

**A critical investigation of the role of teacher research and its relationship to teacher professionalism, knowledge and identity.**

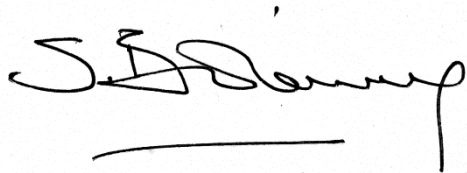
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## **Abstract**

The thesis examines the related concepts of teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity through the lens of teacher research, and in the context of a teacher-research network. The mechanism for exploration was through teacher voice. As the research unfolded, what was revealed was that accessing teacher voice presented a major obstacle as teachers struggled to articulate their own views on knowledge, professionalism and identity, in part because there seemed to be no language to discuss such concepts. The question of discourse thus became a key theme. The research methods developed to address this issue include a card sort as a way of addressing the teacher silences: this approach revealed that teachers were able to engage with ideas around knowledge, professionalism, identity and research when given a language in this way. However, what emerged was far from a cohesive narrative but rather diverse and at times contradictory accounts of associated teacher beliefs and values. Faced with inconsistency and paradox, a new theoretical lens of post-modernism was used to explore the fragmented and splintered narratives which had emerged, and a different account of knowledge, professionalism, identity and research is offered.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Brindley', with a horizontal line underneath.

Sue Brindley

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This thesis is for my supervisor, Dr Jane Perryman. It simply would not have happened without her. Thank you, Jane - *il miglior fabbro*.

I also owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr Jacek Brant, for his generous support and advice.

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**Introduction: ‘What we need to do is find our own voices again. Maybe research is the way to do that, I don’t know, I don’t know.’  
(Teacher participant)**

The ongoing debates about the place and legitimacy of teacher research, claims and counter claims about knowledge, professionalism and identity cohered for me as part of my own professional life co-ordinating a teacher research network, and in the recognition that the teachers I was working with seemed to find the opportunity to research and discuss that research as a way of, as one teacher said, ‘becoming more of a professional’. I wanted to know what this actually meant and whether her view was shared by other teachers. As I began to explore this area, I encountered strongly-felt arguments from teachers about the ways in which research was, at that time, being downgraded by policy-makers, and the frustrations felt by these researching teachers that their findings were being ignored – they were literally unheard. The impact on these teachers seemed to be significant but diffused: they talked about being energised by the research but were unclear about its impact in the classroom; they felt ‘changed’ by being involved but found it difficult to explain how; they were enthusiastic about continuing but could not point to any ways in which their research had changed school practice or policy. Given such marked contradictions, I was curious to explore with these teachers what research meant and what its ‘point’ was for them. I wanted to give them a context to develop their research in meaningful ways, and thus a voice which I felt was missing from professional debates.

This thesis began with a belief that through teacher voice it would be possible to give accounts of teacher knowledge, professionalism, identity and research in ways which would illuminate some of the questions being raised around these constructs by both teachers and policy-makers. I had noted that research literatures frequently reported on teacher views, but rarely gave priority to the teachers’ own voiced opinions. I hoped as this research began that by giving teachers voice through their, and my own, research, new understandings could be generated. However, as the research developed, I was faced with a different challenge: that discord would itself arise through the very use of teacher voice. This unexpected development led to the use of a theoretical lens which presented a quite different narrative about teacher voice, and indeed about professionalism, knowledge, identity and teacher research.



## *Policy*

It is worth noting at this point that policy has itself been called 'contested terrain' (Gunter *et al.*, 2010:163). Policy might be thought of as occupying two major positions, 'neo-liberal' and 'civil' (Gunter *et al.*, 2010:164-165). The former emphasises the role of the individual within an economic framing, the latter positions the individual as concerned with social justice. At the time of writing this thesis, policy within education in the UK is positioned as responsive to the government's concern with individuals' projected roles in a competitive global economy. Such a position resonates strongly with a neo-liberal model of policy:

The state's responsibility for economic development ... in the role of the individual to secure their readiness and capabilities for work ... the emphasis is on skills, credentials ... human capital.  
(Gunter *et al.*, 2010:164)

Policy is thus understood, at least in the early stages of this research, in as operating within the currently dominant neo-liberal model. An interesting paradox is raised later in the thesis by the use of the neo-liberal meta-narrative in the face of post-modernism's denial of such constructs, and indeed in the denial of post-modernism's own meta-narrative. Nevertheless, in exploring the economic imperatives that drive much of the policy decisions encountered in this thesis at least, the neo-liberal framing is an important contextualisation.

Chapter One starts by investigating the literatures in the key areas of teacher voice, knowledge, professionalism and identity. In this chapter, I identify issues around definition, and trace some of the debates both chronologically and thematically. In Chapter Two, I revisit the key areas through an in-depth examination of the work of four major scholars, Giroux, Bernstein, Kincheloe and Habermas, in order to engage more deeply with the ways in which their work informs and defines the areas I want to understand. Chapter Three details the theoretical and methodological decisions made in seeking to capture data through teacher voice, and highlights the importance of the emerging place of discourse. Chapter Four tells the story of the ways in which I had sought to understand knowledge, professionalism and identity, and the development of my own self as researcher as I encountered a major obstacle in teachers' inability to articulate views and opinions, so that teacher voice

itself became a questionable area to investigate. Chapter Five records the use of card sorts as a means to generate teacher voice, and analyses the outcomes which demonstrated teacher voice as at best divergent and at worst, contradictory. Chapter Six adopts a new theoretical position of post-modernism, and seeks to demonstrate that the apparently fragmented phenomena examined, under a post-modern lens, in fact illustrate 'a different way of seeing' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:2) teacher voice, knowledge, professionalism, identity, research and discourse. It is acknowledged in this chapter that such a lens brings challenges and tensions as previous theoretical positions are explored and challenged in this new light. However, it is argued there that the insights offered by a post-modern analysis are so significant that not to pursue this analytical framework would be to deny the opportunity to explore the paradoxes and complexities associated with the contested fields of knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research in innovative and original ways.

As each stage of the research has unfolded I have become increasingly aware of the profound changes in my own thinking. Beginning from a position where I saw teachers and teacher voice as being a single, repressed dimension of the struggle between practice and policy, and research as a means of releasing that voice, I have moved from a position of 'an answer' to that of being able to acknowledge that 'answers' are crude measures of success in research. Instead, I claim only that I now think about these complex areas with more clarity, and perhaps know the questions I should have asked to begin with, but, without this research, did not know existed.

## **Chapter One: teachers' voice, professionalism, knowledge, identity and teacher research**

In this first chapter, I explore the academic literatures relating to the major structures in the conceptual framework which underpins my research. My research is concerned with establishing the impact, if any, of teacher research on the key areas of teacher professionalism, knowledge, identity and research. In order to explore these areas, I am interested in the authentic voice of the teacher and the representation of these key areas specifically through the lens of teacher researchers.

The literatures represented in this chapter therefore fall into five categories: teacher voice; teacher research; professionalism; knowledge; and identity. In this chapter I examine these areas individually. In Chapter Two I explore the relationships between these areas through a close and deep examination of works by selected key scholars.

### **Teacher Voice**

Teachers, their voices and views, are the lynchpin of my research. I am interested in their experiences and their constructions of some of the key areas investigated in academic literatures. It is, therefore, a particular concern to explore the ways in which teachers' perspectives map against some of the claims of the academic literatures. Teacher voice was, therefore, the dimension by which my research data were gathered and through which my findings were interpreted.

In understanding the term 'teacher voice', I draw on three major constructs: firstly, that of authenticity. At one level this refers to the notion of representation: thus Goodson's (1991:39) claim that the term 'teacher's voice' has been used selectively within research, often excising those elements which are felt not to represent a perceived version of how teachers are seen to think, 'The researcher only hears what he/she wants to hear and knows will sound well when replayed to the research community'. But linked to this is a perhaps more significant perspective, that the very term 'teachers' voice' has been used to 'romanticise' (Hargreaves, A., 1996:12) the construct of a teacher and thus to create a particular discourse:

by selectively appropriating particular empirical voices ... predominantly humanistic and child-centred, then condensing them into a singular voice, *the teacher's voice*, which becomes representative of *all* teachers. This generic voice is given a particular and positive moral loading...

This is of particular note for this thesis, given, as will be seen, the construction of a discourse of compliance, interestingly a product of the claims D. Hargreaves makes about the 'creative professional'. It both reveals a process and a product that will be encountered throughout the thesis. Within this research, however, 'teachers' voice' will be understood as representing the authentic and comprehensive views of teachers, even where that voice stands against the argued case. Indeed, as later chapters indicate, the presence of opposing voices became a key factor in theorising the data when the anticipated metanarrative of teachers' views on professionalism, knowledge and identity was realised instead as a series of what I came to call 'splintered stories'.

The second construct of voice is that used by Elbaz (2006:10), and links with the previous notion of discourse – a theme which as will be seen later in the thesis, becomes a central concern. It is the claiming of both right to 'speak' and the expectation of being heard:

having 'voice' implies that one has a language in which to give expression to one's authentic concerns, that one is able to recognize those concerns, and further that there is an audience of significant others who will listen. ... voice is already there, already critical, regardless of whether the outside world allows it expression.

The right of teachers to have a discourse, and crucially to be heard by those shaping education at policy level, is a principle which informs this thesis. It is the foundation of the belief in teacher research as a mechanism for achieving this, and in the reclaiming of professionalism and identity – both centrally important to this thesis. Elbaz's belief that voice is 'already there, already critical' positions teacher research as powerful in its potential to offer a language – a discourse – to teachers.

Thirdly, following Freire (1983:13), the notion of teacher voice is that of the political, a 'right to participate consciously in the socio-historical transformation of . . . society'. Freire states that in this sense voice is a 'primordial human right' (1983:12), and

where voice is denied, teachers are ‘alienated from the power responsible for their silence’ (1983:13). The themes of power and silence will become increasingly significant in this thesis, and indeed became an imperative to design my research in ways which I had not at first anticipated.

Teacher voice then is multi-layered. It is a claim to authentic representation, to the notion of discourse which speaks to both the personal and the political. In this way, it can be claimed that a ‘working definition’ encapsulates all of these dimensions, and the thesis which follows addresses each of these within the research, though, as will be seen, the research developed, teacher voice itself becomes subject to challenges in all three constructs.

Diagrammatically, at this stage, my research might be represented thus (see Figure 1:1 below):

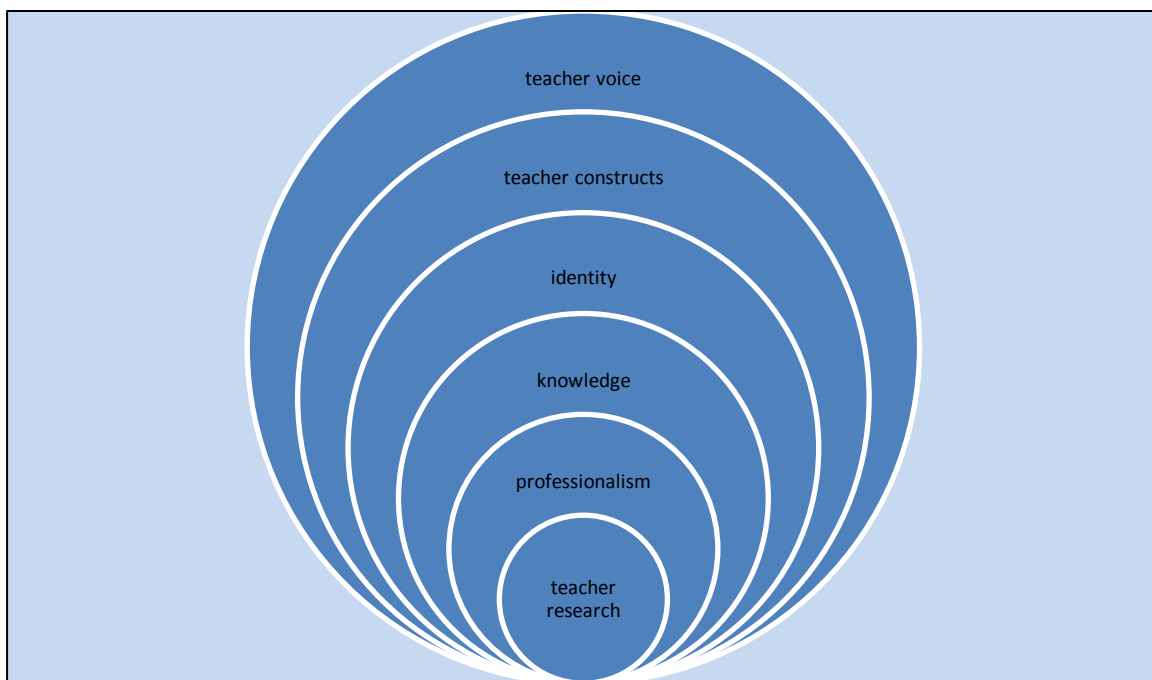


Figure 1:1 Thesis foci

Selection of teacher voice as a theoretical perspective was thus not simply a mechanism for data collection. Rather, through this research, I wanted to reinstate, as it were, the ideological dimension of teacher voice:

In a political sense the notion of the teacher's voice addresses the right to speak and be represented. It can represent both the unique individual and the collective voice; one that is characteristic of teachers as compared to other groups.

(Butt, Raymond, McCue and Yamagishi, 1989:57)

It is significant, though, to note that this claim, originally made in 1989, seemed to capture a *zeitgeist* when teachers were indeed a voice to be heard. The literatures of the 1990s (for example, Elbaz, 1990, 1991; Goodson, 1991; Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993; Hargreaves, A. and Goodson, 1996) demonstrate powerful assertions that teacher voice was a preoccupation of the time, and a major contributor to discussions about teaching and learning. Elbaz (1990:15), for example, states that:

'Voice' is a term used increasingly by researchers concerned with teacher empowerment; the term expresses an implicit critique of a prevailing tendency in earlier studies of teaching to reduce the complexity of teachers' work, and to privilege theoretical formulations over the concerns of teachers themselves.

However, warning notes were being sounded about the representation of teacher voice. Thomas directed us to a changing significance:

While, traditionally, teachers have been of strong voice, primarily through their direct participation in decision-making associated with the administration of schools and curriculum, their status shows signs of change.  
(1995:125)

In the UK at least, 'signs of change' could be tracked in the 1990s through the introduction of a centralised system, designed to bring about 'accountability' and to 'raise standards'. This took the form of a national curriculum and an extensive assessment system designed to monitor pupil progress within that, and thus a version of teacher efficacy which aligned with a centralised view. Teachers' 'decision-making' powers were severely curtailed with the introduction of a government curriculum and with associated accountability measures, such as league tables. Concomitantly the phenomenon of 'teacher voice', both in research terms and, it might be claimed, in political terms, faded. Far from teachers being part of any decision-making, they became instead the subjects of such decisions. Teacher voice effectively disappeared as an academic and political phenomenon and instead was replaced with 'consumer voice' and particularly pupil voice (for example, Rudduck and Flutter, 2000; Noyes, 2005; Flutter, 2007), a change in the balance of power interests which, as will be seen, was echoed in shifts in the constructs of

professionalism, knowledge and identity. So notable was the disappearance of teacher voice, that in demonstrating this phenomenon, and writing in 2002, Whitty quoted A. Hargreaves' (1998:4) perspicacious remark, 'Teachers' voices have been either curiously absent, or been used as mere echoes for preferred or presumed theories of educational researchers.'

It was this 'curious absence' that struck me in my own literature searches. Although there were numerous books, chapters, articles and websites which addressed my research themes of professionalism, knowledge and identity, the seminal texts were the voice of the academic, the professional researcher; none of these texts actually gave *precedence* to teacher voice. These theorised views on teacher professionalism, knowledge and identity actually marginalised teacher voice within the debates – an ironic twist in an area populated by those ostensibly seeking to rebalance educational debates away from dominance by policy-makers towards teachers, as Elbaz had demonstrated earlier.

