get in trouble / for at least a year, [...] / then I started getting back into it all again / now I have to go to Court for that.	
	664	JN:	Yeah. So was it, erm, one of the officers was, did you see him regularly?	Brushed over – not willing to discuss or doesn't see the relevance?
	665	LH:	[slow speech, thinking] No / I missed three appointments / no / I missed two appointments / 'cause like / *they wouldn't let me on the bus* so I called and / told them that I was going / to miss that appointment / and they said, "Oh, I'm doing this too long / so try to get in for five," / because my appointment was at four / I got in at five, they saw me / then went home.	I am thinking here – do I press for the story here or do I leave it and move on as it might not be relevant, but it might be relevant – shows my inexperience in working like this in such an open way and making on the sport decisions about whether or not to influence the narrative with what I am saying.
	666	JN:	Okay. Do you feel that's been a useful experience, [...] talking to the Youth Offending Officer?	
	667	LH:	Yeah / It helped me not get into trouble.	
	668	JN:	Yeah, but then it's kind of worn off a little bit?	
	669	LH:	[...].	
	670	JN:	Or is it because…?	IP – 14? IP – 17?
	671	LH:	[Quiet speech]. Met new people.	In the end, my tentative questioning does get a reason for

				the getting back into trouble, but again it is not expanded upon and this is informed consent in action – Liam is not willing to enter into discussion about it. Meeting new people and getting into trouble – suggests Liam is influenced by others? IP – 21: easily influenced
48. Advice to other young people	672	JN:	Yeah. Okay. Erm, [quiet speech] so like just let me check if I've got to ask any other questions. [Louder speech] Is there anything else that you want to add to your story at the moment? No? [...] Erm, okay, so if there was one thing that you could tell another child or young person...	Story 44 – advice to other young people
	673	LH:	[Abrupt] don't get into trouble.	
	674	JN:	[Amused] don't get into trouble. How would you not get... thinking about your experience?	
	675	LH:	Don't do any crimes.	
	676	JN:	Yeah.	
	677	LH:	Don't like [slow speech, thinking] / get yourself into trouble, er, [...]	
	678	JN:	So how would you kept yourself out of trouble?	
	679	LH:	And don't rob things [Laughter].	
49. Having ADHD and taking medication	680	JN:	[Laughter] what do you think you could have done, because it, it sounds like you had quite a lot of anger and frustration because people weren't listening to you?	Story 45 – having ADHD
	681	LH:	But I've got ADHD so that's probably why.	
	682	JN:	Oh okay.	
	583	LH:	[Mumbles] I'm supposed to take tablets but...	
	684	JN:	But you don't?	
	685	LH:	No. I'm going back on them.	
	686	JN:	Oh yeah.	
	687	LH:	Which I don't like.	
	688	JN:	Why's that?	Does not like taking medication because it makes him sleepy.
	689	LH:	'Cause the social worker.	Has been told by the

	690	JN:	You don't like it?	social worker that he has to take the tablets because he is a naughty kid
	691	LH:	My social worker / said I had to go back / on them. [.....].	
	692	JN:	Why have they said that?	
	693	LH:	Because I'm a naughty kid. [....].	
	694	JN:	What, they think medication's going to make you...	
	695	LH:	I won't *take* any tablets.	
	696	JN:	No… How do you feel when you're on them?	IP – 22: I'm a naughty kid
	697	LH:	I feel like [.......] I feel like I just, [sighs] [...] want to go to sleep. [Laughter].	
	698	JN:	Yeah. So that's not very helpful, is it, if you're trying to learn? Or do anything else?	IP – 13: taking control of his life
	699	LH:	Well, I already told my mum that. She said if he says I've got to go on them, yeah, you don't have to.	Mum appears to be standing up for Liam against the social worker – what does this tell me????
50. My Mum was a bad person	700	LH:	[…] / 'Cause my mum was a bad person when she was at school, you know.	Story 46 – describing mum as a bad person
	701	JN:	Oh, was she?	
	702	LH:	Uh-huh.	
	703	JN:	What did...	
	704	LH:	She used to get into fights at school.	
	705	JN:	Right.	
	706	LH:	Everything. She threw a chair at a teacher once. She threw a chair at my teacher once.	
	707	JN:	Oh, I see.	Learned behaviour rather than ADHD???
	708	LH:	[Laughter].	
	709	JN:	So you've had a few [...] experiences of [...] grownups getting into trouble?	
	710	LH:	Yeah.	
51. I don't want YOT again	711	JN:	So it's kind of [...] I suppose it's, well, I wonder whether it's [...] made you kind of [over speaking]	
	712	LH:	I just don't want it… If this Court case comes back, when this Court case comes, I just don't want to get YOT.	

	713	JN:	You don't...?	
	714	LH:	I went all the way to L and like, at four o'clock, 'cause that's the time I normally do that after school club.	
	715	JN:	Yeah. [........] So what would they give you instead?	
	716	LH:	Probably ten.	
	717	JN:	Yeah.	
	718	LH:	They might let me off. [Laughter].	
	719	JN:	So yeah, that's an interesting one, isn't it? [Quiet speech] I don't know what's going to happen there. [Deep breath]. Hmm. Do you think...?	
52. I needed money quick	720	LH:	I'm on a doorstep curfew at the moment [...] for the, erm, robbery.	
	721	JN:	Right. [.....] What made you, erm, do that?	
	722	LH:	Well, it's a robbery. I needed money quick. [Laughter].	
	723	JN:	Can I ask why?	
	724	LH:	Get weed. [Laughter].	
	725	JN:	Oh, okay. Yeah. [.......] [Deep breath]. [...]	
	726	LH:	That's that.	
	727	JN:	Unless you've got some...	
	728	LH:	Ow!	
	729	JN:	Ooh, careful. [...] At the moment, what I shall do is listen back to what we've talked about and try and put this into some kind of [stammers] your story. Erm, and if er, if I can go through it again with you and then perhaps we can just add to it if there's anything else that you want to [...] put in? [.......] That'll be really good.	
	730	LH:	[Laughter].	
	731	JN:	Thank you, Liam, for your time. I really appreciate it.	