My own research, however, was focused on finding teacher voice. I wanted to know what teachers could tell me about professionalism, knowledge and identity, and to do so in the context of teacher research. I sought, therefore, to address the 'curious absence' of teacher voice by positioning teachers centrally in my research. Only through their authentic voices could I hope to discover what professionalism, knowledge and identity actually *meant to teachers*; if I wanted to know whether teacher research was important in any way to teachers, it was their voices I needed to hear. My decision, therefore, was that this thesis should position teacher voice as 'strongly present' rather than 'curiously absent'. Part of the claim to original knowledge in this thesis is thus based on representing teacher voice as the prime and defining mechanism for investigating my research questions. An unexpected outcome, indeed a dominant theme, is that teacher voice segued into the notion of discourse; and discourse into notions of power and constructions of realit(ies) that would question whether teacher voice per se could still be thought of as other than fragmented.

But I also had a further dimension I wanted to explore. Many of the literatures made reference to 'reclaiming teacher voice' through teacher research (Smiles and Short, 2006; Kincheloe, 2003; Giroux, 1988). Teacher voice in the sense of that mentioned

by Butt *et al.* (1989) the political voice, was about emancipation, as were Elbaz's claims:

The notion of 'voice' has been central to the development of teacher thinking research. The term itself does not appear all that often ... [but] is implicit in the work of all those whose work is committed to the empowerment of teachers ... the term is always used against the background of a previous silence, and it is a political usage as well as an epistemological one. Teacher thinking researchers have all been concerned to redress an imbalance which had in the past given us knowledge of teaching from the outside only; many have also been committed to return to teachers the right to speak for and about teaching.

(Elbaz, 1990:17)

By implication, the silencing of teacher voice was, therefore, an act of repression. I wanted to know whether teachers experienced such repression, whether they saw teacher research as in any sense to do with emancipation, and thus whether the 'reclaiming' of voice was significant for them.

### ***Teacher Voice: other manifestations?***

Teacher voice continues to languish in the margins. Little scholarly activity has been evident in the field. However, teacher voice has emerged in different guises. Perhaps politically significant is the proposal in April 2013 for a Royal College of Teaching. Although at the time of writing, this remains a proposal rather than an actuality, one of the claims made is that the College should 'represent teacher voice':

Dame Joan McVittie, a secondary school head teacher and former president of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) union, says...a Royal College of Teaching should provide an informed, authoritative voice for teaching, with responsibility for setting standards.

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-22339100>)

This is a complex claim in a number of ways. For example, the debates continue over who actually would own the College: it is being promoted by a wide range of bodies - unions, professional bodies such as National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE), exam boards, the Prince's Trust and by Government. Since it is immediately evident from this grouping that competing agendas would inform the development of any such College, the question has to be whether this body would represent teacher voice any more genuinely than the ill-fated General Teaching Council (GTC). The paradox of how any centralised body with inevitable vested interests can genuinely claim to represent teacher voice has not been addressed thus far. It will be interesting to track whether the emergence of a Royal College will



*in fact* allow teachers to return to the notion of having an authentic and powerful voice – or whether this is yet another mechanism for bringing about the ‘standards’ agenda, glossed with ‘professionalism’. Indeed, in the light of Chapter Six and the theoretical analysis using post-modernism, the whole question of teacher voice will be brought into question, so that the proposals of the College take on a different light altogether. Rather than a polarised struggle using versions of teachers’ standards, the research will question the very possibility that, no matter how frequent or extensive the consultation processes, accessing the phenomenon of teacher voice is, in a post-modernist interpretation, without point since no such event can be considered to exist as a coherent entity.

In the early stages of the research which follows, I claim that the teacher voice represented here is indeed authentic. I am seeking to discover if, how and where teachers are able to voice their own legitimate interests and concerns about education. It was therefore, I believed, teacher voice which was both the vehicle for exploration and the means by which understanding could be achieved. But, as will be seen, Chapter Six queries whether the question is that of teacher voice and emancipation, or whether both concepts are open to restructuring using a post-modernist lens.

### **Teacher Researchers**

Teacher as researcher is a subject which has generated substantial attention and literature, and particularly so over the past 20 years as teacher research moved out of the arena of relatively bounded academic concerns (see, for example, Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993; Kompf, Bond, Dworet and Boak, 1996) into the realm of policy (see, for example, DfE, 2012; TTA, 1999). The impetus for the focus of policy-makers on research could be attributed, in the UK at least, to David Hargreaves’ 1996 influential address to the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), the government policy-making body on teacher training of that time, *Teaching as a Research-Based Profession: Possibilities and Prospects*. This highly critical account of educational research branded most university-based research as a costly exercise, producing few findings of any relevance to practitioners. Hargreaves called for the educational research agenda to be set by practitioners, with a clear focus on producing classroom-focused research which would raise standards of teaching and learning. The subsequent report commissioned by the TTA (Hillage, Pearson, Anderson and Tamkin, 1998) unsurprisingly supported Hargreaves’ findings, and despite – or

perhaps because of - warnings relating to ownership and professionalism from eminent and very well respected academics (see, for example, Whitty, 1999), the government of the time elected to action the recommendations of Hillage *et al.* to implement a National Teacher Research Panel (NTRP). The panel would be responsible for both setting an educational research agenda and supporting practitioners in undertaking research.

Kincheloe (2003) and Bottery and Wright (2000) point out that this move by government essentially de-professionalised university researchers, thus attempting to destabilise the relationship between teacher researchers and university-based researchers, and offered what might be argued to be the illusion, at least, of teachers reclaiming the right to professional (teacher) knowledge creation through the claiming of the research agenda. Simultaneously, as Bottery and Wright (2000) and Whitty (2002) illustrate, this move also ensured that the university-based research agenda was branded as nothing more than 'ivory tower' polemic, 'irrelevan[t]' to 'real' teaching. It was essential, Hargreaves stated, that the research agenda was removed from universities and given into the hands of teachers. There are two points worth noting here. Firstly, university research carries a potential and often realised agenda of critiquing governmental policies. Perhaps not accidentally, the undermining of university research in education also served to undermine any such critique. Secondly, in the first instance at least, teachers' research interests are likely to be concerned with immediate classroom practice. Any research agenda would, therefore, reflect this. Again, the university engagement with wider and perhaps deeper issues, and certainly with the politicisation of education, was unlikely to appear on any research agenda. Clearly, for Hargreaves, this was highly desirable. Positioning teachers as central to defining the research agenda also allowed the government far more control than university-based research would do. Importantly too, funding was attached to teacher research undertaken under the auspices of the government in the shape of a Best Practice Research Scholarship (BPRS, 2001), and concomitantly, university-based research which did not focus on the 'raising standards' agenda found funding increasingly difficult to source. The university claim to its role as an independent producer of new knowledge was itself, as Bernstein (2000) had predicted, under attack.

Interesting spin-offs emerged, however. The BPRS scheme, originally designed to have teachers leading any research in education, also had the rider that teachers should have research-experienced partners to support the research methods knowledge needs of the teachers. These were often established higher education (HE) partners (through work, for example, in initial teacher education partnerships) and although it could be argued that the TTA's intention was to create an inverse hierarchical relationship with university researchers acting as 'assistants', in reality many BPRS teachers worked either as equal partners with university researchers (often reflecting already established ways of working elsewhere) or simply allocated the researcher role back to the university (see, for example, Furlong, 2005; Prestage, Perks and Soares, 2003; McIntyre, 2006). However, what may have been an unexpected consequence of the BPRS scheme for the TTA was the creation amongst teachers of an awareness of a research agenda which might serve to support not the 'profane' (Durkheim, 1947) knowledge base of the TTA model using the discourse of policy, but a return to 'sacred' knowledge, a term Durkheim, and later Bernstein (2000), used to refer to the type of discourse which is the hallmark of an autonomous profession. The opportunity to explore 'sacred' knowledge was taken by a number of teachers. It is perhaps interesting to note that many of these teachers found their research was not accepted for publication on the BPRS website (where the TTA had assured teachers that BPRS research would be published) which may raise the question of what was deemed acceptable, that is publishable, knowledge by policy-makers. What did emerge, however, was a practitioner research community which, far from focusing solely on a 'raising standards' agenda, looked instead to create a new professional autonomy through a teacher knowledge base legitimised by practitioner research.

BPRS funds were withdrawn in 2003, ostensibly as part of a wider reorganisation of funding. This acted as a body blow to many teacher researchers, who found themselves unable to continue with their research without the time that could be bought out with BPRS funds. Longer term damage was apparent in the government's 'de-legitimisation' of teacher research by the act of withdrawing funding. Remaining or developing as a teacher researcher became an activity which could only now be agreed within the school structure, and with an agenda which heads, aware of the accountability demands which surrounded their role, would

authorise. A new control mechanism was thus created, and the responsibility for teacher research designed to produce teacher knowledge moved from the government to the head, a role itself increasingly under government control. Inevitably, unless heads had themselves already been involved in research and were committed to the possibilities it offered teachers, teacher research in schools reflecting individual interests became a low priority. However, the foundations had been laid for a version of research which was policy-focused and policy-promoting and it was this version of teacher research which now moved into the ascendant.

### **Teacher research and policy agendas**

The notion that university-based research was removed from the reality of the classroom, highly theorised and 'jargon laden' had already been expounded by Hargreaves. 'Useful' research, it was claimed, could only be undertaken by teachers in schools, and in an interesting adumbration of the diminution of access to professional discourse, had to be reported in 'plain language' with immediate transferability to classroom practice, again interesting in setting a research agenda which excised critique of policy. The marketing exercise which policy-makers embarked upon was clothed in rhetoric of teacher control, practicality and, ironically for this thesis, teachers 'having a voice'. The reality of the political regulation which boundaried policy-controlled research agendas was obscured by the generation of moral outrage of 'wasted' research funding in universities. The solution offered by policy-makers was ostensibly to locate research within an 'independent' body of teachers, supported by an 'independent' organisation (that is, based neither with policy nor university) whose function was simply to advise. Returning to Hillage *et al.*, policy agenda research was thus developed and supported through the NTRP (<http://www.ntrp.org.uk>), and the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (Curee), a profit making organisation, was contracted to support the NTRP in bringing about a research agenda based on 'evidence-based practice' – the 'what works' agenda of policy. As a bought-in business, Curee was marketing itself as 'a wholly independent company' and 'an internationally acknowledged centre of expertise in evidence-based practice in all sectors of education' (<http://www.curee.co.uk/>) whilst simultaneously contracted to government to promote policy research agendas - clearly, and at the very least, a disingenuous position. It is no accident that Curee uses the language of policy in its website marketing:

In recent years we have contributed very substantially to the growing shift towards evidence-informed practice in education by:

- Helping school leaders to decide on *cost effective* approaches by knowing what really works
  - Increasing the interest and *skills* of practitioners in their own *classroom* enquiries
  - Making research and evidence *useful* and *attractive to practitioners and policy-makers*
  - Using research to underpin CPD which *enhances teaching and learning*
  - *Increasing policy-makers' desire to build on what the evidence shows us*
- (<http://www.curee.co.uk/about-us>: italics mine)

Nevertheless, the apparent linking of a teacher-based panel to drive research, and a 'neutral' organisation to support that, allowing the research agenda to be positioned centrally, was to be the dominant model of teacher research. Policy bodies, including the now defunct 'independent' regulatory body, the General Teaching Council of England (GTCE), were linked with Curee so that policy-driven teacher research became the default model. The repeated claim to 'independence' from all of these bodies highlights the co-option of language characterising ideological function evident in this set of moves.

Thus located within policy at both Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and latterly Department for Education (DfE) level, incorporating both the TTA and National College of School Leaders (NCSL), teacher research, far from representing 'teachers' voices' became the means whereby teacher voice was actually silenced. The only available discourse was that prescribed by policy, and research was simply another means of reinforcing that control. In 2014, teacher research was represented through the DfE website as 'Research-informed practice' with an opportunity for schools to subscribe to a 'Research Digest', a policy informed research-bites site, information about the NTRP and access to a magazine publication edited by the NTRP and Curee, interestingly named *Inside Information*. In fact, the articles cited, and indeed the magazine itself, is largely written by members of the NTRP. It uses a 'sound-bite' approach to research, with a clear 'what works' agenda promoted through mini-accounts of practitioner research. There is no suggestion of a vibrant research community, but rather a set of templates for teacher research, none of which show any sense of critical engagement with policy.

In terms of parallel academic positioning, the nature of the literatures took on a different complexion, with much of the researcher attention given over to guidance and advice to teachers on approaches to research, on sustainability and on building networks (e.g. Taber, 2007; McLaughlin, Black-Hawkins, Brindley, McIntyre and Taber, 2006; Campbell, McNamara and Gilroy, 2004). These literatures assumed an agenda set within the school which simply sought to show 'how to' research rather than 'why'. In many ways, this suggests that universities were also swept up in the 'what works' agenda. Few texts explored the political import of this model. The stage seemed to be set for a version of teacher research which was no more than policy in other clothing. However, Biesta (2007:5) in an article entitled *Why 'what works' won't work* demonstrated why teacher research must have as a key function the role of critiquing policy:

On the research side, evidence-based education seems to favor a technocratic model in which it is assumed that the only relevant research questions are questions about the effectiveness of educational means and techniques, forgetting, among other things, that what counts as 'effective' crucially depends on judgments about what is educationally desirable. On the practice side, evidence-based education seems to limit severely the opportunities for educational practitioners to make such judgments in a way that is sensitive to and relevant for their own contextualised settings. The focus on 'what works' makes it difficult if not impossible to ask the questions of what it should work *for* and who should have a say in determining the latter.

If research, whether school or university-based, fails to ask these crucially important questions of 'what it should work *for* and who should have a say' the implications are profound. Teaching will thus become, as Bottery and Wright (2000) predicted, a 'directed profession', where teacher knowledge will be reduced to policy prescription, and teacher identity one of compliance and conformity.

In the next sections, I want to consider professionalism, knowledge and identity, and to explore the ways in which these are subject to policy as the shaping force.

### **Professionalism, Knowledge and Identity**

I am going to explore the three concepts of professionalism, knowledge and identity as separate entities, both to establish a foundational understanding of the areas, and as a means of grounding the work of Chapter Two when I investigate their interrelationship. In this section, by examining the literatures extant, I want to begin

to explore an argument which suggests that professionalism, knowledge and identity have been areas contested by policy and academia, and that any attempts to claim or define these areas are, at the very least, open to debate; but further I want to begin to investigate the issue that, although the protagonists of these debates claim to speak on behalf of teachers, teacher voice itself is less frequently represented.

I begin with professionalism as the construct within which teachers' professional activities are most readily positioned, and argue that professionalism is a discourse through which both teacher knowledge and teacher identity can be defined, and thus controlled. Professionalism thus has a valuable ideological function in bringing about apparent cohesion, and from there, compliance.

### ***Professionalism as a concept: criteria and definitions***

Professionalism as a concept emerged in the work of sociologists in the 1950s, and in particular through the work of Talcott Parsons (1954) and his construction of professionalism through functionalism, in which the professionals might be said to be responsible for certain social functions central to the maintenance of the well-being of society. This might be characterised as the start of the preoccupation with defining the concept, a preoccupation which threads itself throughout the discussions on professionalism and status to the present day. (Appendix 1 lists a summary of Parsons' principles of professionalism).

These principles do not specifically relate to teachers or teaching, but it is certainly the case that these have come to be a starting point in the developing interest in professionalism in education. Following Parsons, many other texts exploring professionalism in teaching have similarly attempted a definition of criteria (Goodlad, 1990; Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting and Whitty, 2000; Hoyle and John, 1995; Kincheloe, 2003; Bottery and Wright, 2000; Quicke, 1998; Crook, 2008; Lunt, 2008) though not necessarily in the form of an extended list. Furlong *et al.* (2000:1), for example, simply refer to, 'the skills, knowledge and values of teachers – in other words, their professionalism'. Whitty (2008:28) states that, 'Definitions of professionalism vary across time and space'; Quicke (1998:324) suggests, '... a meaning which revolves around the notion of 'work' which is not just done for a living but gives meaning to life itself, and is carried out in accordance with standards set by a community of autonomous workers for the benefit of society as a whole'. Such

attempts at definition frequently acknowledge the difficulties inherent in the act of attempting to capture and hold what might be thought of as the shifting sands of the definition of professionalism, and, significantly, thus the status of teachers within society. Indeed, Carr and Kemmis describe the direction of much of the energies surrounding professionalism and teaching in precisely these ways:

Most discussions about teaching as a profession focus on the extent to which teaching conforms to the criteria normally employed in distinguishing professional from non-professional occupations.  
(1986:7-8)

Identification of the criteria used to define professionalism became the basis of an on-going mapping exercise to locate teaching on the spectrum of professional, quasi professional or non-professional. The preoccupation with this was linked to debates about status (Hargreaves, L., 2006), taxonomy of types (restricted and extended professionals: Hoyle, 1974), training (Etzioni, 1969, Furlong *et al.*, 2000), processes of thought (Schon, 1983) and autonomy (Larson, 1977), accountability (Ozga and Lawn, 1981) and the nexus of control of education (Bottery and Wright, 2000), themes which appear in my own research.