Appendix D

- **Narrative Transcripts of Adrianna, Cain, Darnell, Jay and Sheyden;**

- **Tables to show illustrative examples of how these were used to identify broad categories which were then further refined through analysis of the fabula and sjuzet in the Working Transcripts**

Adrianna

I was born in Poland… I came here five years ago when I was nine with my parents and two older sisters… my Dad moved here when I was like, about two… I used to live there with my Mum and then we just moved… we go back to Poland quite a lot to see family… I didn't go to school in Poland until I was about seven because that's how it is in Poland… I stayed in the same school there for the two years until we moved…

So when I was there… I can't really remember back then… from what my Mum has been telling me I was good at learning and that but it was quite, the same problems… first day at school, I beat up some boy… so my Mum had to go into school the first day I started…

I've been at C secondary school, then they sent me to NW for six weeks… I came back to C for a month then they kicked me out, when I got moved to HF… I was there for like four weeks and then I got kicked out… They sent me back to C but C said they didn't want me… they sent me to NW… I was there until the end of the year and I came here.

I got into trouble for fighting at school… obviously I'm going to react if someone's, well, if someone's provoking me, I just can't stop myself… I just don't – I don't let people say things about me that I don't like and that are not true, and I just go mad if people lie about me or I just don't like it… I hate it…

I got involved with YOT because one day I was bored… I went to E Park with a toy gun and I was threatening some girl and then people in the car, then I got arrested. They packed me in a cell for three days… I had to go to Court and it went on for over a year… and then I was on tag for three months and I cut it off and then the second time I was on it for three months I got YOT for two years… and thirty hours of community service… I got arrested for some Chinese girl and she was like 24 and I was 12 at the time… she said I tried to kill her but all I did is I tried to trip her up and then I ran after her… she called the police on me, she said I tried to kill her and she said I pulled her bag, that wasn't even true…

There's a lot of things been going on in my life since I came here, late at night, during the day - depends… my parents are strict so they don't really let me do as much, but I always used to go out, not tell them where I am and come back in about two weeks… they did know I'd gone and they called the police and that because they thought I went missing, well I did, you know?

I think my parents have helped me 'cause they've put pressure on me to be good and that… I've kind of understood, but it took me time… I can talk to them or to my sisters but I just never do it… I just keep it to myself or talk to my friends… it's my choice… I choose not to talk to someone else 'cause like, when I've got YOT I'm meant to see my YOT Officer but instead I see a psychologist… and even when I talk to her I don't tell her everything 'cause like I know that older people when you talk to them, they take it in differently and they like report it and get someone, not even me but someone into trouble… so I keep things to myself… I usually don't talk to people, I just sort my problems out myself… 'cause I just think that I need to learn about life 'cause if someone keeps on helping me, then if I grow up and I'm 18 there's not going to be no one there to help me… so I need to know my way…

Now I just go to school and YOT… outside school I just go out with my friends and that… all that's the past… I'm not like this no more… I haven't been like this for over a year… I just feel that because I'm in Year 10, I just feel that I've been messing around for too long and I think it's time to get on with what I'm doing 'cause I don't want to be no… I don't want to be walking around cleaning toilets!

I was doing hairdressing… I didn't want to be a hairdresser but I think that was the easiest thing to do… and because my sister's a hairdresser, I know some things about hair, so yeah, but they cancelled it… so now I'm doing digital arts… then in college I'm going to do beauty… I'm not sure what I really want to do… I'm good at drawing… I speak Polish fluently – better than English…

In five years' time, I'll have my own house by then… I'm going to have a car, driving licence… and if I have a boyfriend by then, if that I'm going out with a man, then I'll be planning kids… I'd be settled and happy…

Name	Broad Categories identified in Narrative Transcript	Sections identified from Working Transcript lines to enable analysis of sjuzet relating to these stories / broad categories identified in the Narrative Transcript:
Adrianna	Country of origin	4 – 6; 7-10
	Culture	125 – 134
	Moving home	12 – 14
	Moving schools	34
	Fighting	34; 36; 118 – 120; 135 – 136
	YOT	28; 43 – 44; 91 – 92; 168; 170 – 172
	Not sharing problems with others	187 – 192; 194 – 196; 220 – 224
	Relationships with teachers	55 – 56; 80; 146; 210 – 212
	Trust in adults	196 – 198
	Attendance	175 – 180
	Couldn't be bothered – motivation to learn	142
	Mood affecting learning – waking up in the morning	88
	Pride in school work	161 – 162
	Option choices restricted by educational provision	74
	Future aspirations	61 – 71; 93 – 94; 184
	Friendships	28
	Getting excluded	34
	Feeling listened to / valued / respected	37 – 38; 148
	PRU as a last resort	53 – 54
	Just got to get on with it – attitude	90; 144; 184
	Finding school easy	138; 155 – 158
	Finding 'flow'	142
	Parental support	186