However, no resolution of either characteristics or, indeed, teacher status emerges from these debates. As Hoyle and John (1995:1) observe of professionalism:

Despite its widespread use in the media and in the everyday discourse of those who would be readily regarded as professional people, and despite the best efforts of sociologists, philosophers and historians, it defies common agreement to its meaning.

This is an interesting situation. If we accept that the term does indeed 'defy common agreement to its meaning', attempts at definition must ultimately be non-productive. The different emphases given above by those who have pursued the line of 'definition' do indeed suggest that, at best, we might say there are some characteristics which seem to be associated with the term 'professionalism', but that these are not the same as criteria. However, and crucially for this thesis, what this does mean is that professionalism is open to re-interpretation by any range of interested parties, and therefore defining professionalism, whether through criteria or through characteristics, can serve not as an act of seeking clarification, but rather a



claiming of territory, a dimension I will be exploring in my thesis with particular reference to teacher voice. What I want to do now is to investigate whether it is indeed possible to see professionalism as a changing construct, and what factors and agencies are involved in these changes.

### ***Politics and professionalism***

In mapping the 'ages and stages' of professionalism, the contexts of the prevailing political, cultural and economic factors of each stage are in themselves telling.

Consider the following quotations:

The difference between industry as it exists today and a profession is, then, simple and unmistakable. The former is organised for the protection of rights, mainly rights to pecuniary gain. The latter is organised, imperfectly indeed, but nonetheless genuinely, for the performance of duties. The essence of the one is that its only criterion is the financial return which it offers its shareholders. The essence of the other is that, though men enter it for the sake of livelihood, the measure of their success is the service which they perform, not the gains which they amass. They may, as in the case of a successful doctor, grow rich; but the meaning of their profession, both for themselves and for the public, is not that they make money but that they make health, or safety, or knowledge, or good government or good law.  
(Tawney, 1921/1961:89-90)

First, the workforce has, over a decade or more – and particularly since 1997 – shown an ability to adapt and improve at a rate they themselves did not believe possible. Secondly, the reform programme will continue to be supported by investment in the services and the people who provide them.

Thirdly this is a workforce that already draws its motivation from the achievements of those it serves: the sudden breakthrough in a child's understanding ... a talented student whose insights shine new light on a research project ... It is not such a big step for this workforce to put the consumer first, to develop a passion for improving public services...  
(Department for Education and Skills, 2004b: paragraphs 50-51)

The contrast between the two texts is marked. In the first, professionalism is marked by an assumed commitment to the 'duties' enshrined. Contrasts are clear between profession and occupation, and boundaries delineate the two. In the second, there is no reference to professions or industries, but rather to 'workforces' for whom the assumed position is one of reluctance to 'put the consumer first' (though they are being encouraged, presumably by government, so to do). It is almost as if professionalism as a concept has disappeared from this policy document. The question is, how has such a radical change of position been achieved?

In order to begin to address this, I want to look in particular at two sets of frameworks which will serve to show how professionalism has been linked with political positioning. I will be exploring these contrasting positions in order to demonstrate that in dealing with the notion of professionalism, we are inevitably also drawn into political and ideological positioning, a claim I investigate later in some depth; and to understand how professionalism, in the fragmentation of its construct, allows for competing versions of one of its key components, professional knowledge, and thus makes knowledge subject to ideological agendas (Furlong *et al.*, 2000; Quicke, 1998).

I explore two models of professionalism over time: one presented in Andy Hargreaves' (2000) *Four Ages of Professionalism and Professional Learning*, and one which formed the backbone of a conference presentation by Michael Barber in 2001: *Large-Scale Education Reform in England: a work in progress*. These two frameworks have both been important landmarks in the discussions about professionalism and professional development, not least because they allow us to see the ways in which the social, political and economic circumstances of the time have impacted on the construction of professionalism. Of particular significance is that they begin to introduce the notion of professionalism as an ideological construct: a concept which will become increasingly important in this section and which will serve to inform the thesis more widely. Hargreaves' construction links professionalism to a liberal humanism perspective, whereas Barber is located much more within a managerialist position.

A. Hargreaves (2000) identifies four main stages of development in professionalism:

- the pre-professional age;
- the age of the autonomous professional;
- the age of the collegial professional;
- the age of the post-professional or post-modern.

The pre-professional age, teaching is seen as 'technically simple' (although Hargreaves does distinguish between this and teaching as a 'demanding' occupation):

Once you had learned to master it, you needed no more help after this point ... professional learning for new teachers was largely a matter of apprenticing oneself as a novice to someone who was skilled and experienced in the craft ... And once they had served their brief apprenticeship, experienced teachers saw no more of their colleagues in the classroom, received no feedback on their practice, and changed and improved largely by trial and error, in their own isolated classes ... this... approach... confined teachers to what Hoyle (1974) calls 'restricted professionalism' – scarcely a form of professional at all. (2000:155-156)

As Hargreaves points out elsewhere, this version of teachers and teaching may paradoxically still be seen by some policy-makers as a golden age:

The 'good' teacher was the 'true teacher' who 'devoted herself to her craft' ... in this age, teachers were virtually amateurs: they 'only needed to carry out the directives of their more knowledgeable superiors' (Murray, 1992:495) ... pre-professional images also figure prominently in public perceptions of teaching among adults whose own schooling and experiences of teachers took place in the pre-professional age, and whose nostalgia-tinted ideas about teaching often remain rooted there. (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998)

It lacks an evidence base, but nevertheless this account by Hargreaves and Fullan, with its features of teacher compliance, is curiously redolent of some of the policy decisions current in centralised educational thinking, such as the current Secretary of State for Education<sup>1</sup>, Michael Gove, and his call to teach 'British values' in the wake of the so-called Trojan Horse report (<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jun/10/michael-gove-british-values-schools>, 2014).

The second age, that of the autonomous professional, Hargreaves links with the improved teacher conditions of the early 1970s (e.g. in the UK, the Houghton pay award of 1973). Hargreaves characterises this as the era of 'unprecedented autonomy over curriculum development and decision-making' (2000:158). Writers such as Dale (1988) identify teachers as having a kind of 'licensed autonomy' whereby they broadly addressed the mandates of the state but in exchange were offered a status in society with associated material rewards, which has been steadily eroded since this time. Hobsbawm (1994) refers to this as the 'golden age' of history, with an expanding economy matched by a view of education as 'an investment in

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<sup>1</sup> Since writing this thesis, Michael Gove was replaced as Secretary of State for Education in July 2014 by Nicky Morgan.

human capital' (Hargreaves, 2000:159). It has to be said that Dainton (2005), for example, dismisses the notion of a 'golden age' altogether, but she does acknowledge that teacher autonomy as represented in this age is for her a key concept in the construction of professionalism. But this stage carries a more significant kernel of development. It is this age which leads teachers to debate the significance of educational choices: in curriculum, in pedagogy, in assessment, and in teacher rights and responsibilities:

For more and more teachers, pedagogy was becoming an ideological decision; an object of judgement and choice. Unquestioned routines and traditions were being replaced by an ideological conflict between two great meta-narratives of traditionalism and progressivism.  
(Hargreaves, 2000:159)

Hargreaves' third age, that of collegial professional, which he identifies as belonging to the mid to late 1980s, is characterised in his terms as one in which the individual teacher, faced with the changing demands and nature of teaching, which meant too for some that they could no longer simply teach in ways they themselves had been taught (McLaughlin, 1997), were no longer able to sustain an individual, and at times idiosyncratic, approach to classroom practices. Instead, it is Hargreaves' contention that:

...many teachers [started] to turn more to each other for professional learning, for a sense of direction, and for mutual support.  
(2000:162)

Hargreaves (2000:162) acknowledges that this was not the response of all teachers, pointing out that some '[clung] tightly to their classroom autonomy when others try to force collaboration upon them (Grimmett and Crehan, 1992)' but maintains that, nevertheless, conditions such as an increase in policy demands re curriculum content, directives on associated teaching styles, the development of extended pastoral responsibilities, the integration of special needs students into the mainstream, growing ethnic diversity and changing structures, procedures and discourses of school management brought about what he refers to as 'a crucible of collaboration' (2000:163). Hargreaves observes that professional development is no longer the preserve of 'off-site experts' but is rather embedded in meeting policy demands. Professional development activities are related to the immediate needs of teachers attempting to come to grips with the national curriculum and associated

assessment procedures. Professionalism, as Hargreaves points out, has become about developing a required response to policy initiatives:

Episodic response to imposed curriculum reform ... tends to fade away fast once the initiatives have been implemented. Professionalism here is 'new' rather than 'old' (Hargreaves, D. 1994)...  
(2000:165-166)

New professionalism is a concept to which we shall return later in this section.

This age represents too the beginning of the notion of de-professionalisation, the positioning of teachers as 'deliverers' of a curriculum whose knowledge base has been selected and shaped by centralised government agencies such as the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA), and whose abilities to select differing emphases in curriculum have been eroded by tightly controlled assessment procedures. The whole question of teacher knowledge thus becomes central to my research.

The fourth age, the post-professional scenario, is driven by two major forces: new patterns of global economic expansion, competition and organisation; and the revolution in communications as a result of the development of digital technology. Information, if not knowledge, is available to all, across geographical divides, across cultures and is provided by a wide range of sources, not simply teachers or indeed those who might be regarded as educationalists more widely. The notion of expert has been downgraded, and instead the arena is driven by market forces. Teachers become subject to what Ball (1990:17) calls 'discourses of derision'. Teachers are presented as scapegoats for social and economic failure. Far from being seen as shapers of, or even contributors to, the new economic and social orders they are represented instead as 'obstacles to the marketisation of education ... weakened through legislated changes in the conditions of union membership, restricted [in the] scope of decision-making; prescribe[ed] central curricula; shift[s] towards temporary contracts...' (Hargreaves, 2000:168). Such a shift in autonomy is also tracked by Gleeson and Gunter (2001) who point out links to the culture of accountability, and performativity (see, for example, Perryman, 2009).

De-professionalisation becomes more marked, with a micro-management culture evident from centralised government, whatever the political party in power. Experts,

such as Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs), an innovation designed to reward those teachers willing to 'coach' other schools in policy-defined key areas such as pupil achievement, become the 'new' professionals, defined by, and created in the image of, centralised government. Their knowledge base is given, constrained and made functional only in terms of the appropriacy of that base for the fulfilment of government directives; and unsurprisingly, many teachers thereby constructed as, at best, 'outmoded' become disaffected and leave teaching, as the statistics about teacher retention demonstrate (see for example:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmeduc/1515/151508.htm>).

It is interesting at this point to compare the accounts of Hargreaves and Michael Barber who ostensibly occupy opposing positions: the former, one whose scholarship is frequently used to stand against government directives; the latter, a figure who promotes government directives. Nevertheless, the accounts have some interesting parallels.

In October 2001, Michael Barber, now Sir Michael Barber, was head of the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit, whose remit was described by the Cabinet Office website as '... ensur[ing] that the Government achieves its delivery priorities during this Parliament across the four key areas of public service: health, education, crime and asylum and transport'. The Unit worked closely with HM Treasury in holding the public service departments to account through the established PSX monitoring process and reported regularly to the Prime Minister on progress towards achievement of these priorities. At this time, Barber presented a paper at the Managing Educational Reform Conference in Moscow, entitled *Large-Scale Education Reform in England: a work in progress* in which he produced a diagram (Table 1:1 below), which he claimed described four different historical periods in professionalism since the 1970s. The diagram has become widely known and influential, not least through Barber's own promotion of it in the debates about professionalism and ownership.

## Barber's models of professionalism

<b>1970s</b>  <b>Uninformed professionalism</b>	<b>1980s</b>  <b>Uninformed prescription</b>
<b>1990s</b>  <b>Informed prescription</b>	<b>2000s</b>  <b>Informed professionalism</b>

Table 1:1

(Barber, 2001)

For each stage Barber claimed a shift in emphasis and control. The 1970s (uninformed professionalism) harked back to a time of teacher autonomy but one which 'suffered' from a lack of central (that is, government controlled) vision - teachers were acting as individuals with associations of isolation (sometimes referred to as 'the egg box syndrome'). Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) a widely respected group of highly knowledgeable educators, held the responsibility of overseeing practice in schools, a task undertaken with a view to promoting exchanges of good practice rather than the later Ofsted 'name and shame' approach. The 1980s, with echoes of the Callaghan 1976 Ruskin speech brought accountability to the fore and the move to prescription was a response to this. Barber refers to this as uninformed in that there was still no central vision from government, though with Shirley Williams' (Secretary for State for Education and Science) national networks of monitoring and accountability groupings, there was certainly a sense of prescription. The 1990s heralded the national curriculum and associated assessment arrangements, and Ofsted, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority and the Teacher Training Agency, all of which were charged with ensuring teacher accountability through curriculum, assessment and inspection reforms. Prescription was the order of the day and these government agencies were individually and severally responsible for ensuring teacher accountability (and conformity) of action. Barber's final quadrant, informed professionalism (2000s) represents a claim that teacher accountability has brought about a 'new'

professionalism, where central vision from government, informed through teacher consultation in the form of focus groups, notwithstanding the caveats many might bring to such a method of consultation, is melded with teacher responsibility for meeting those standards described by government. 'New' agents of control were put in place. The Teacher Training Agency (TTA), for example, became the Teacher Development Agency (TDA), (now the Teacher Agency (TA) and part of the DfE) with a briefing to oversee not just initial teacher education, but also continuing professional development (see, for example, the TDA Business Plan, 2007). The original standards for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) were developed to become performance standards for all teachers.

So, for Barber, the informed professionalism stage in which we now find ourselves is the best of all worlds: teachers are working in a framework of national curricular initiatives (including the literacy and numeracy strategies), managed by heads whose accountability is through the management of centrally prescribed standards of teacher behaviours in and outside of the classroom, answerable through public league tables of examination results, and with a version of professionalism which accords with teachers' responsibilities in delivering the prescribed curriculum. The rhetoric uses such terms as 'classroom focused' and 'pragmatism', with an implication that anything which looks outside the immediate, and substantial, demands of meeting the TDA standards is irrelevant and, in Barber's terms, unprofessional, which might be seen as a neat twist in the definition of professionalism.

There are other voices in this debate, many of which disagree with Barber. Robin Alexander for example, calls Barber's diagrammatic account of professionalism over time, '...as distorted and political partisan an account of recent educational history as one is likely to find' (Alexander: 2004:13). Dainton (2005:161) attacks both Barber's terms, asserting that, 'uninformed professionalism' is surely oxymoronic, and his construction of professionalism debatable:

My memories of professionalism in the 1970s and 1980s are somewhat different from those of Michael Barber and the civil servants and advisors who continue to promulgate his analysis. At a national level there was the TVEI, the superb work of the Schools Council... There were national enquiries (Warnock, Bullock and Cockcroft spring to mind) and many excellent opportunities for teachers to be directly involved in APU test programmes... At



a local level, there was much innovative work happening in LEAs ..., HMI national and regional courses that teachers queued to get on – backed up by a whole series of HMI discussion papers...  
(Dainton, 2005:162)

If we tabulate the positions taken by both A. Hargreaves and Barber (below Table 1:2) some interesting comparisons emerge:

### Models of professionalism: A. Hargreaves and Barber

<b>A.Hargreaves</b>	<b>Barber</b>
<b><i>Pre-professionalism</i></b> <b><i>Pre-1970</i></b>	<b><i>Uninformed</i></b> <b><i>professionalism 1970</i></b>
<b><i>Autonomous professionalism</i></b> <b><i>1970</i></b>	<b><i>Uninformed prescription</i></b> <b><i>1980</i></b>
<b><i>Collegiate professionalism</i></b> <b><i>1980-90</i></b>	<b><i>Informed prescription</i></b> <b><i>1990</i></b>
<b><i>Post-professionalism</i></b> <b><i>2000</i></b>	<b><i>Informed professionalism</i></b> <b><i>2000</i></b>

Table 1:2

The constructions, though not precisely parallel chronologically, are nevertheless close enough to allow us to see the differing slants that each places on events: where Hargreaves takes us along a route he describes as ‘deepening de-professionalisation’ (2000:169), Barber’s route takes us, through the same political, economic and social events, to a position of ‘informed professionalism’. The contrast is stark: in the presentation of teaching as ‘informed professionalism’ Barber is making a claim on teacher autonomy, on teacher knowledge and on teacher function and role in society; on the other hand, in his reference to teachers and teaching as de-professionalised, Hargreaves opens up a scenario of teachers as *petit bourgeoisie*, functioning in Althusser’s terms as part of the ideological state apparatus, with no more ability to reflect on, or indeed change, circumstances, than any other ideologically controlled group. When Bottery and Wright (2000) draw our attention to teachers as a ‘directed profession’, that is exactly their concern. They state:

The teaching profession, we suggest, is being de-professionalised through its increasing lack of autonomy in how and what it teaches ... whether the

pressure comes from above (in terms of government direction) or below ( in terms of market forces), ... wherever on a spectrum from 'market led' to 'government directed' ... the result is appears to be the same – one in which governments control and direct the activities of the teaching profession, and in which the teaching profession apparently acquiesces... (2000:2-3)

This construction of the teaching profession as one which is shaped and controlled by centralised policy, whether government- or market-led, is either chilling in its implications for teacher autonomy (Hargreaves, 2000; Bottery and Wright, 2000) or a positive development (Barber, 2001) with a new, informed professionalism designed to ensure a coherent integration of classroom-focused values, beliefs and practices.

### ***New Professionalism***

The 'New Professionalism' agenda commanded substantial attention from a range of audiences. In policy, the term is first encountered in the Five Year Strategy:

[Workforce reform] will usher in a new professionalism for teachers, in which career progression and financial rewards will go to those who are making the biggest contributions to improving pupil attainment; those who are continually developing their own expertise, and those who help develop expertise in other teachers... (Department for Education and Skills, 2004b:66)

What is unsaid here, but evident in the context of the writing, is that developing expertise refers only to that expertise which will allow teachers to promote centrally devised policy: this is not about teacher knowledge in the sense we might have encountered in Hargreaves' second age of autonomy; nor even, to some extent, to that of the third age, of collaborative professionalism. In a position statement, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) reject such a construction of teacher development and teacher knowledge, even when related to development agendas defined within the school (which will almost inevitably reflect the centralised agendas):

... the ATL rejects a concept of New Professionalism which is limited to teachers being required to undertake development which relates to short-term aims as directed by the school or, less still, by the Government. In the context of workforce reform, teachers are the lead professionals who should be equipped and empowered to lead a continuing debate within their schools about curriculum, pedagogy and assessment ... The Government must [offer] a greater commitment to staff development, and the creation of a culture of innovation ... It must recognise that, however important it is for ...teachers... to

be able to recognise standards and levels, it is equally important for developing teachers to engage with academic disciplines such as the philosophy, psychology and politics of education.  
(2005:3)

Whilst the construction of teacher knowledge expressed here might be open to some debate, the message is clear: short-term, managerialist constructions of professionalism are not those acceptable to an organisation whose purpose is to promote teachers as professionals with all that implies.

ATL were not alone in this rejection. Dainton observed:

The Government's recent assumption that it has the authority to tell the teaching profession that the current reform of the workforce (note the language of 're-form' and of 'work force' – a force of workers) will ...usher in a new professionalism for teachers, in which career progression and financial rewards will go to those who are making the biggest contribution to pupil attainment...(DfES Five year Strategy p.66) is breathtaking both in its naivety and in its arrogance. By their very nature, professions determine for themselves what it means to be professional. There is surely something amiss when New Labour (or any political party come to that) assumes the right to define a 'New Professionalism' for teachers.  
(2005:163-164)

Dainton's commentary on new professionalism is one which many would echo, but in order to explore that further I need to consider whether there are other positions which might illuminate the construction of new professionalism.

Quicke, in his article *Towards a New Professionalism for 'New Times': some problems and possibilities* (1998), gives an entirely different construction of new professionalism which has little to do with directed short-term professional development, but rather directs our attention to a new professionalism which:

...contribut[es] to the construction of a new social and moral order ... As we know from the history of western Society, this would not be the first time that the professions were linked with the idea of social improvement.... Durkheim was one of the first to see that the professions could be a positive moral force in society, acting as a bulwark against economic individualism and an authoritarian state. He envisaged the moral communities established by professionals acting as an alternative source of solidarity in an era where the old ties of the traditional moral order had broken down. In England, this theme was taken up by the Fabian left and social democrats ... who regarded professionals as a source of stability and democracy in a changing world.  
(1998:327).

Quicke's construction of new professionalism, and the contrast in purposes and effects, is markedly at odds with that of current policy-makers and raises a further issue related to teacher professionalism: control over teacher knowledge:

One of the main differences ... is that in the current period the knowledge base of professionals, the source of previously much valued expertise, has become less secure...  
(Quicke, 1998:327)

New professionalism's attack on professional knowledge is significant. Control of knowledge by policy effectively removes from teachers access to a major area of professional behaviours, that is, shaping the curriculum. As Stenhouse states:

Curriculum is the medium through which the teacher can learn his art.  
Curriculum is the medium through which the teacher can learn knowledge.  
Curriculum is the medium through which the teacher can learn about the nature of education. Curriculum is the medium through which the teacher can learn about the nature of knowledge.  
(Stenhouse: 1975:4)

Removing responsibility for curriculum removes teachers from engagement with the 'nature of education' and thereby also removes them from professional debate about knowledge. The vacuum thus produced would serve policy-makers well in that curriculum control would equate with teacher control and therefore accountability. It is this debate which secures professional knowledge as a central concern of this thesis, and a theme which will emerge throughout the research.

'New professionalism' and control over knowledge, powerful as it is as a mechanism, is not a single event in teacher professionalism. Furlong (2005:130) argues, for example, that 're-professionalisation' is at the heart of policy reform – the shaping of the teaching workforce through a move from individual to institution realisation of professionalism. A further act of centralisation is to be found in Craig and Fieschi's (2007) *DIY Professionalism Futures for Teaching* published by Demos, a right-wing think-tank. Significantly, this was written in association with the GTCE, an organisation ostensibly established precisely to protect the notion of teacher professionalism. Within this curiously named document, the authors state:

Markers of teacher professionalism are increasingly cultural and informal. Rather than a national level, 'profession-wide' professionalism, it is the cultures of school, teacher networks and local areas that are more significant than ever in defining and sustaining teachers' professionalism.... *teachers'*

*professionalism is becoming increasingly personal* – teachers’ ethics rest on a foundation of personal idealism and are regulated by personal conscience ... while professionalism has always been about self-regulation, this self-regulation took place at a collective level. Today’s self-regulation tends to take place at an individual ... level. ... For good or ill, this ... means that teachers no longer share in a collective vision of their profession’s future.  
(Craig and Fieschi, 2007:3: italics mine)

The personal and professional are constructed as one and the same and this is to prove of great significance for this research. Although this is one paper, the influence of Demos, and at the time the GTCE as a public regulatory body (ironically disbanded by government in 2012), is not to be underestimated. It was therefore particularly worrying that the construction of professionalism as a fragmented and individualistic event, together with a statement referring to a ‘collective vision of their [sic] profession’s future’, raises the question about whose agenda might be seen to sit beneath such a definition. Alongside this runs another theme which will form part of my thesis research: in according the notion of professionalism to the individual, what construct of identity is believed to be operating here? And further, to what extent is the construct of professional identity also open to political shaping?

### **The Teacher Status project**

In 2007, the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, and the Centre for Mass Communication Research at Leicester University published a report commissioned by DfES to carry out a 4-year study on the status of teachers and the teaching profession in England. In that this is a politically commissioned report, there needs to be a recognition that there were existing agendas to be addressed. Nevertheless, to balance this, the claim is that this report expresses views which are the ‘authors’ own’ and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DfES (title page). This major report set out to explore notions of professionalism through:

- establish[ing] a baseline and monitor[ing] changes in perceptions of the status of teachers and their profession, among teachers, associated groups and the general public, between 2003 and 2006
- understand[ing] the factors that might influence perceptions of status and teachers’ attitudes
- identify[ing] how perceptions of teacher status can be improved.

(Hargreaves,L., Cunningham, M., Anders Hansen, A., McIntyre,D., Oliver,C. 2007:v)

Such aims are laudable. However, what follows is a research report which is curiously free of critical comment. For example, the authors state:

A concern to improve the status of teachers and the teaching profession has been inherent in government policy initiatives since ... a White Paper (DfEE, 1997) and subsequent documents such as 'Teachers meeting the challenge of change' (DfEE, 1998). Underpinning the range of initiatives which ensued was the desire to improve standards in teaching and raise the standards of teachers.

(Hargreaves *et al.*, 2007:v)

The linking of improving standards and rais[ing] the standards of teachers is not uncontentious. As this thesis will show, linking these two elements is one of the major ideological tactics for bringing about a policy dominated 'workforce'. Certainly the report is helpful in identifying a range of factors associated with the notion of teacher status, in comparing views of stakeholders, including teachers themselves, and in exploring how perceptions of professionalism are created. Critically, the report states that 'parents, governors and teaching assistants ... were more likely than teachers to see teaching as *delivering standards*' (Hargreaves *et al.*,2007:xiv: italics mine), yet the link between professionalism and control over the very purpose of teaching remains unexplored. Similarly, aim three presupposes a 'solution-based' approach and indeed, the report suggests that part of the responsibility for low status resides with teachers themselves:

It would appear that teachers' own sense of their status would be greatly enhanced if they could lose their apparent prejudice against the press, build on their relationships with regional correspondents and attend to the actual, rather than the imagined way in which the media portrays their profession. Teachers themselves can also contribute to the desired increase in public awareness of their work that they seek through wider engagement with constituencies beyond their schools, in collaborating with parents, the community and other professionals.

(Hargreaves *et al.*,2007:96)

The apparent naivety in such suggestions is actually more telling in that the manipulation of professional image being suggested here is divorced from the reality of the construction of the very notion of professionalism by policy. The suggestion that teachers do not seek 'collaborat[ion] with parents, the community and other

professionals' almost colludes with a version of teachers who need to be 'brought into line', when, I would argue, such collaboration forms part and parcel of teachers' everyday lives.

Nevertheless, acknowledging the lack of critical engagement with policy constructs, there are powerful findings about professionalism. For example, in claiming that professionalism was defined through two sets of factors, 'reward and respect' and 'control and regulation' (*ibid.*,2007:xi), the report then goes on to quote teachers who are clear that it is the element of control that (in this report) teachers construe as *responsible* for the low status of teaching:

The status of teaching has been undermined, repeatedly over the last two decades, as a result of them adhering to government policies and initiatives that many opposed at the outset.  
(*ibid.*,2007:81)

and echo this with a comment that, 'teachers and associated groups were positive that central control undermines professionalism' though reporting that, 'though associated groups were less positive than were teachers' (*ibid.*,2007:82).

Several comments are reported which indicate a lack of trust towards teaching by government:

There is a need for the government ... to recognise the integrity and professionalism of qualified teachers and stop asking them to prove everything every day, week or term.  
(*ibid.*,2007:82)

Government intervention ... gives the idea to the general public that teachers don't know what they're doing.  
(*ibid.*,2007:84)

Nevertheless, the report indicates a raising of status of teaching, in public, if not teachers' eyes. The report states, for example, that teachers are represented more positively, and sympathetically, by media, with a somewhat odd claim that this is evidenced by representations of teachers as 'victims':

a large portion of such headlines were about teachers as victims, reported in a way which implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, conveyed sympathy for teachers. The sympathetic outlook manifested itself in the form of reporting on an increasingly diverse range of problems, increasingly articulated by the teachers themselves, and portrayed by the newspapers as legitimate claims or as unreasonable pressures.

(*ibid.*,2007:57)

not, I would argue, a positive representation at all. However, there is a 'tentative optimism' about teachers' sense of professional status:

Another hopeful finding of the teacher status project is that by 2006, the steep decline that teachers perceived in their status over the last 40 years has been arrested. We cannot say, however, whether the rapid decline or, equally, the levelling out in teacher status can be attributed to governments' policies. This levelling, as well as the slightly higher ratings of teachers' status in 2006 than 2003, suggests an imminent turning point. Modest improvements in teachers' perceptions of their status relative to other occupations, echoing a perception of modest improvement of the status of public service professionals since 2003 also suggests that teachers have appreciated, and have had their morale raised by, the government's general concern with, and financial commitment to, their own and other public services.

(*ibid.*,2007:85)

It is interesting therefore to compare this with a more recent survey for the National Union of Teachers (NUT) (YouGov:2013) which reported teacher morale as 'dangerously low'. Recognising that the survey was commissioned by a teaching union (the NUT), nevertheless, findings reported that:

- 77 per cent said the government's impact on education in England was 'negative'.
- The results suggested that teacher morale had collapsed by 13 percentage points since a similar survey in April. Then the proportion describing their morale as low or very low was 42 per cent. The figure describing it as high or very high dropped from 27 per cent in April to 15 per cent in December.
- Some 69 per cent said their morale had declined since the general election in 2010.
- Almost three-quarters (71 per cent) said they rarely or never felt trusted by the government.

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-20877397> retrieved May 2013)

The juxtapositioning of these reports suggests at the very least that professionalism is an on-going issue. Far from 'government interventions' enhancing professionalism, it appears that the centralised control implicit in such interventions is actually having a negative impact. In terms of this thesis, this is not unexpected. If professionalism is a function of the ways in which policy defines teachers, rather than a state of being,



and is thus subject to 'improvement' through external interventions, then teachers' perceptions of professionalism reveal not a deficit of positive awareness, but a construction of professionalism precisely designed to render teachers vulnerable to centralised control. Implicit in this is control over professional knowledge and professional identity.

In 2013, the proposed Royal College of Teaching was also laying claim to professionalism. For example, Chris Pope from the Prince's Trust identifies, 'the need for the teaching profession to establish an independent body that will promote and uphold high professional standards in teaching'. Similarly, Dame Joan McVittie sees the College having, 'responsibility for setting standards'. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-22339100>). The issue of 'setting standards' raises questions in its ambiguity. Are these the same standards as the Government developed 'Teachers' Standards' - which are designed to bring about compliance? Or a new set of 'professional standards' which would require at the very least the right to critique policy? Whose values and beliefs will dominate? How will the right to critique policy be represented, and whose knowledge base will inform such critique? If research is a key mechanism for teacher voice, how will dissenting voices be heard?

It would seem that in 2014, the arguments about professionalism, including definitions, are re-emerging. It will be interesting to track whether the Royal College proposals will engage with these arguments explicitly, or whether the notion of professionalism will simply be used to justify increased policy control.

### **Teacher Knowledge**

Central to teacher claims to professionalism is the claim to a body of knowledge. The entire notion of 'knowledge' is not, however, value-free. What is meant by knowledge in education and by teacher professional knowledge is, like the term 'professionalism' itself, deeply contested.

The first stage in understanding teacher knowledge might be to examine how knowledge has been analysed into constituent parts, and what those parts might be. The second claim to explore is the extent to which teacher knowledge can be said to

have been politicised, and the impact that has had on the very notion of teacher knowledge.

### ***Knowledge: the naming of parts?***

In 1995, Hoyle wrote that:

... recipe type knowledge is insufficient to meet professional demands ... The acquisition of this body of knowledge and the development of specific skills requires a lengthy period of higher education.  
(Hoyle, 1995:12)

The question might be, what is this 'body of knowledge'? Numerous descriptions of teacher knowledge exist (see, for example, Tamir, 1991; Connelly, Clandinin and He, 1997; Edwards and Ogden, 1998; Holden and Hicks, 1997). Organising the vast array of claims into a comparative state is complicated by differing and diverse use of terms such as 'content' and 'subject'. Further, as Ben-Peretz (2010:10) argues, the concept of teacher knowledge shifts over time so that more recent texts represent a construction of knowledge which connects with wider societal issues:

The closer we come to the present time, the more demands are made on the knowledge required by teachers. ... Teacher knowledge has been extended from knowledge of subject matter, curriculum and pedagogical content knowledge, to include general themes like global issues and multiculturalism.