Cain

My nan, granddad, mum and sister have been the most important people in my life… my Mum lives in Northampton with my sister and my nan and my granddad live in… they're like, five miles away… I live with my Dad, step-mum and two step-brothers… one's older and one's younger… I used to have a pet rabbit… but my sister killed him… now I've got a dog…

I've always lived in this area but I moved to N for a bit… when, yeah, because I used to live with my Mum… I moved to N with her when I got kicked out of school… and then I got kicked out of school there… and came back down here…

I'm good at fighting… I also like ice hockey, boxing and rugby… just fighting… I like it, just fight really… I used to do ice hockey... it was a laugh… it was ok being in a team but I prefer being, like, on your own in sports… like boxing and that…

I don't think anything really important has ever happened in my life… moving didn't cause me any problems… it doesn't bother me… I keep a suitcase packed… just in case, like… I don't really plan it out with my Mum… it's just sort of like "Yeah I'm coming over this weekend"… but I'll say that Friday night when she comes to pick me up or my Dad's already taken me there…

I had to move schools like five times… I kept getting kicked out but it didn't make me feel that bad… cause the schools I went to were really shit, pretty much… the teachers, the students, the facilities… I'd say they cared more about, like, their appearance than they would the students getting their education…

I went to two different primary schools… I started the one in Year One and then got kicked out in the second year… and then I went to a different school and then done the rest there… I remember it being alright… until a teacher was yelling at me and then a student started kicking off… and a bunch of kids started crying… so I picked a chair up and threw it at one of them… and they kicked me out… permanently…

I was about 7 or 8 when I moved to the next school… it wasn't too bad… I got into a couple of fights… and finished… I don't really have any good memories of it… I didn't really have fun in primary school… I just… it was just like sort of get it over and done with… until I went up to middle school… I loved it there… because I just wanted to beat everyone up…

I loved PE… I like anything that can like build my body… I love going to the gym… I suppose it fits in with the fighting… same as PE… like – stamina… so you can just go for longer…

On the computers, I used to just get one of the little kids who sits next to me like, to do it for me… on the sly…

I used to have one to one sessions with Mrs H… I used to be able to do all my work but if it was a teacher that I didn't like then I would just… I would just kick off and walk out… I don't know why she was different… she was just sound, like, just bare sound… she listened… she didn't raise her voice… I used to do, like, three quarters of the work and then she used to be like… she used to come along and like… not 'give' me the answers but just like help me out a lot… she asked me questions about it… sort of 'gave the answer away'… I did feel I learnt more like that…

When I left middle school I went to secondary… and then I got into a bunch of fights there… got kicked out… went to another school… got kicked out… got in a fight with the deputy head then got kicked out of there… and then I went to iP for two weeks until I moved to N… got into a bunch of fights over there… smacked a teacher… told one of the teachers to go fuck himself and then they kicked me out of there… and now I'm back at iP and got caught smoking weed like on the site quite a couple of times… and then they just kicked me out 'cause I always went in there stoned… I got YOT for drugs… 8 month Referral Order… I've been with them a month and a half…missed one appointment because I was at my Mum's…

Fighting is a big thing with me… not as a way of coping when I don't agree with people or when I think they're being unfair… no… I just like doing it… I just, dunno, look for reasons to hurt someone… it gives out adrenalin and I just… I dunno… I just like it…

In the school in N I thought the rules were shit so I got kicked out… they weren't fair… and the teachers, like, they don't talk calmly… they just sort of like, walk up to you and yell in your face… I got screamed at three times, yeah... because of just turning around to and telling them to "fuck off" of something like that... they'd just yell at you, innit? You end up, like… if someone yells at me, I'm just going to yell at them back… if they got in my face they used to… you would either throw 'em backwards or something like that…it seemed like the rules were more important than the students…

Looking back now, I wouldn't do anything differently… because the way I was like… brought up as like… dunno… like… how to look after myself… just look after yourself and… just do that… I never really learnt anything… I always used to just… walk out of the lessons… like, I used to go in for five minutes and then just walk out… just because… I couldn't be bothered… and I couldn't be bothered sitting there like 32 screaming kids and that… I've always been a bit more mature for my age… so, like, if I walk into a class and hear a bunch of like little kids screaming then I'm just going to walk out because that's not my learning environment… however, if I go to iP, it might be a shithole but I learn stuff because there's only like, 3 people in the class… and they're all spread out so it's not too bad…

I'm sort of at school at the moment… like, I only go in on Fridays for half a day… but I get home tutored Tuesday for two hours... where I go on Fridays, it's a shithole… well, no, it's not so much like the teachers or anything… it's the students… because they all think they're like "Top Dog"… and so they go round and like, they get mouthy… but you can't, like, turn around and hit 'em because you know you'll get expelled… and that's like, the last school you get to go to… if I get expelled from iP I'd get home-schooled… two hours a week… that's not enough really… do you know what I mean?

School is different now in that I've got a lot more freedom… well, if I want to walk out of a lesson they'll just say "leave the lesson", like… if I say I'm walking out the lesson they'll be like "alright, see you later"… there's no real expectation that I'll get the work done… you just sort of say, like "gone" and then hopefully they will come back… because the only reason they're walking out is to get the attention… that's from most kids obviously… but for me it's just a break… if I come back I come back, but… it's not a lot of chance that I will… because I just walk out because I get angry… and then it takes me ages to calm down… I get angry at literally anything… like, the littlest thing can set me off… one minute I could be working perfectly… and then a kid could say something too loud or like, not stop laughing… and I just start screaming… because for me that's like… I don't know… it's like, em, I can't learn when people, like, talk…so I want to learn and someone's like… yelling about something and that then I just go mad… with one teacher he lets me – I just put my headphones in… but all the teachers don't let me so I end up screaming…