Nevertheless, there are key and influential models of teacher knowledge which have been significant in shaping thinking in this field and which are themselves referred to in almost all the other studies in this area. I want therefore to examine the work of Elbaz (1983), Shulman (1987), and Grossman (1990), and refer to both Sockett (1987) and Schon (1983).

In 1983, Elbaz moved a construction of teacher knowledge on from Lortie's (1975) notion that teachers have experience but not knowledge (see also Beijaard, Meijer, Morine-Dershimer and Tilimer, 2005) and focused instead on the notion of 'practical knowledge', which emphasised difference rather than deficit in relation to the then common and defining model of scientific knowledge. She located teacher knowledge within a social context, centring teacher knowledge in the debates about the role of teachers:

... the single factor which seems to have the greatest power to carry forward our understanding of the teachers' role is the phenomenon of teachers' knowledge  
(Elbaz, 1983:45)

Elbaz proposed a model which organised teacher knowledge into five domains: knowledge of subject matter; curriculum; instruction; self; and milieu. Subject matter is both the subject discipline and also theories related to learning; curriculum knowledge refers to the structuring of learning experiences and curriculum content; instruction includes classroom routines and management, and student needs; knowledge of self includes personality, values, beliefs and personal goals; and milieu refers to the social structure of the school, and the wider school environment. Knowledge in Elbaz's structure is in dynamic relationship with the practices of teachers: although the classifications remain stable, knowledge both shapes and is shaped by practice. Teachers' knowledge is 'intuitive and tacit' (2003:46), not usually formally articulated or codified. Importantly, Elbaz sees teacher knowledge as informed by theory: the 'theoretical orientation' of teacher knowledge is however an implicit theory of knowledge which informs the teacher's practical knowledge (1983:21). Much of Elbaz's insistence on the practical and the non-articulated is echoed in and by Schon's 1983 and 1987 versions of professional knowledge. Schon's 'swampy lowlands', that is, practical knowledge about teaching derived from first-hand experience, has its focus on 'experience, trial and error, intuition and muddling through' (1987:43). Schon's personal and practical knowledge is gained, he argues, by reflecting in and on practice. It is this which is significant for Schon. The question for this research, however, is whether teacher knowledge can be said to remain 'intuitive and tacit' in a situation where knowledge is centrally controlled by policy. Will teacher knowledge be constructed differently when explicit content is specified by a national curriculum? Will 'intuitive and tacit' become 'explicit and understood'? Certainly the articulation of knowledge by teachers is a key area for this thesis.

Similarly an exploration of Shulman's (1987) proposed seven categories of teacher knowledge (content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, values and purposes) will be a major means of organising an examination of

teacher knowledge. In this framework, Shulman proposes two major types of teacher knowledge: content, which is also known as 'deep' knowledge of the subject and knowledge of the curricular development and which therefore encompasses what Bruner (cited in Shulman, 1992) calls the structure of knowledge - that is, the theories, principles and concepts of a discipline; and the classroom skills (pedagogical skills) which enable teachers to present that content knowledge in ways accessible to students. This he refers to as pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Teachers effectively transform content knowledge, through pedagogical knowledge, to knowledge forms that can be used by students. PCK has come to be a key component of teacher knowledge discussion, and is notable for its ubiquity in literatures exploring teacher knowledge (e.g. Mishra and Koehler, 2006; Gess-Newsome and Lederman, 2001; Verloop, van Driel and Beijaard, 2001). The construct of transformation of subject knowledge is in itself a central component of teacher knowledge. Again, for this research, I will want to know whether the place of subject knowledge and its transformation features in teachers' construction of professional knowledge.

A further area to explore in terms of teacher knowledge will be whether professional knowledge can remain constant in a context-free situation. For example, it is perhaps notable that, in an exchange with Shulman (1987), Sockett (1987) challenges Shulman's claim regarding the central role of a body of knowledge in 'good' teaching on the basis that teaching involves moral action in particular contexts. Sockett contends that the types of propositional knowledge (rules for practice) proposed by Shulman are inadequate for the purpose of explaining the moral context within which teachers work (that is, for responding to the actions of students as moral agents). Sockett argues that classroom practice extends outside of knowledge implemented and learned, and involves both knowledge in action and action in socio-moral contexts. Although Shulman's response attempts to separate the two types of knowledge, a significant reconceptualisation of knowledge is demonstrated here - that of teacher as moral agent as a domain of knowledge.

In 1990, Grossman proposed a further classification of teacher knowledge into six domains; knowledge of content which brings both content and PCK into one category; learners and learning; general pedagogy; curriculum; content; and self. It is useful to note that Grossman's categories (which were created in the context of

English teaching) are not significantly different in organisation, in that this triangulation of characteristics fundamentally presents similar sets of teacher knowledge, albeit with the caveats expressed earlier in relation to terms and usage. We begin therefore to have a sense of the types of areas which are legitimised in the literatures as comprising teacher knowledge. As a working model only, I have brought together a brief and therefore inevitably truncated description of the categories employed by Shulman, Elbaz and Grossman.

The table below (Table 1:3) uses Shulman’s categories (taken from Lee, 2000) as a starting point and adapted to represent Elbaz (Tsui, 2003 and Grossman, 1990).

For ease of reference Shulman is represented in green; Elbaz in pink and Grossman in purple.

### Composite Models of Teacher Knowledge

Teacher Knowledge Category	Definition
Subject Matter Content Knowledge	<p><i>Academic-related knowledge.</i></p> <p>Subject matter knowledge includes information or data and the structures, rules, and conventions for organising and using information or data.</p> <p>Subject matter is both the subject discipline but also theories related to learning.</p> <p>Subject matter content and pedagogical content.</p>
Pedagogical Content Knowledge	<p><i>The combination of content and pedagogy.</i></p> <p>Information or data that helps lead learners to an understanding would be classified as pedagogical content knowledge. This includes any way of representing a subject that makes it comprehensible to others.</p>

	<p>Subsumed under Subject Matter.</p> <p>Subsumed under Subject Matter.</p>
Curriculum Knowledge	<p><i>Materials and programmes that serve as ‘Tools of the trade’ for teachers.</i></p> <p>Knowledge of the curriculum can be considered vertical (within a discipline area across grades), or horizontal (within grade and across disciplines).</p> <p>The structuring of learning experiences and curriculum content.</p> <p>Includes processes of curriculum development and of the school curriculum within and across grades.</p>
General Pedagogical Knowledge	<p><i>Principles of classroom management and organisation unrelated to subject matter.</i></p> <p>General pedagogical knowledge is unrelated to specific subject matter and can therefore be implemented in a vast array of classroom settings.</p> <p>Uses ‘instruction’ which includes classroom routines and management, and student needs.</p> <p>Includes knowledge of classroom organisation and management, and general methods of teaching.</p>
Knowledge of Learners	<p><i>Specific understanding of the learners’ characteristics.</i></p> <p>These characteristics can be used to specialise and adjust instruction.</p> <p>Uses ‘instruction’, which includes student needs.</p>

	<p>Adds 'and learning'. Includes learning theories, the physical, social, psychological and cognitive development of students; motivational theory and practice; and ethnic, gender and socioeconomic diversity.</p>
<p>Knowledge of Educational Contexts</p>	<p><i>An understanding of the classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, the character of school communities.</i></p> <p>Knowledge of the big picture surrounding the classroom helps to inform teachers about how the community may perceive their educational actions. This knowledge of educational contexts may also inform teachers about how to proceed in the classroom in relation to school, community, and state conventions, laws, and rules.</p> <p>Uses the term 'milieu', which refers to the social structure of the school, and the wider school environment.</p> <p>Includes knowledge of multiple and embedded situations and settings of teachers' work-school district, region and state; also knowledge of students, families and local communities, historical, philosophical and cultural foundations of education in particular countries.</p>
<p>Knowledge of Educational Ends</p>	<p><i>The purposes and values of education as well as their philosophical and historical grounds.</i></p> <p>An understanding of the purposes and values of education will help teachers motivate learners.</p> <p>Category not used but present in Knowledge of</p>

	<p>Self.</p> <p>Category not used. Elements e.g. motivation present in other categories (Knowledge of Learners) but also in additional category of Knowledge of Self.</p>
Knowledge of Self	<p><i>The place of teacher self-awareness in teacher knowledge.</i></p> <p>Category not used by Shulman though some qualities represented in Knowledge of Educational Ends.</p> <p>Knowledge of Self includes personality, values, beliefs and personal goals.</p> <p>Includes knowledge of personal values, dispositions, strengths and weaknesses, personal educational philosophies, goals for students and purposes for teaching.</p>

Table 1:3

It is interesting to note that Shulman, in addition to developing PCK, uses a category of Educational Ends, which neither Elbaz nor Grossman use, but that in turn they both use a category of Knowledge of Self, which is not used by Shulman. However, the definitions, brief as they are, allow us to see that there is some overlap in the underlying concepts, though these are differently assigned. Such teacher knowledge models are nevertheless useful frames of reference for exploring the ways in which teacher knowledge has been represented as comprising identifiable components. (Appendix 2 illustrates other constructs of teacher knowledge.) The question will be whether these can be claimed to be comprehensive and unchanging. This research will therefore seek to establish whether and how teacher knowledge is impacted upon by policy and centralisation, and if so, in which ways, and whether existing



models of teacher knowledge are adequate in describing knowledge in the new context of accountability.

### ***The politicisation of teacher knowledge***

What we have explored thus far are models of teachers' knowledge and analyses of its components. I am not arguing for privileging any one model above another, but rather illustrating that substantial scholarship has gone into the framing of teacher knowledge in these ways, so that a conceptual scaffold has been built to discuss and refine understanding of teacher knowledge.

However, the two critical frameworks I now want to use to further explore teacher knowledge are those which have been influential in shaping not only scholarship, but also policy in teacher knowledge. They emerged in almost diametrically opposed situations: the form of professional knowledge proposed by David Hargreaves (1998), which has been highly influential in political contexts of teacher education policy, and that proposed by Bernstein (1971 and 2000) which draws on the Durkheimian constructions of sacred and profane knowledge and applies them to education.

I want to use these to demonstrate the ways in which knowledge as a concept is constructed, in order to address what I wish to contend, following Elbaz, are ideological functions in teacher knowledge, and which relate to the agenda of political control.

### ***The End of Professional Knowledge?***

Knowledge as we know it in the academy is coming to an end ... [and this represents] a crisis arguably more serious than those of finance, organisation and structure.  
(Griffin, 1997:3)

Although Griffin is discussing higher education, the point is still of relevance to secondary schools. It might be argued that the introduction in the UK of the national curriculum in 1988 through the Education Reform Act (ERA) defined the content knowledge needed by teachers. But there was quite simply no point at which the selection of knowledge was theorised: there were political *post hoc* rationalisations, but no professional discussions about this attempt at constructing knowledge before the publication of a curriculum were ever in evidence. A paradox exists. Pollard, for

example, states that, 'Underpinning the aims of any national curricula are a set of understandings about the nature of knowledge' (Pollard, Collins, Simco, Swaffield and Warwick, 2002:170), but as I have shown, there is no evidence to support that position. The trenchant question might be not what set of understandings is – or is not – present implicitly, but rather why, if it exists, has no such set of understandings ever been made public? Are we to believe the *post hoc* rationalisations which frequently refer to global economy needs (education for the workplace) as the justification for the selection of knowledge to form curricula, or are there deeper and more significant claims on professional knowledge being made which go far beyond what types of knowledge selection might constitute any curriculum? In this research, of central interest is the political claiming of the professional knowledge agenda. Such questions will therefore serve to structure enquiries into the political dimensions of teacher knowledge.

### ***New knowledge, new professionalism?***

In this section, I analyse two quite differing frameworks for the construction of teacher knowledge and its relationship to teacher professional identity and thus, for my research, lay bare some of the factors which might inform teachers' own constructions of these areas. In the first, David Hargreaves argues for teacher knowledge to be understood as the body of knowledge and skills necessary for the development of the 'knowledge society' (1998:11) and thus:

...teachers must now be helped to *create* the professional knowledge that is needed.

In the knowledge economy, work patterns will change and must thus dictate school agendas for education and training:

...people will have to learn how to 'redesign' themselves: examine the job market for opportunities, decide what skills and qualifications are needed, then seek out the education and training required.  
(1998:11)

In order to meet these needs, teachers will have fundamentally to rethink their position in society, the values and beliefs they hold, the purposes ascribed to them by society and - critically – the values and purposes they themselves as professionals ascribe to the teacher role. Hargreaves sees the need to train teachers

to understand and implement these changes (become 'better teachers') as paramount:

...training better teachers for the knowledge society is a gigantic task, one that involves finding out 'what works' in schools and classrooms. And this process of knowledge creation and application must be a continuous one, since society continues to change very fast, constantly making new demands on the education service...

(1998:13)

It is interesting, however, to note the ways in which the language itself begins to reveal Hargreaves' positioning of education: it is charged with being a 'service' which must respond to the 'new demands' made by society. Teachers need to be 'trained' in order to respond appropriately to these needs. In his model, current professional development models are no longer relevant:

...today's dominant models for *creating, disseminating and applying* professional knowledge are now

- almost entirely inappropriate and ineffective
- a serious waste of material and human resources
- adding to low morale and the serious shortage of teachers

*The answer, I argue, lies in a new model of knowledge creation, one based on evidence of success in other sectors of society. To be effective in education, this new model must be adapted to support the continuous development and self-renewal of better teachers and teaching.*

(1998:13: italics author's own)

Hargreaves is, in my view, disingenuous in separating out government policy as the driver and instead replacing 'the wider society' (1998:10) as the impetus for school change, as if no relationship exists between the two, although crucially he claims:

Government can help by reconceptualising the role and professional identity of teachers and providing conditions under which they can adapt successfully to these changes.

(1998:10)

This 'reconceptualisation' of professional identity is glossed over by Hargreaves, with no acknowledgement of the magnitude of this demand, for teachers as individuals or indeed for schools as communities. And he is quite clear how this can be brought about. Hargreaves begins by creating a position of instability for teachers. They are 'failing to meet the challenge' of creating 'new professional knowledge' (1998:15); they are poor role models: 'The trouble with teachers is that their students do not

want to be like them' (1998:12). The question for teachers is where to turn in this new world. Hargreaves presents a set of arguments for development of teachers' professional knowledge which rest upon a version of schooling designed to promote economic growth in a globally competitive society:

[Teachers] help the young to appreciate their cultural heritage; they must now ...prepare them for a world in which ...new skills are at a premium.  
(1998:12)

Hargreaves' solutions are systemic and far reaching. He cites five key aspects for development which rely on two sets of skills: improving the 'working knowledge' (1998:19), which Hargreaves says all teachers possess, and doing so by managing change in five key areas:

- managing the school;
  - managing teaching and learning;
  - managing the school's external partners;
  - managing the creation of new working knowledge for teachers and heads;
  - managing the dissemination of this new knowledge to 'every single school'.
- (1998:19-20)

The emphasis on management is important to note. Hargreaves later seeks to involve teachers in their own new knowledge production, but critically it is within the managerialist culture (see, for example, Norris, 1991) where teachers no longer can operate with what Hargreaves describes as a 'do-as-you-please philosophy' (1998:54), instead, presumably, operating in a 'do-as-you're-told' environment. But as Beck notes:

... there is a symptomatic emptiness in this notion of the endlessly re-trainable employee. The flexible, marketable self has no centre – no attachments to intrinsic value...  
(Beck, 1999: 228)

Drawing on Gibbons *et al.* (1994), Hargreaves cites the modes of knowledge argument:

Mode 1 is university-based, pure, disciplinary, homogeneous, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, peer-reviewed. ... Mode 2 ... knowledge production is applied, problem-focused, trans-disciplinary, hybrid, demand-driven, entrepreneurial and embedded in networks...Mode 2 is strongly concerned with knowledge that is useful.  
(1998:21)

It is, Hargreaves contends, Mode 2 knowledge which should constitute teacher knowledge bases, and it is no coincidence that Mode 2 types of knowledge 'already flourish in business and industry' (1998:22). In the section sub-headed, 'A lesson from business and industry', Hargreaves describes 'knowledge creating' schools which demonstrate staff with 'task relevant expertise rather than organisational status' and a 'high commitment to continuing professional development' (1998:25-26). Validation of professional knowledge cannot be through teachers' own experiences:

Knowledge validation is reduced to 'what works for me' – but the criteria by which a practice is judged remain obscure. This is patently not a way in which standards can be raised.  
(1998:33)

Instead, teachers are to be trained to use the validation strategies of 'independent outsiders' (1998:33), such as Ofsted, to provide teachers with:

An enhanced capacity to validate their new practices, at the individual teacher and school levels.  
(1998:34)

In other words, to internalise the criteria used by agencies such as Ofsted to judge self-performance. Professional knowledge is now not only neatly defined by government agencies, but teachers are required to develop a professional identity which accords with those criteria, or risk being one of the perpetrators of the 'negative image of the profession' (1998:11).

The appeal to Mode 2 knowledge, the 'useful' type as opposed to the, by inference, useless Mode 1 type can only be gained through teachers taking control of the education research agenda and the Mode 1 producers (universities) required to act as 'mentors' to teacher researchers. The claimed opposition of these types of knowledge, and indeed, the assumption that teachers and university researchers occupy opposed and bitterly defended areas of the construction of teacher knowledge are used but remain unexamined by Hargreaves. Nevertheless, Hargreaves' assertion is that educational research is 'irrelevant' and 'inapplicab[le] to the improvement of what happens in schools' (1998:15):

In this country, £65 million is spent each year on educational research ...Much of this research has been widely criticised – for its poor quality, irrelevance and inapplicability to the improvement ... of schools. In the summer of 1998,

this diagnosis was confirmed by an independent review of educational research...  
(1998:15)

The 'independent review', the Hillage Report, was in itself widely criticised for its poor research base and biased sampling of research; nevertheless, the effect that Hargreaves had on educational research was profound in relocating control, responsibility – and funding – into schools. However, the result was not quite the wholesale shift in roles that Hargreaves was looking to implement. Part of the work of this thesis will be to explore in depth the relative positioning of the two sets of players in the construction of teacher knowledge and to investigate the ways in which teacher researchers have impacted on teacher knowledge and professional identity in teachers.

### ***Ideological positionings***

Hargreaves' position is closely argued and based, it seems, on a consistent version of schooling as a means of ensuring that those emerging from the system are simply prepared appropriately for success in the world of work. There is, however, one short section which reveals a rather different purpose:

Transplanting innovations into a school is as risky as transplanting into our bodies a metal prosthesis or an organ donated by someone else; so the prudent reformer first seeks to minimise the risk of rapid rejection. ... teachers naturally tinker in much of their professional work, and new practices must be presented to them in an inherently modifiable form. *Adequate time and opportunity for such tinkering by teachers is the most powerful immune-suppressive ...* Many of the reforms ... have not been presented to teachers in this way, thus provoking resistance, distortion and rejection ... Smart reformers identify the spheres in which teachers are already tinkering, for it is here that ... resistance is at its lowest. .. When teachers are, through tinkering, creating new knowledge, they are most open to ideas and practices from outside.

(1998:37: italics author's own)

Such a precise prescription for teacher manipulation is at the very least chilling; but it is also revealing of the ideology which sits beneath Hargreaves' insistence of teacher involvement in reform: not to champion teacher expertise, but to bring about a state of 'least resistance'. The metaphor of organ transplant and the implied 'pathological' (Alexander, 2004) state of teaching is in itself a telling act.

Hargreaves' answer – the creative professional located in a world of knowledge production – leaves teachers to twist and turn on a gallows of professional obligation to answer the presented immediacy of students' needs in the 'knowledge creation' world and the belief for many that professional knowledge is not the commodified, market-driven version presented in Hargreaves' scenario. The impact of the reconstitution of professional knowledge is potentially the reconstitution of the professional self, the self that Hargreaves wants to see with 'resistance at its lowest'.

### ***Bernstein and sacred and profane knowledge***

The position espoused by Hargreaves stands in sharp contrast to that which we encounter in the work of Bernstein. Bernstein directs us to consider the ways in which the relationship between knowledge and the professional self is defined and redefined in the current political climate:

Of fundamental significance, there is a new concept of knowledge and of its relation to those who create and use it ... Knowledge, after nearly a thousand years, is divorced from inwardness and literally dehumanised ... what is at stake is the very concept of education itself.  
(Bernstein, 2000:87-88)

Bernstein's framework, represented here by the quote from his seminal work *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity: Theory, Research, Critique* (2000) is of major significance for this thesis, and I will return to it in greater depth in Chapter Two; however, it is important at this stage to explore the central concepts Bernstein offers, both as a contrast to David Hargreaves' construct of knowledge, and also to open up new ways to consider the links between knowledge, professionalism and professional identity.

Bernstein's constructs relate to an analysis of the ways in which he perceives the structuring of education to be increasingly driven by market-oriented instrumental values (echoed in the work of other commentators such as Beck (1999, 2002) and Moore, Arnot, Beck and Daniels (2006)).

As such, education becomes contested not only in terms of curriculum content but also of control. The positioning of the state is not one of acknowledging professional expertise within the teaching profession, nor even of negotiation, but instead Bernstein notes:

... the crucial change is in the State's increasing control over its own agencies of symbolic control, especially education, at all levels ... The change is a change in State ideology and regulation...  
(1990:154-155)

And critically for this thesis, '... what is of interest is the State's indifference, *even hostility*, to its professional base' (1990:155: italics mine).

Drawing on Durkheim's use of the concepts of sacred and profane in educational knowledge, which for Durkheim, and Bernstein, has at its heart the concept of boundaries:

...strong boundaries carry the potential to create clear-cut categories and unambiguous identities ...[they] commonly demarcate the domain of the *sacred* and separate it decisively ... the sacred ... refers to knowledge for 'intrinsic' non-instrumental purposes, such knowledge being accorded a higher legitimacy and authority than that tied to ...instrumental practices; ... [it is also however] ... the domain where it is possible to glimpse the fact that all orderings of knowledge are in some measure provisional, where the secret of *uncertainty* is disclosed....  
(Beck, 1999:225: italics author's own)

The realm of the 'secret of uncertainty' reveals a dangerous territory, where established knowledges of control are revealed as provisional and therefore open to challenge. Access to such knowledge is only achieved after 'the socialisation of appropriate guardians [through] long and arduous apprenticeships' (Beck, 1999:225), and is only available to those who have been, as Bernstein puts it, 'legitimately pedagogised' (1971:57). Only then can the destabilising possibilities of '... creating new realities ... [be revealed] very late in educational life'.

For professional knowledge, the demarcation between the sacred, the inner knowledge, and the profane, the 'outer' knowledge constructed through and by those whose own identities are defined by the instrumental and market-driven values (in Beck's terms the 'profane' sphere of economic production (2002:620)), has lost its strong boundaries. Where professional knowledge once was defined as owned by, and institutionalised through, the agency of the teacher, it is now, according to Bernstein (2000:86), '...subject instead to definition by the authority of the market place. The principles of the market and its managers are more and more the managers of the policy and practices of education', and the relinquishing of



professional knowledge by teachers is achieved at least in part by the redefinition of their professional identity:

... the ... State is seen as employing its new repertoire of controls and incentives to project particular kinds of *prospective pedagogical identities*. (Beck, 2002:623: italics author's own)

Redefinition of prospective pedagogical identities is achieved through, Bernstein (2000:67-68) states, '... selective recontextualising of features of the past to defend or raise economic performance', a condition which recalls both Alexander's (2004) observations on Barber's (2001) framework of professionalism and indeed, D. Hargreaves' own reconstruction of professional knowledge in 'the creative professional'. What we see in action, Bernstein contends, is:

.. a restructuring of the 'formation' of the new professionals who will service the needs of these re-formed institutions. (2000:87)

Using Bernstein's framework (2000), the reforming of the professional self is located within three major events which define professional lives:

- the need to respond to the setting and monitoring of institutional priorities through government agencies, such as TDA, Ofsted and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) – a state known as 'market responsiveness';
- a climate of 'short-termism' in which professional knowledge is centred not on secure subject professional knowledge identities, but on the need to develop opportunism in order to survive professionally;
- and 'trainability', that is, the 'need ... to profit from continuous pedagogic re-formations' (2000:72), preferably in response to requirements relating to competency or standards-driven initiatives.

These major events all recall David Hargreaves' criteria for the need for 'new' professional knowledge – it is an almost perfect description of Hargreaves' construction of professional knowledge in a knowledge society, except of course in Bernstein's purposes in identifying them. For Bernstein:

...knowledge is being separated from inwardness, from commitments, from personal dedication, from the deep structures of the self... (2000:87)

The dislocation which teachers have experienced between professional knowledge and the 're-professionalised' knowledge of the market place is the 'profane' knowledge of Bernstein's framework, and leads to a version of professional identity which is defined not by the teaching profession, but by those seeking to claim the educational agendas for the construction of profit, not knowledge:

There is a new concept of knowledge and of its relation to those who create and use it. ... Knowledge should flow like money to wherever it can create advantage and profit. Indeed, knowledge is not like money, it is money. Knowledge is divorced from persons, their commitments, their personal dedications. Once knowledge is separated from inwardness ... then people may be moved about, substituted for each other and excluded from the market.  
(2000:87)

In this we can make a direct comparison to Hargreaves' 'knowledge society' with its need for 'people to re-design themselves' and to acquire sets of skills useful at a particular moment – and then to move on to new sets of knowledge for the next task.

### ***Contested professional knowledge: the place of teachers***

We have a curious collocation of differing views emerging through the four major frameworks and converging on a point of agreement about action, but not about motivation or purpose. The agreement is on the role of teachers in generating teacher knowledge. For A. Hargreaves, teacher knowledge can and should be the result of teacher collaboration, noting, however, that:

...if severed from the academic world altogether...will de-professionalise the knowledge base of teaching and dull the profession's critical edge.  
(2000:166)

In D. Hargreaves' terms, professional knowledge – Mode 2 knowledge – is the only desirable teacher knowledge, and the only group which can and should define both agenda and processes is that of teachers, though teachers as firmly defined within the context of the new professionalism.

Bernstein too alerts us to two types of knowledge, but his construction (of sacred and profane knowledge) is quite different from that of David Hargreaves in its insistence of the centrality of sacred knowledge in professionalism and professional identity. Barber's agenda for development of professional knowledge is that of, in Bernstein's terms, the market place. Teachers' professional development should accord with the

needs of the knowledge acquisition defined by government curricula and assessment practices.

For Bernstein, the issue is not one of prescribed action, but of warning:

If the identity produced by 'trainability' is ... empty, how does the actor recognise him/herself and others? ... by the materialities of consumption ... the products of the market relay the signifiers whereby temporary stabilities, orientations, relations and evaluations are constructed.  
(2000:59)

The curiosity resides, however, in the centrality for all four commentators of the teacher as professional, and as owner and constructor of professional knowledge. In each of the frameworks above, the notions of professional and of teacher knowledge are constructed differently, and accord with differing agendas relating to professionalism and professional identity through teacher construction of knowledge. For Barber and D. Hargreaves, that involvement is within the frameworks set by government agendas; for Bernstein and A. Hargreaves, the positioning of teachers is essentially outside of those frameworks. As I will demonstrate later in the thesis, how and where teachers actually position themselves within these frames will impact on the approaches to and types of professional knowledge development undertaken.

### ***An evidence-based profession?***

Our best teachers are already using informed professional judgement. They are creating an evidence-based body of knowledge about teaching and learning. Establishing such a body of knowledge has always been a crucial step in marking out the top professions in our society. It will provide working models that other teachers will adopt and ensure that teaching is acknowledged for what it is: an innovative and expert profession.  
(DfES, 2002:12)

...to be 'informed' is to know and acquiesce in what is provided, expected and/or required by the government and its agencies... no less, and especially, no more.  
(Alexander, 2004:17)

These two contrasting statements could be said to sum up the ways in which teacher knowledge and teacher professionalism are positioned. The DfES statement clearly positions teachers as users of 'informed professional judgement' - they are 'creators of evidence' - as part of a move to ensure an acknowledgement of teaching as an 'expert profession'. But the phrases are familiar: Barber's 'informed professional' sits beside David Hargreaves' 'knowledge creators'. The statement has its roots in a

particular construction of teacher knowledge, which aligns with confirmation and evidencing of central policy.

Barber is not the only person, of course, to assert that a knowledge base for teaching is a straightforward affair (see Gardner in Reynolds, 1989; Hiebert, Gallimore and Stigler, 2002). But what is surprising in Barber's assertion that it is 'our best teachers' who are already creating an evidence-based body of knowledge. What Barber claims he is describing is a body of professional knowledge built, and importantly, defined by teachers as professional knowledge, and based on 'evidence'. The political discourses are clear (see Beck in Moore *et al.*, 2006, for a deeper analysis of this area), and the implications of what is meant by 'our best teachers' - critiquing or complying – left ambiguous. Either there can be read here an enormous confidence that the teaching profession has been 're-professionalised' to the extent that they now, as Alexander says, 'know and acquiesce in what is provided' or there is a complete misapprehension by policy-makers about the degree to which the teaching profession still retains a version of professional knowledge which is located in Bernstein's 'sacred'. Such 'evidence -based teaching' would therefore contain within it the seeds of the reclamation of the 'sacred' body of professional knowledge by the teaching profession.

### ***Building an evidence base, professional knowledge and the place of teacher research***

To return to the claim Barber makes about 'our best teachers' – that they are, '... creating an evidence-based body of knowledge about teaching and learning' (DfES, 2002:12), the question that arises is linked immediately to teacher knowledge production and legitimisation. Whose 'knowledge base' is being promoted in this context? To what extent can we say this is teacher knowledge – the 'sacred' knowledge which offers teacher autonomy of thought and debate, as opposed to 'policy knowledge' – those skills required to operate successfully in the transmission of centralised curricular and assessment, and which Bernstein constructs as 'profane' knowledge? An examination of one of the means of the creation of an evidence-based body of knowledge promoted by Barber *et al.*, teacher research, might help to illuminate the types of knowledge being created and the ways in which this knowledge might be said to be 'sacred' or 'profane'.

## ***A new knowledge base?***

It is perhaps telling that in 2014, debates about ‘teacher knowledge’ have changed. Research published on teacher knowledge *per se* has diminished significantly, and instead scholarly articles have moved towards a consideration of subject or technology-based debates (Charalambous and Hill, 2012 and Walshaw, 2012 - mathematics; Rohann, Taconis and Jochems, 2012, and Hughes, 2005 - technology; Nilsson and Loughran 2012, and Heller, Daehler, Shinohara (2003) – science; Gordon 2012 - English). The notion of teacher knowledge either as a debate or indeed outside of a subject-based curriculum is less evident (though see Hashweh, 2005). In part, it may be argued that these are simply pragmatic responses to teachers’ current practices. But these practices have been generated by policy. A narrative is emerging which speaks to this agenda rather than that of critique of constructions of knowledge, and a policy discourse is thus privileged, with a concomitant attenuation of professional discourse. In many ways, it can be claimed that this is successful realisation of the earlier positioning of D. Hargreaves. For this thesis, the significance will be found in whether teachers themselves talk of ‘teacher knowledge’ or whether the discussion is about subjects only.