I've been told I've got a reading age of 16… and I'm 15… and I can write… but I just… can't be bothered… really tried like, you know? I don't always see why I have to… I know what I can read and write, you know? And that's enough to get me by… I'm not really worried about my education 'cause I've sort of got… I don't need grades for what I'm doing when I grow up… I've always got a back-up plan that if I don't get good grades then I can work in my Dad's company… so I… they don't really matter…

I don't know how I'd rate my school experience on a scale of 1 to 5… because some people might class mine as like a '1' because I haven't learned anything… but I'd class mine as '5' cause, I dunno, it's got me where I am now… and I like where I am now… I enjoyed school… everything that happened was my choice… it was alright… I enjoyed it… I don't know that anything different would have made a difference… I'm just more like… deal with… just deal with it… I would say to other kids don't let anyone fuck you over… that's sort of… that's the way I got taught… like, because I always used to hang about with people like five times my age… and… all that like… I'm pretty sure when I was like… going on 8 or 9… I was hanging around with like 20 year olds… but, you know, it was alright… I didn't really have friends my own age… I've got a couple of mates that are my age now… but… yeah… that's about it… I always got on better with older kids…

I think about the future quite a lot… but I dunno… probably working in my Dad's company… which is a, grafting, building, scaffolding… or… I dunno… or a chippie, like, carpenter… that's probably about it…I will have to get my CSCS card to work on the site and then that's about it really… I'll probably have my own house, like, with a mate…

Name	Broad Categories identified in Narrative Transcript	Sections identified from Working Transcript lines to enable analysis of sjuzet relating to these stories / broad categories identified in the Narrative Transcript:
Cain	Separation of parents	10;13-14; 15 – 16; 26; 473 – 482
	Moving home	21 – 24
	Moving schools	28; 128 – 130; 211 – 220; 230 – 236; 254
	Getting kicked out / excluded	132; 158; 218 – 220; 254
	Fighting	63 – 67; 70-74; 250; 254; 264-268; 270
	Relationships with schools and teachers	133-140; 160-174; 254; 315-320; 391-397; 399-416; 430; 492; 149-158
	YOT	449-472
	School as entertainment	240-245
	TA support	321-338
	Couldn't be bothered	195-200; 290-292; 306-310
	Friendships	187-191; 296; 376; 402; 422; 498; 506-508
	Home tutoring	182; 193-200; 195-198; 201-210
	Differentiation – how I learn best	298-300; 422
	Transport to school	180
	Getting angry	417-422; 410-416
	Motivation – depends on learning environment	285-290; 291-293; 300; 295-297; 306; 424; 420; 422
	PRU as a last chance	191-192
	Can't see the purpose of learning	301-314; 433-436
	Good memories of school	246-248; 380-390

	Future aspirations	99-108; 433-434; 483-486
	How I was brought up	278
	Liked PE	355-370

Darnell

My grandparents and my step-gran have been the most significant people in my life… I live with my Dad at the moment… and I see my Mum all the time… my uncle is also very important to me… he was when I was younger, a big influence but obviously it didn't go too good… I was close with him, he was more like a brother… he's in prison now… so he's not really like a good influence but when I was younger like, he was…

YOT is the only other significant place for me now… I go twice a week to do a programme… you stay for two hours and talk about knife crime and all this stuff that's happened… I don't see my YOT Officer though, I don't need to 'cause I do the programme…

I went to two different primary schools… I started SFD in nursery and I left in Year 4… then I moved house… I was living with my Dad when I was at SFD then I moved to my step-gran's house in L… I started the next primary school in Year 4 halfway… that was tricky… I stayed there until Year 6 then went to N in Year 7… I got excluded in Year 8… then I got, a managed move to St M's… near the end of Year 8… I stayed there until Year 9… I got excluded from St M's just as I was going into Year 10, a week before the 6 week holidays… I stayed at home until I got referred to here… I moved to here in Year 10, I've been here since January… I've moved quite a lot…

At SFD I was a bit naughty… and my Dad didn't know how to really discipline me… so he moved me to my step-grandmother's house… and that's when I moved schools and then same really, I got excluded a couple of times at LM, but not permanently… just like for a couple of days or whatever…

I was excluded for fighting… and I accidentally broke a window once… I was playing football and I kicked a ball at the window… not deliberately… in fact, you know what, it weren't actually me… I was with a friend… and we was coming back from PE and there was no teacher in the classroom but there was like pupils… and I'm like kicking the ball at him. My friend had the ball and he kicked it at the window and then I've gone inside and started kicking the ball around inside and then we've both got excluded for it… like a bit of playing gone too far…

Football was the most enjoyable part of primary school… and I had good attendance as well… I had my favourite teachers in Year 6… I think maybe it was because I was leaving… she was nice compared to the rest… and I got my first teacher in Year 4… she was the best as well because she was new and I didn't really know her and I got to know her better… they just like… they showed me around and stuff… and they made me feel like I had been there since nursery… I felt valued and important…

PE and football were most important to me… I really enjoyed PE… doing like sprinting and little mini Olympics… I pick things up quite easily… anything to do with sport I get the hang of quick… I don't play football outside of school anymore… I just stopped… trouble… I kept getting into trouble…

I don't really know why I got into trouble… I think I was just a bit rude… I was rude to certain teachers as well, especially if I felt they were being rude to me… and I had, I had a bad attitude and a temper… my Dad struggled with this as well…