## **Teacher Identity**

The ways in which teachers achieve, maintain, and develop their identity, their sense of self, in and through a career, are of vital significance in understanding the actions and commitments of teachers in their work. (Ball and Goodson, 1985:18)

The fine line, indeed the invisible boundary, that many teachers draw between their personal identity and that of the classroom practitioner is of particular interest at this crossroads of professionalism and knowledge. Teacher identity is widely explored (Sikes, 1985; Ball and Goodson, 1985; Nias, 1984; Huberman, 1993; Day, Kington, Stobart, Sammons 2006a). Acknowledging that both professionalism and teacher knowledge have been represented as subject to a range of claims, it is perhaps no surprise to note that teacher identity too is an area which is under dispute. As Leaton Gray states, ‘the contemporary educational landscape is riddled with confusions and disagreement regarding teacher identity’ (2006:2). Hoyle and John (1995:1) for example, use the term ‘contested’ to describe teacher identity. Beijaard *et al.* (2000:750/762) call it ‘a poorly defined concept’, though state that ‘it is

important to do research on [teachers'] professional identity as [this] strongly influence[s] their judgements and behaviour (see also Nias, 1989; Tickle, 1999). Sachs (1999) states that the idea of professional identity is 'rarely taken as problematic'. The 'problematic' can be located in the ways that teacher identity is said to be constructed, and the tension that exists is between whether teacher identity is a product of teachers' self-image (Beijaard *et al.*, 2000), a point echoed by Vahasantanen, Hokka, Etelapelto, Rasku-Puttonen and Littleton:

...the concept of professional identity has usually been related to the teacher's self-image (Knowles, 1992), based on the belief that concepts or images of the self determine the way people develop as teachers. In addition, the emphasis has been placed on teachers' roles (Goodson and Cole, 1994), or on *what teachers themselves see as important* in terms of their own personal background and practical experience (Tickle, 2000). (Vahasantanen *et al.*, 2008:3: italics mine)

or whether, as Sachs contends:

I would suggest that there would be incongruities between the defined identity of teachers as proposed by systems, unions and individual teachers themselves... (1999:5)

Such 'incongruities' are important to note, since these schisms are the areas where competing constructs of teacher knowledge and professionalism are located. It remains to be seen from this research whether teacher identity is expressed through subject by teachers in the sample group, or whether the wider notion of teacher identity remains extant.

### ***Models of identity: teacher defined***

What is significant is that Wenger's models assume *teachers as prime actors* in the realisation of identity – 'teachers define'. Wenger's models (see Appendix 3) demonstrate that identity is multi-faceted and located within a number of differing contexts: the five models are created through teachers' relationships with those differing contexts and are descriptions of observed professional roles. There is an expectation that identity is defined by teachers and that that remains constant. Wenger is not alone in that expectation: indeed, Rose (1998, quoted in Zembylas, 2003) argues that identity has to be precisely both stable and self-defining. However, what we do not see here is any notion of contradiction between the five models – in

fact, quite the opposite as the fourth identity point '*nexus of multi-membership*' reveals by explicitly stating teachers 'reconcile various forms of identity into one identity'.

I would contend, therefore, that in seeking to understand identity, it is precisely the contradictions which need to be examined, and specifically the ways in which teacher professional identity can be said to be *constructed*, that is, subject to external drivers, and the sometimes competing forces which serve to shape professional identity.

### ***Models of identity: defined or constructed?***

Jansen (2002:242) explores as problematic the relationship between 'policy images' and the 'personal identities' of teachers:

By 'policy images' I mean the official projections through various policy texts of what the ideal teacher looks like; by 'personal identities' I mean ... the understandings that teachers hold of themselves in relation to official policy images.

Day et al. (2006a:1) claim that teacher identity is 'neither intrinsically stable not unstable, but can be affected ... by different degrees of tension [teachers] experience[d] between their own educational ideals and ... cultures of schools'. Certainly there seems to be a sense that teacher identity is in some way defined by external forces.

Increasingly it is policy demands which contribute to teacher identity disassociation. Lasky (2005:899) identifies 'new reform mandates' at the heart of competing constructions of identity:

Interview data revealed that the political and social context along with early teacher development shaped teachers' sense of identity and sense of purpose as a teacher. Survey and interview data indicate that there was a disjuncture between teacher identity and expectations of the new reform mandates.

So profound is the 'disjuncture' that it may be said that teachers are no longer the defining agents of their own professional identity:

Following Maggie MacLure, we can think of identity in terms of teachers 'arguing for themselves', or giving an account of themselves. Yet in the wake of poststructuralism's radical de-centering of the subject and its highlighting of

a number of impediments to agency, we might well ask how teachers are to give an account of themselves?  
(Clarke, 2009:185)

In this construction, and opposing the view of Day *et al.* (2006a) the notion of identity is in fact inherently unstable, and thus open to manipulation by a number of agencies. Sachs (1999:6), for example, states that:

In times of rapid change identity cannot be seen to be a fixed 'thing', it is negotiated, open, shifting, ambiguous, the result of culturally available meanings and the open-ended power-laden enactment of those meanings in everyday situations.

If this is the case, then teacher identity is subject to how professionalism is defined (that is, through autonomy or compliance), and the perceived ownership, or not, of professional knowledge particularly when generated through practitioner research. As Wenger (1998:149) argues:

...there is a profound connection between identity and practice. Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants.

The dilemma is to be found when a lack of correlation between those images occurs. It is not simply a case of an act of 'negative capability' on the part of teachers: rather the location of any struggle is likely to be where policy image contradicts personal image and demands behaviours and actions which teachers are required to observe because of policy demands, but which might stand in contra-indication to teachers' own moral stance, a point also made by Day *et al.* in the VITAE project:

Professional identity reflects social and policy expectations of what a good teacher is and the educational ideals of the teacher. ... One in three teachers did not have a positive sense of identity.  
(2006b:4)

The discontinuity between the personal beliefs and policy demands may well contribute to the lack of 'positive sense of identity'. However, what is also being signalled here by Day *et al.* is a sense of competing narratives: that is, the narrative of 'social and policy expectations' is not simply one account, which could be examined and rejected. Rather it is a dominant narrative which requires teachers to acquiesce to this version of the 'good teacher': teachers' own narratives of the 'good teacher' lack legitimation at any level other than the personal. The question is whether the research data will confirm the dominance of the policy narrative, or the



existence of competing narratives, or whether, if there is teacher resistance (that is, opposition) evident, the possibility that what is being shown is the fragmentation of all narratives, possibly, in fact, the breakdown of all narratives - Lyotard's (1986:7) 'incredulity towards meta-narratives'. The theme of dominant, competing or disintegrating narrative will be re-visited throughout the thesis.

### ***Official knowledge and pedagogic identities: the politics of recontextualisation***

Identity is further complicated by its relationship with knowledge and professionalism. Beijaard *et al.* (2000) claim that teachers' identity is formed through combinations of the ways in which they see themselves as 'subject matter experts, pedagogical experts, and didactical experts' (2000:751). Although Beijaard *et al.* do not elaborate on the construction of these categories, I would argue that these are subject to policy control; teachers who use these concepts to explore their professional identity are themselves subject to, and products of, such control. Bernstein states that:

'Official Knowledge' ... refers to the educational knowledge which the state constructs and distributes in educational institutions. I am going to be concerned with changes in the bias and focus of this official knowledge brought about by contemporary curricula reform currently on-going in most societies. I shall propose that the bias and focus ... constructs different pedagogical identities.  
(2000:65)

Bernstein identifies four pedagogic identities: two generated by state-held resources, namely retrospective pedagogical identities (RI) and prospective pedagogic identities; and two generated through locally held resource, that is, differentiated and integrated pedagogic identities. Since an examination of Bernstein's position on the construction of pedagogic identities will form a major section of Chapter Two, I do not propose to elaborate on the four identities; but want to emphasise that these identities are constructed through changes in the official – legitimised - knowledge bases. Bourne says that:

Official pedagogic discourse... establishes particular social relations between government agencies and those active in the field of education ... It thus not only impacts upon curriculum and classroom practices, but also offers different forms of specialised consciousness, and thus helps to construct different identities...  
(2008:1)

If the notion of identity is removed from the arena of self, and placed instead into that of legitimised knowledge, then professionalism is also involved. If professionalism is defined as the successful ability to engage with, and translate into classroom pedagogies, the knowledge legitimised by policy, then the three constructs, knowledge, professionalism and identity, are interlinked. Furthermore, if we consider how teacher research has been claimed to impact on the production of knowledge (with an associated notion of empowerment through research), then it has to follow that teacher research also impacts on professionalism and identity.

However, what is noticeable is the discontinuity of narratives emerging. Under the key headings professionalism, knowledge and identity, it is possible to discern competing *and opposing* versions of what could be assumed to be meta-narratives in education.

In the chapter that follows, I therefore examine the interaction of the narratives of professionalism, knowledge and identity and their coherence, opposition, or fragmentation within research literatures, in order to illuminate the development of my own research questions. To do this, I propose to use the scholarly works of Giroux, Bernstein, Kincheloe and Habermas to explore the issues of professionalism, teacher knowledge, identity and the place of practitioner research.

## Chapter Two: the inter-relationships of professionalism, identity and knowledge

In Chapter One, I looked at the literatures which explore practitioner research, professionalism, knowledge and identity as separate areas, and sought to identify the key ideas and contradictions which existed as starting points in the development of thinking about the research questions for this thesis. I also signalled the notion of narrative as a conceptual framework for exploring the phenomenon of the interplay of dominant, competing or indeed fragmented accounts of professionalism, knowledge and identity. I indicated that this framework could act to inform the interpretation of research data from this project, and therefore would act as a reference point for this thesis. In this chapter, I propose to take three major social science commentators, Bernstein, Giroux and Kincheloe, and explore in some depth their representations of the three key constructs of professionalism, knowledge and identity, with reference to teacher research. In this chapter I am particularly interested in the *interrelationships* of professionalism, identity and knowledge, one to another, and what is revealed when examining these concepts - indeed these narratives - in relation to practitioner research. I argue that in order to understand the place teachers occupy, or could occupy, in the shaping of professional knowledge through research, we have to understand the deeper contexts of the constructions of teacher knowledge and the social forces which operate upon those teachers, and on the knowledge domains within which they work. Without this context, seeking to understand teachers' own constructions of professionalism, knowledge, and professional identities through practitioner research is placed in an insecure position, where teacher accounts could result in 'falsely coherent narratives', teachers and researchers alike caught in a complex, but superficial, set of accounts of actions within the knowledge domains, but without the means to interpret or challenge in any meaningful way.

I want firstly to refer to the work of Bernstein in his investigation of the nature of official knowledge with which teachers are being required to engage and promote - or risk being marginalised and silenced - and thus to the related concept of identity. I will then move on to Giroux's exploration of professionalism and identity, and

particularly the teacher as transformative intellectual, after which I will explore Kincheloe's exposition on teachers as researchers and generators of professional knowledge.

Finally, I want to conclude this chapter with a consideration of how all three theorists have contributed to an understanding of the ways in which teachers and research can be instrumental in bringing about a form of knowledge which explores and develops emancipatory knowledge, with particular reference to professional teacher knowledge generated through practitioner research.

### **Bernstein, Giroux, identity and knowledge**

In Chapter One, I explored Bernstein's position with reference to Durkheim's constructions of sacred and profane knowledge. Specifically, Bernstein argues that professional knowledge, owned and legitimised through the teacher (the sacred), was being replaced by that owned and legitimised through the state (the profane) and that this relocation of knowledge to state control (the dimension of power) results in a dislocation of the professional values and beliefs held by the individual:

...knowledge is being separated from inwardness, from commitments, from personal dedication, from the deep structures of the self...  
(Bernstein: 2000:87)

The result is the replacement of the moral positioning of the individual as professional by a set of values tailored to state needs, which in turn teachers are required to internalise as their own (the ideological dimension of identity) - the new professionalism - which embodies the dominance of the 'profane' construction of knowledge. The introduction of the notions of competences and standards are mechanisms whereby state controls are exercised, but also a means of producing a generation of teachers whose professional identity is defined by the boundaries of the 'profane' rather than the 'sacred' knowledge (Bernstein's 'new actors with new motivations' (2000:61)). Rejecting the values of the 'sacred' is not simply a career decision (as promotion is dependent upon demonstrating the ability to conform to the standards representing the 'profane' knowledge), but also positions the teacher within a particular category, that is, as 'in touch' with modern societal needs – D. Hargreaves' (1998) argument. The 'sacred' is no longer relevant; the professional values and beliefs expressed by a teacher whose moral positioning locates them

within the 'sacred' knowledge arena marks them out as not only 'out of touch', but in some ways dangerous to the development of the profession, apparently standing against relevance and (the pernicious and undefined notion of) progression . It is an invidious position for any individual to hold: it invites marginalisation and a personal anomie. Without a secure and mainstream professional identity, the individual is alienated and thus open to professional isolation. For this thesis, it is of central significance to understand how teachers' professional identities are developed in connection with knowledge and professionalism in order to, in turn, understand the knowledge value systems to which teachers are willing to subscribe. In particular, it is important to explore the ways in which practitioner research impacts on the *boundaries* of teacher knowledge, especially if I consider teacher knowledge developed through research as potentially emancipatory knowledge. Thus understanding teacher identity and concepts of professionalism by engaging with the production of such knowledge is critical.

I wish now to turn to an investigation of the forces acting on the positioning of the professional, and the concomitant knowledge and identity claims.

### ***Professionalism, knowledge and identity***

If identity and knowledge legitimisation are positioned within the realms of values and beliefs, and the roots of these values and beliefs are found in the personal, then we are left to deal with a collective of narratives which revolve around the individual. What Bernstein allows us to do, however, is to understand the development of values and beliefs in relation to the politicisation of teaching by invoking the concept of the 're-centred state' (2000:67). The 're-centred state' refers to:

...new forms of centralised regulation whereby the state de-centralises and through a) central setting of criteria and b) the central assessment of outputs of agencies, financially (and otherwise), rewards success and punishes failures: 'choice', selection, control and reproduction.  
(2000:78)

Within this, both legitimised knowledge and identity are driven by the differing means of regulating and managing the 'moral, cultural and economic' (2000:66) change which defines the teacher workplace. Legitimised knowledge – 'official knowledge' – acts to shape professional identity:

'Official Knowledge' ... refers to the educational knowledge which the state constructs and distributes in educational institutions. ... [and the] changes in the bias and focus of this official knowledge brought about by contemporary curricula reform currently ongoing in most societies. I shall propose that the bias and focus, which inheres in different modalities of reform, constructs different pedagogic identities ... *Thus the bias and focus of official discourse are expected to construct in teachers a particular moral disposition, motivation and aspiration, embedded in particular performances and practices.* (Bernstein, 2000:65: italics mine)

## **Official Knowledge and Pedagogic Identities**

The values and beliefs inherent in the construction of a particular pedagogic identity - the *particular moral disposition, motivation and aspiration* – reflect too the professional beliefs about what constitutes knowledge. Professional identity is not an individualistic matter, but rather, Bernstein claims, 'the result of embedding a career in a collective base' (2000:66). Briefly, the 'collective base' refers to a position held by, in my case, teachers, and described by the relationship between the state and the notions of professionalism (for example the Teachers' Standards). Within this collective base reside sets of beliefs and values (including those relating to knowledge) which are inherent in versions of the professional self. Any consideration of professional identity therefore has to explore the relationship between professional values and professional knowledge, for if these are both formed and reinforced by membership of a particular collective base, the location of the development of the values and beliefs system which has thus far informed the investigations of teacher knowledge and professional identity might be made evident through an understanding of that collective base.

For Bernstein, pedagogical – professional - identities are formed through interaction within ('struggle between' (2000:65)) competing collective bases, themselves formed through engagement in what Bernstein refers to as 'grand narratives of the past' (2000:66-67); that is, selected and re-contextualised retellings of cultural, economic and technological events which are designed to shape the professional knowledge bases, and thereby the pedagogic or professional identities of those teachers within those boundaries. In order to create dominance, the collective bases compete for control over pedagogy, seeking to secure their position through representation in state policies and practices; for example, a teacher identity which not only responds

to, but ‘recognises’, a professional identity within a policy frame, such as the Literacy Strategy.

In his ‘Modelling Pedagogic Identities Classification’ diagram (Figure 2:1 below), and in what Bernstein calls ‘no more than a sketch’ (2000:65) he identifies four such bases, grouped around the re-centred state and reflecting two main positions: state as central controller of resource, and resource as allocated through a de-centralised state mechanism. It should be remembered, however, that the de-centred state is not a route to autonomous self-control, but refers instead to ‘new forms of centralised regulation’ where the development of criteria, adherence to which opens up or restricts access to centrally held and distributed resources, operates.