I felt better when I moved in to be with my step-family 'cause I had more freedom so… I got to walk to school by myself, I got to live with my older uncle who was only like, he was like in Year 9 at the time… and I was in Year 4… so he wasn't much older… he was older than me but he was more like, more like a brother… yeah. He's in prison now, but yeah… I looked up to him…

N School was… Year 7 was a bit… because I had to make new friends… again… but it was alright 'cause I met one friend and he lived actually two flats next to me… and I moved back to my Dad's… 'cause my Dad wanted me to come and live back with him… I wasn't really happy about it…

But I actually liked the school… it was, it was even easy and it went quick as well… the work and everything was easy… but I got excluded in Year 8… one time, I had a supply teacher and no one liked him. Everyone hated him… 'cause he was just a pain… and I had fart gas but he walked back and he saw me, and I got excluded and… I walked out of school… because I knew when I'd get home, my Dad was just… just went crazy… so I went to my step-gran's house… and then… I actually moved back in with my step-gran until St M's…

St M's was big… I felt alright there 'cause I had a cousin there… and yeah, I just started well there… it was a good school… I enjoyed St M's more 'cause I was older there and 'cause, I don't know, I just enjoyed the school better 'cause it was bigger, it has Astroturf…

I got excluded… the permanent exclusion from St M's was… I was in the corridor with my friend and there was a boy running, running and I pretended to trip him up and then he kicked me and I beat him up… then I went back at my other gran's… a lot of moving…

Moving has been kind of helpful but kind of annoying, like, each time you move it's like a new start but yeah… just you never get a chance to settle down, for me anyway, I was always moving around… if I had my choice I'd be at my step-gran's 'cause it's fun… she's not strict, only when I'm doing something wrong… and she'll never keep me in the house every day or she would like be "go out"… I'm more settled at my gran's 'cause I don't get into trouble that much anymore…

I'm doing Business Studies here, and GCSE maths and English… it's alright here… I get on OK with the teachers… the school is a bit small though…

I hope to be in college in a year's time… in five years' time hopefully, hopefully I'm a football coach… hopefully I'll be living by myself…

Name	Broad Categories identified in Narrative Transcript	Sections identified from Working Transcript lines to enable analysis of sjuzet relating to these stories / broad categories identified in the Narrative Transcript:
Darnell	Family members in prison	118; 369-371
	YOT	177-178; 194-204; 207-210; 385; 389; 495
	Moving home	14; 64; 128-135; 137-138; 160-162; 164; 165-166; 209-295; 471; 479-481
	Moving school	8-12; 28; 46; 54; 66; 169; 205-206
	Getting kicked out / excluded	32; 42; 66-68; 121-122; 157-160; 164; 170-176; 279
	'Managed Moves'	34
	Fighting	62; 69-70; 174; 190-193; 317-321
	Relationships with teachers	83-96; 212-214; 441; 455; 461
	Attendance	82
	Feeling important / valued / respected	113-114; 263; 457; 461; 486-489; 493
	Friendships	14; 126; 128; 261
	Being 'in the flow' of work	150; 450-451; 452-453
	Physical school environment	439
	PRU as a last resort	223-230
	School work was easy	150-154; 399-401; 439
	Being given several chances	122
	Energy – not thinking through consequences	14; 279-285
	Not seeing the purpose of education / qualifications	215-218
	Future aspirations	304-309; 410-415
	PE	101-108; 190
	Attitude towards school	114; 249-255; 461
	Liked school	148; 465-467

Jay

I don't really have any good memories from primary school… there was a lot of fighting… it was just a lot of fighting, like… in primary school everyone is just… a lot of fighting, you know? It used to be one year against the other year… it used to be, like, my year: we were Year 5… and then the other year: year 6… and there used to be like, 20 people… there used to be, like… 40 people on the pitch just fighting… a bit mad… every week really… quite a lot! Um… one year group thought they were better than the other… and they think they've got stronger people in each year, and stuff… it's just… ridiculous things like that, really… I just remember there was a lot of fighting there… and, just every day you had to watch your back really, in the school… yeah, everywhere, you know? Corridors, hallways, everything… toilets… it wasn't… it wasn't that bad really… I wasn't really thinking about that more than learning… I wasn't really bothered about that…

I enjoyed some of the lessons at primary – PE, music, sometimes maths, English was alright… it wasn't anything in particular… just – it wasn't that bad… the teachers was alright… but I got on well with… it wasn't… she wasn't my teacher… she was like a… what do you call one of them… TAs… she was a TA… that was pretty much the only person I got along with really… she was with me most of the time… yeah. A group of use people… she was ok to talk to… but there was always one person in class who would disrupt the class in some way… would always do something… or there's… something funny like someone going to sleep in the classroom… or something… someone's doing something… you can never… you can never have one lesson.. without someone doing something… it's impossible in that school… um, it was funny, yes, it was alright… sometimes when you get to the subject you like and then it just gets annoying sometimes…

I got excluded in Year 6... I didn't got to another primary school though…I got home – tutored for the end of Year 6… it was pretty long, for 7 months I think… it wasn't that bad… a lot of exercise wasn't that bad… I took a bike to the city everyday… quite a lot of exercise… too much exercise I think! Too far! I had to travel to MK library every day… half an hour it would take from my house… yeah… half an hour… um, I would get there for about 8am or 8:30am… then I would be there until 3pm… so… a couple of hours really… a good few hours… it was nice… tiring but nice… I had to go to sleep early! It was much better than school because… because you get like: one person who's teaching you then… instead of the whole class… it just because like… you understand it more… I guess, having that constant attention on you…

Overall I'd rate primary school 3 out of 5… it was alright… it was mainly the teachers really… if you did something wrong you would have to go and sit in his office and then he'll try and shout at you and stuff… full on shout… he could burst your ears… it didn't bother me 'cause I was used to it… I just sat… and thinking in my head 'is he going to shut up?' I just sat there and took it… he'd get really close to your face, like… and spit in your face… nah… not good… he'd do it to everyone… it was his way of teaching, yeah? His way of… discipline…

Secondary… it was an alright school… it wasn't that bad… it was just the teachers, really… same old… shout: discipline for no reason really… I wasn't there for long… I got kicked out in Year 7… Year 7, I got kicked out… for fighting… everyone moved up together… it was quite a lot of people in there from my other school… I felt like I was going back into it, yeah? And there's more people from different schools so it makes it even worser… yeah… harder… it was more of a challenge… because you've to watch your back even more because you don't know the people there…

It was nicer being in a bigger school though… more freedom for running around… but the teachers were worser than the primary school bunch… in, in that school it's annoying… they're saying: 'If you do that again… if you, um, slip up one more time… I'm gonna'… and it's, it's… uh, it's just annoying… they swear and shout and stuff… in that school: threats from the teachers… they all say the same thing… it's always the male teachers… 'This is my school'… all of them are like 'it's my school'… 'My school'… and I says 'it's not your school, it's Mr Barnes' school'… he owns the school'… and it's like, 'no, it's my school'… same stuff… it felt like they were trying to put themselves above us… they all… all of them say… 'It's my school'… but blatantly it's not… I feel like at that school… I didn't get on with none of them… it was that bad…

I got excluded for fighting again… towards the end of Year 7… um, actually I was home-schooled again for a couple of months… and then I went to, um, White Spire… the school I'm at now… I've been at WS from Year 8 – 10… the teachers are much nicer in that school, but they just don't know the rules… teachers in that school – I don't know why – in secondary school, but it's all about shouting 'it's my school' and stuff… so they know. In that school it's all about… it's pretty much relaxed… they let you do anything really… you would get away with anything in that school… I've got away with a lot of stuff! Bunked lessons all the time… anything really…you can run out the gate… run out the school gates! They normally – like in secondary school – they'd run out the school gates; call the police; call your mum… get your mum to come and find you or something like that… call the police to go find you or something like that… at this school they call your mum and then they're just like… 'He's runned off. I can't do much about that'… and that, so… they…I used to be pretty bad in that school, when I was like, in Year 8 and stuff… and just struggled really, to see the point more…

It's alright there… there are lesser kids in class… it's like, 12 people in the lessons… it's much more, calmer area… no fighting… if I didn't like the lesson I'd just walk home… learning there is less challenging.. I had 1:1 support the whole time… teachers will just get on with lessons and stuff… just do PE and stuff…

Um, I'm doing… well I'm starting my GCSE's in Year 10, and I'm doing like BTEC science and that… just doing stuff like that… and it's just, yeah, it's alright… I've been doing Wheelright… it's a mechanic – it's a project that, um… helped me out with… um, someone to go to and you're a mechanic… and they teach this course… it's alright… working towards a qualification… I did want to be a mechanic but I haven't really got my mind set anymore… I don't know…

I got involved with YOT a few months back due to an incident what happened… first incident what happened was a person in my street… I got 12 months… but I don't know how long now… I had to do knife crime… Sally, she comes round and it's just… how I'm feeling, how my mum's feeling, everyone… what's all the tension and stuff in the house…

Name	Broad Categories identified in Narrative Transcript	Sections identified from Working Transcript lines to enable analysis of sjuzet relating to these stories / broad categories identified in the Narrative Transcript:
Jay	Got excluded a lot	10; 26; 145-147
	Fighting	16-20; 22; 50; 148; 164; 166; 199-201; 231-234
	PE was ok	34
	Got on better with TAs than teachers	41-44
	Not bothered about learning	59-60; 226
	Home tutored	61-69; 75-80; 117-120; 203-204
	Learning environment	75-80; 83-90; 149-162; 167-168; 220-222; 227-228; 230
	Relationships with teachers	96-104; 107-112; 115-116; 121-124; 138-144; 169-179; 180-184; 185-198; 217-220
	Learning as entertaining	122
	Friendships	226
	You had to watch your back	52; 54-58; 159-166
	Feeling listened to / valued / respected	75-80; 247-248
	Different rules in AP – more relaxed	217-224
	Attendance	243-246
	Differentiation of school work	235-236
	YOT	291-304; 309
	Difficulties with transport / tag	246
	Lack of trust	248
	Can't be bothered	248
	Future aspirations	282
	Options restricted by funding	272-284
	Consequences of actions	309-311

Sheyden

My brother, my sisters… are important to me… and my mum… and my nieces and my nephew…it's a big family, and I've got another niece and another nephew on the way…

My sister moved to MK like last year… I moved here a few months ago… with her… I lived… I lived in L before… with my sister… I've lived with her since like, 2008 yeah… before that I lived with my Mum and we moved all over… every year it seemed like… three or four moves?! Probably over 10! That's house moves, not school moves… yeah, I've lived everywhere in London… you'll have to ask my mother why… I don't know why, I was a kid, innit… it seemed alright but… if you think about it it's not though… because a kid shouldn't be moving around everywhere… it should be stable…

I sofa-surfed in L a lot… my Mum kept getting evicted… Social Services were involved… I was taken into Local Authority accommodation last year… Since then, yeah… I was 16 when I moved up here… I live in MK now and I still go to L… it's like an hour… when I first came up here I thought it was the end of the world! But now I'm used to it… it's like a bus ride… I go back down when I feel like it… to see my mum, my friends, my brothers…

I dunno how it would've been different if it had been stable though… everywhere I've moved I've always come back to the same area… I've had the same friends my whole life… no matter where I live…

So I mainly went to school in L…I went to one primary school 'cause even though we moved a lot it was always in that area… a secondary and two PRUs… I went to secondary school until I got kicked out in Year 8 or 9… then I went to a unit… but that unit was too far away from my house so then I moved to the one closer… it was the same at both… I just remember messing about… I liked a few of the lessons at the second unit… – English, PE, Science… then the geography, religious studies… uh, art… I liked art as well… and music… yeah, those are the best ones… they were different to the ones I didn't like 'cause you were allowed to talk, like; in a group and stuff like that... at that unit the teachers were fun… they organised stuff for us to do like Business Enterprise and shit… In maths at secondary school they… they just want you to be silent… most of your lessons they just want you to be silent… but them ones… it's more practical, innit though? So you can work with people…

That's all really… the rest I didn't like, like Maths… all I can remember getting in trouble in is maths or science… but I only ever got in trouble in science because I will do my work and then talk… I dunno what it was with maths… it's not even the work… you're just… it's just the atmosphere… it's just boring… maths is a boring subject… I don't like it... if I'm bored I won't do it… I'll just find something else for entertaining me… I use maths everyday… adding up and that… I know enough to get by… I don't need to know anything else…

I had one mentor that I used to… help me keep calm and that… but no help with learning… I don't think the teachers helped us… because… I don't know… they were just all shit teachers… that secondary school was backward… I dunno what they could have done to help… I don't think it would have mattered if they focused more on what I could do… I was what I was…

The teachers were just weird…what they do… how they do… stuff that… I seriously don't know how you could be late for school and then get an hour detention after school… like… what's the? That's… that's stupid… that is stupid… you can be like five minutes late and they want you to sit behind after school for an hour because you was five minutes late… I don't think so… so I never used to go… at one stage they never use to come for me if I was late… even though I lived on the same road… but at one stage I was late everyday… sometimes I was late because I couldn't be bothered or I'd bunk and hang out with some of the Year 11's… I hated it in Year 8 but then I started liking it again… my attendance was bad in year 8 around when I got kicked out… but then I went back and got kicked out again… and then they tried to have me stay behind for detentions and that… but you think I'm staying behind? No… never… it don't make sense… if you're late for school, you're late for school… why do you need to get detention for it? It's not like you was bad or done something wrong… it's not that it wasn't fair, they just don't seem 'right'…

I found school easy… following rules was easy… they were there so everyone can be cool, innit? And they can do what they're doing their job smoothly… but it's not going to happen is it? Not everyone can abide by the rules… is it… if there was that then there wouldn't be no prisons… I wouldn't be here… like the shoes rule… I never, ever used to wear shoes… wore black Kickers! I don't like wearing shoes… I didn't mind the uniform… it was a jumper, it wasn't a blazer… it was a polo shirt and jumper so I didn't mind… it's more comfortable… but I think that's one of the reasons the kids didn't listen as much, as well… I don't know… schools that wear blazers and that, like, academies… they're different… it's like they're more behaved… yeah, and you've got the schools that just wear jumpers and that… I think that probably had an effect on behaviour… everything does…

I've got good memories of school, but all my good memories are bad! The good memories I have is probably all play-fighting and that… and cussing each other… and all that rubbish… just messing about really, innit? I don't have any memories about learning… I don't think I've ever learnt anything in school… I don't think school teaches me… like, I sit there and I wonder why in my head… my only bad memory is getting excluded… I was angry 'cause I didn't see the reason they needed to exclude me… so I just didn't want to go to any school after… I felt rejected 'cause the teachers at the school loved me! Especially the PE teachers… 'cause it was a sports college they were good… you could have a joke with them…

School was alright some days… it was fun… some days it was boring… most of the time it was fun though… I'd rate it as 10, 10… I love school… but I just used to mess around a lot… I have slightly regretted it… getting kicked out… or getting transferred… got excluded in Year 9. Or year 8; something like that… I've not been in school since then… well I got transferred… not kicked out… means the same thing to be honest… I don't know why they call it that… they try and make it sound 'better'…

I got kicked out because they wouldn't… because I wouldn't let them search me for weed innit? They tried saying… I was smoking on the school road after school… but the day they said I was doing it I was in at home for that whole day so it couldn't have been me… and the next day I went in, they tried to search me… and I was like, 'no', so… they excluded me… I was waiting for it anyway… yeah, it was only a matter of time… 'cause I… always had something to say to the teachers… back chat…I missed it afterwards, a lot… and now I just can't be bothered… I dunno, man… it's just school, innit? I go through my phases… when you think about it… that's when you miss it… when you don't think about it… that's when you don't miss it… but I can't miss it now anyway because… it's not like I could go back there… none of my friends are there anymore, so… there's nothing to miss… apart from memories…

How did I feel I learned best? I just listen, innit? And do my work… if I, if I… I dunno… it depends how I was feeling, how I was taught… if I was in a good mood then I'll do my work innit… if I'm in a bad mood I'll just mess it about… waking up not in a bad mood helped – if my sister or something would wake me up in a… in a, in the wrong way then I would be woken up in a bad mood like. If they wake me up nice I'd be waking up in a good mood!

I don't think I have a problem with learning… if I want to learn something I'll learn it… I just have to want to do it… if I don't want it to happen it's not going to happen… I just know when I don't want to… it's weird…

What am I good at? I dunno… I dunno. I'm good at music… good at sports… good at writing and reading… spelling… that's all really… I was proud when one of my art pictures is on the wall… in the corridors. But before I got kicked out I was doing some… some essay thing in my BTEC Sports but then I got… kicked out… and I never got to show it… I was angry about that… it was good, like, seriously good…

I regretted getting kicked out 'cause of that, just that, really, and all my friends… that's the real reason; I'll be honest… I haven't seen my school friends in a few years now… only kept in touch with them on Facebook and that, innit? It's not really because I moved up here, um, no, not really… they… they… they… I don't know… they live in some different places now… where they live, I can't go… I can't be bothered, too spread out… but sometimes… certain ones I'll see… I can't remember what ones…

I got involved in the Youth Offending Service in 2012 the first time… then again in about May… March? Something like that… I think… for drugs… I got a 12 month Referral Order…

I don't have a clue about my future… probably music… I can see myself doing some kind of music stuff… probably will be doing that… or sports stuff, or teaching sports… or being a youth worker, yeah? Like in a youth club… I used to go to a Youth Club… it was alright there… but I'm too old for it now… I don't 'play' anymore… but I wouldn't have a go at that water-skiing!

I'm not doing nothing at the moment… I did have an interview to enrol in the college but then they never accepted 'cause of my offences… so since then I haven't applied for nothing else… I'm 17 today… I guess I don't have to attend education any more…

I know I will definitely be doing something in the music industry… def-in-ate-ly… I know that for a fact… I've seen it already… I know Labyrinth's brother… he lives near my mum… he's got a studio and that… I know a couple of people that do this music rubbish…

I'd go back to training if I got rich by the time I'm 21, then I'll go to university… I'd do anything… anything that will give me qualifications… I don't even care! I'm not really bothered about qualifications to be honest… but I know I'll need them at some point…

If I was talking to another young person about school now I'd say 'go' and 'make sure you go there' innit? Don't get in trouble… much…

Name	Broad Categories identified in Narrative Transcript	Sections identified from Working Transcript lines to enable analysis of sjuzet relating to these stories / broad categories identified in the Narrative Transcript:
Sheyden	Moving home	59; 60-66; 68; 209; 213; 215; 216-225
	Moving school	201; 205; 207; 302-305; 12
	Friendships	186-189
	Getting kicked out / excluded	205; 305
	Messing about / play-fighting	2; 16; 18; 20; 289
	Liking school	21-28; 339-340
	School as entertainment	2
	Feeling listened to / valued / respected	163-166
	Differentiation of work – how I learn best	30-32; 158-160; 98-100
	Boring subjects – not seeing	169-181

		the purpose of studying them	
		Relationships with teachers	124-134; 249; 251; 254-255; 261-263
		Differences of understanding between students and teachers	139-148
		Couldn't be bothered	8; 315
		Attendance	257-259; 305
		Good memories of school	303; 287
		Regret getting excluded	4; 341-350
		Transferred, not kicked out or excluded	117-118; 119-123; 6
		Mood affecting learning – waking up in the morning	34-42
		Motivation – I have to want to learn something	94; 96; 168
		Pride in school work	182-185
		Restricted educational options (by YOT)	315
		TA support	247
		Future aspirations	351-354; 352-333

Appendix E

Example of Categorical-Content Analysis Table

Dimension of Learning	Narrative Resource	Category	Example sentences (+ young person and transcript line)
Incentive	Instability	Moving	*'I came here five years ago'* (AD: 8) *'I moved house 'cause I was living with my Dad and then I moved to my gran's house'* (DK: 14) *'I finished at DH, then I went to P, and then I moved here, then I went to C'* (LH: 411 – 415)
		Exclusion	*'Getting kicked out… or transferred'* (SM: 6) *'Then they kicked me out, moved me to HF'* (AD: 34) *'I had to change schools 5 times; they kept kicking me out'* (CP: 128 – 132) *'Got excluded a lot'* (JL: 10)
Interaction	Incompatibility	Fighting	*'There's a lot of fighting in school'* (JL: 16) *'I only had problems with fighting'* (AD: 34) *'I just wanted to beat everyone up'* (CP: 250)
		Relationships	*'I don't think the teachers helped us; they were all shit teachers'* (SM: 247-249) *'I'd say they cared more about their appearance than they would the students getting their education'* (CP: 150) *'He'll just shout at you… really burst your ears… get really close… and spit in your face'* (JL: 98-108) *'They listened to me… done what they could… then they let me down'* (LH: 266-270)
Content	Incompatibility	Educational options restricted by 'systems'	*'I had an conversation to enrol at college but they never accepted me 'cause of YOT'* (SM: 315) *'I always miss the first lesson 'cause transport is a nightmare'* (CP: 180) *'I'd go if I could trust the taxi to turn up… I have to get 4 buses and it's too expensive'* (JL: 246-248)
	Reformation	Reflections on learning	*'It's just the atmosphere… it's just boring!'* (SM: 166) *'I didn't really have fun in primary school'* (CP: 240) *'I pick things up quite easily'* (DK: 399) *'I couldn't be bothered sitting there with like, 32 screaming kids…'* (CP: 292) *'You can never have one lesson without someone doing something…'* (JL: 86) *'Home-tutoring was much better because you get one person who's teaching you instead of the whole class… it's much better really'* (JL: 78)

	Reformation	Interests outside of school	*'I loved PE, and now I like anything that can build my body… I love going to the gym'* (CP: 360) *'Music… I can see myself doing that… I go to the studio'* (SM: 325-337) *'Fixing… the things I like doing most are fixing bikes… and riding my bike in races'* (LH: 44)