### Bernstein’s Pedagogic Identities

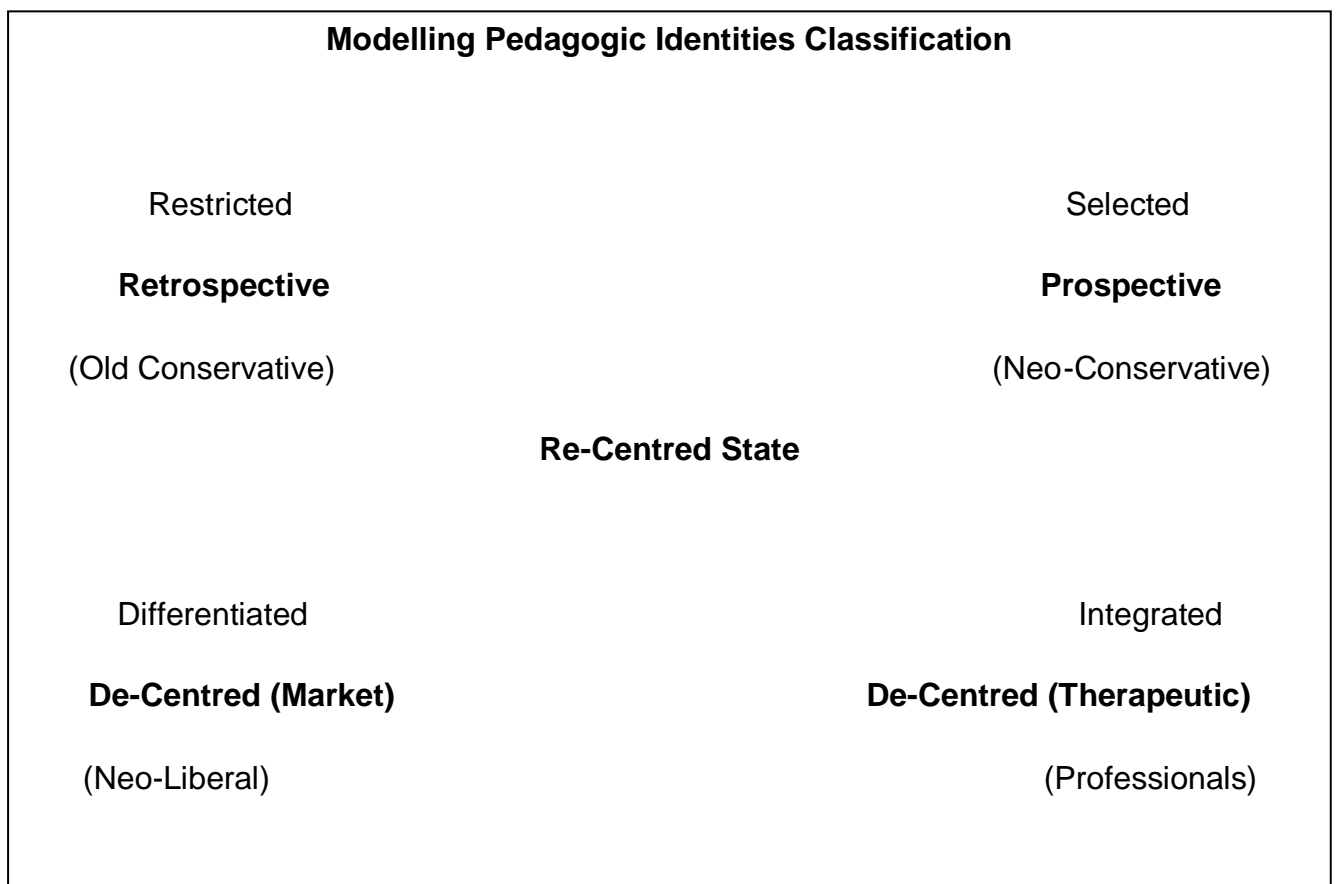


Figure 2:1  
(Bernstein, 2000:67)

In Chapter One the literatures surrounding teacher identity seemed to suggest that identity was fragmented and vulnerable, and increasingly subject to policy decisions. One claim was that teachers were 'no longer the defining agents of their own professional identity' (Clarke, 2009:185), so that unity of teacher identity was a construct which was unlikely to survive - an example of the 'fragmented narratives' which appear to be emerging within these explorations. Bernstein's models will be particularly helpful therefore in exploring whether and how the teacher identities evident in my own research do indeed reflect these constructions, and if so, given the posited notion of the fragmented narrative, are the boundaries described within Bernstein's four models as impermeable as would appear? One approach to this will be to investigate teachers' understanding of the relationship of knowledge and identity with particular reference to Bernstein's framework. This is of particular interest, given Bernstein's use of the 'grand narrative' in the construction of identity.

The first position Bernstein refers to as 'retrospective pedagogic identities' (RI) (2000:66). These are shaped by the 'grand narratives of the past ... national, cultural, religious' (2000:66), which are selectively reconstructed to bring about a secure representation and relevance of that past to the future. RIs are, Bernstein states:

... formed by hierarchically ordered, strongly bounded, explicitly stratified and sequenced discourses and practices.  
(2000:67)

Within RIs, Bernstein positions two opposing modes of identity: the fundamentalist and the elitist. The fundamentalist position draws on resources located within a religious and/or nationalist context and, as such, identities formed in this arena are, Bernstein claims, 'unambiguous, stable, intellectually impervious, collective' (2000:75). The elitist position is also drawn from the narratives of the past, but has a critical difference in relation to the market:

It is an amalgam of knowledge, sensitivities, manners, of education and upbringing. ... It shares with the fundamentalist identities strong classifications and internal hierarchies, but unlike fundamentalist it refuses to engage in the market.  
(2000:75)

With RIs, however, the insistence is on the 'strongly bounded', so that identity is not subject to change from external forces. It will be interesting to see whether any



teachers in my research can be seen to retain such a strong sense of teacher identity as the RI model suggests, or whether the predictions of Bottery and Wright (2000), Clarke (2009) and others serve to demonstrate the fragility of identity. Further, if indeed there are any teachers whose sense of identity responds to the RI model, it will be equally interesting to see those teachers' ways of handling the undoubted pressures of education in the market place ('elitist' RI). Teachers whose identities subscribe to a strong sense of self and who reject the context of the market place, stand in opposition to the current climate in education. The role that research plays, if any, in their professional lives will therefore be revealing, not least in exploring the status of knowledge (sacred or profane) which they privilege in their research.

Prospective pedagogic identities (PPIs) share the centred positioning of RIs and their use of the grand narratives of the past, but with an entirely different purpose: here pedagogical identities are constructed using selective re-contextualising of the past to deal with cultural, economic and technological change. Giving the example of Thatcherism, Bernstein claims that:

A new collective social base was formed by fusing nation, family, individual responsibility and individual enterprise. Thus prospective identities are formed by recontextualising selected features of the past to stabilise the future by *engaging with contemporary change*.  
(2000:68: italics author's own)

By extension, looking at Blair's Labour, the retrospective identity would be that of 'Old Labour'; so-called 'New Labour' would be situated in the prospective, and positioned thus by drawing on '... an amalgam of notions of community ... and local responsibilities to motivate and restore belonging in the cultural sphere' (2002:68).

The retelling of a past narrative in a present context is a powerful and subtle strategy for reorganising the sense of identity. Identification with past elements ostensibly reappearing, albeit in a form aligned to 'future' needs, suggests a continuity and a modernisation which is persuasive. Change is thus structured as progression, and teachers subscribing to this version of 'New Education' are unlikely to exhibit identity characteristics which align with any deep critical engagement with current practices. The emphasis is likely to be on research as engaging with perceived needs, with relevance and responsiveness as key elements. In my own research, for example,

teachers whose identities can be said to belong to PPIs will privilege a version of knowledge which deals with change in pragmatic fashion: ideology will not be a concern, and nor will there be any sense that the context of education might be fashioned by forces which should be open to critique.

Further, the thrust of Bernstein's argument – the ways in which prospective pedagogical identities are 'launched by social movements, for example gender, race and region' (2000:76) - is towards a claim that the sacred is no longer located within a centrally located collective social base, but is rather becoming redistributed:

... the sacred now reveals itself in dispersed sites, movements and discourses. It is less a fragmentation of the sacred but more its segmentation and specialisation. ...  
(2000:77)

Research for teachers whose identities are shaped by PPIs may well be located within a consideration of specific framing of issues rather than individual interests.

Bernstein's other two identities are predicated on a different basis from both RIs and PPIs in that they take as the context for teacher identity the de-centred state (i.e. where institutions share some autonomy over their resources), and though it might be argued that a sense of narrative still permeates these constructions, they do not consciously draw on any 'grand narrative':

Whereas the centring resources of the retrospective and prospective identities recontextualises the past, although different pasts, de-centring resources construct the present through different 'presents'.  
(2000:68)

This is particularly powerful as a model in the current education context, where schools and teachers are being asked to operate in ways which are closer to profit-making businesses than the traditional model of schools as liberal humanist institutions. The question will be: to what extent do teachers in my own research locate their working conditions and/or beliefs and values within this context.

Bernstein's first model in this pairing, the Differentiated De-Centred Market (DCM), is about institutional autonomy and flexibility in order to be maximally responsive to market-driven competition. It is perhaps salutary to note that when Bernstein wrote this, he asked us to '...imagine an educational institution which has considerable autonomy over its use of budget, the organisation of its discourse, how it uses its

staff ... the management system here is explicitly hierarchical ... which will distribute resources to local units, according to their efficiency and their procedure of accountability...' (2000:69). We may not, in 2014, have to imagine this at all, since many of the developments of the past decade and the rise of the knowledge economy are exactly what Bernstein can only ask us then to 'imagine'. This is precisely the quadrant where new forms of centralised regulation, and where the development of criteria, adherence to which opens up, or restricts, access to centrally held and distributed resources, can be seen to be operative. However, not all is well within this model:

The DCM oriented identities towards satisfying external competitive demands, whereas the segmented, serial ordering of the subjects of the curriculum oriented the identities towards the intrinsic value of discourse. This tension ... is not, of course, new. What is new is the official institutionalising of the DCM and the legitimising of the identity it produces. We have a new pathological position at work in education: the pedagogic schizoid position. (2000:71)

The implication here is that all teachers who work in schools or other institutions, where the education system which is designed purposively to respond to market forces, inevitably have identities shaped by these demands. Bernstein states that the situation is characterised by tensions leading to a 'pedagogic schizoid position', which he characterises as pathological. The DCM model is familiar and many schools, at least in part, subscribe to a version of the DCM model, responding to external competitive demands. What will be interesting to track will be whether there is indeed an inevitability that teachers' identities are shaped and legitimised by the institutionalising of the DCM model. Where teachers feel that their schools operate on this basis, are they themselves unable to formulate identities which stand against those values in some way? Will there be teachers whose identification with the DCM context is so complete that they do indeed find themselves in a 'pedagogic schizoid position'?

Interestingly, little consideration is given in this model to the concomitant feature of any 'schizoid' situation: an inherent lack of stability. In a market-driven environment, such instability may be reflected in a number of ways: declared stress, staff disaffection, high staff turnover, including that of management, and high numbers of teachers leaving the profession. Indeed, these are all now recognisably evident in

the DfES 'workforce' (2004b:50). Instability is a threat to any system: any proponent of the DCM will be seeking for mechanisms to rectify this. Teachers whose identities are in some way shaped by this model are likely to privilege research focused on 'realities' and pragmatics, as defined by the external competitive sources. If and where teachers in this context resist, there may well be a focus on either revealing the ideological contexts, or pursuing sacred knowledge, even in a context where profane knowledge is likely to be the major area of interest for the school. In my own research therefore I shall be looking for teachers whose research offers insight into the construction of identity, either conforming to or critiquing a market forces driven environment.

The final quadrant is the Integrated De-Centred (Therapeutic) Professionals model. Bernstein is dismissive of this model, saying that:

I shall spend little time because it is not a strong player in any arena... The transmission prefers weak boundaries ... talk [is of] regions of knowledge, areas of experience. The management style is soft, hierarchies are veiled, power is disguised by communication networks and interpersonal relations. The DCT position ideally reflects stable, integrated identities with adaptable co-operative practices.  
(2000:70)

In examining this quadrant, I want to propose that since Bernstein's first development of the Pedagogic Identities Classification, there have been significant internal changes to this model which call on the next quadrant for realisation. In the period since Bernstein wrote this, the accommodation by government agency of the notions of teacher knowledge as generated by teachers through 'enquiry' may warrant a re-examination of the relevance of the DCT model: far from it 'not being a strong player', it may well have a critical part to play in addressing the schizoid nature of the DCM model in that it brings about apparent ownership and *therefore stabilisation* of professional identity. Stabilisation is critically important for the survival of the DCM model: the move to persuade teachers that professionalism has been 'reconstructed' through DCM, indeed offered as a 'new, improved model' including ownership of teacher-generated knowledge through 'enquiry', is precisely what the new professionalism model subscribes to: it is an ideological construction of professionalism and knowledge, which resists all previous arguments relating to autonomy, since autonomy is exactly what this model of professional identity seems

to offer. The stabilisation potential of DCT may actually be the necessary constituent in bringing about a fully integrated DCM model. This model constitutes, I would suggest, an amended third model - the Integrated De-Centred Market Professional (IDCM) - whereby research can be harnessed to function as a controlled and unresisted version of teacher knowledge and 'knowledge coherence' in DCT, but in which the 'weak boundaries' of the DCT model serve to enable the managerialism of DCM to dominate. Teacher research would thus play a vital role, and teachers whose identities are shaped by the DCT model would privilege research which would answer Bernstein's description of 'adaptable co-operative practices'.

It is only upon closer examination that it becomes clear that the nature of the knowledge generated is once again circumscribed by the concepts of legitimisation. Bounded by government-initiated legitimisation agendas, teacher-generated knowledge once again became subject to the twin regulators of 'relevance' and resource. The location of the sacred is still in the silenced. The notion of silence is important for this thesis. As will be seen later, the methodological concerns of this research are concerned with addressing that silence and seeking to give voice to teachers. In exploring that silence and giving 'voice' back to teachers, this thesis will look to offer an original contribution to the interpretation of teacher knowledge through teachers themselves.

The apparent claim of government agencies on teacher generated knowledge is, however, itself worthy of exploration. Is it simply that changing economic, cultural and technological times have brought about a need for differing models of professional identity? At the heart of any such claim there would have to sit the relationship between teacher professionalism and knowledge. I want to ask whether teacher knowledge, and the professional identity which engages with the generation of such knowledge, should be charged with the need to protect professional knowledge (the sacred), or to be responsive to the need to reflect government policy declared needs of that time (the profane), or both. Can teachers, in other words, be consciously engaged with knowledge as constructed; be critically aware both of knowledge as profound truth-seeking and of knowledge as politically end-driven, and be positioned to engage equally with both manifestations within a democratic society? Can such a coherence of teacher narrative be achieved? I want to turn now to explore whether such positionings are indeed viable in relation to the professional

construction of knowledge, and to do so by investigating in particular Giroux's notion of teacher as transformative intellectual.

### ***Teachers as Intellectuals***

I have noted that the role that teachers have in society has been radically altered over the past 50 years: moving from a position of unchallenged authority with an assumed extensive professional knowledge base and a legitimated, significant voice in the shaping of society, the mid-1970s accountability movement acted to transfer such authority to a centralised government-controlled body which in turn redefined professionalism and teacher identity to bring about a workforce which complied with government agendas in education. These government agencies stood against education (as opposed to training) as a political voice; instead, teaching became a mechanism for the implementation of government agendas related to developing a workforce effective for success in the competitive economic market place of the twenty-first century. This was not, however, a democratically decided development; far from it. In Giroux's terms:

... there is little talk about schools and democracy and a great deal of debate about how schools might become more successful in meeting industrial needs and contributing to productivity ... public concerns about the nature of schooling has been replaced by concerns and interests of management experts.  
(1988:1)

The changes wrought were clothed with concerns about 'falling standards', poor levels of literacy, weak numeracy skills and so forth. The Education Reform Act of 1988 brought about a centralised curriculum, assessment processes and inspection regimes which appeared to be the answer to controlling both education in schools and the teachers who were responsible for that education.

Teacher knowledge was replaced by government-required engagement with the defined curricular demands. Professional knowledge became almost exclusively concerned with 'how to', that is, how best to meet the demands of policy-makers, rather than 'why', that is, critical engagement with those demands. The impact on teachers was to produce a profession in which teachers' identities were simply to be 'conduits' for the national curriculum; their professional responsibilities were no longer concerned with representing a major political voice in the development of a

democratic society, but simply with implementing the externally constructed national curriculum to 'raise standards'.

Curiously, although education has clearly been shaped by government legislation, in the UK at least, schooling is rarely acknowledged in public debate as a *political act*. Instead, it is represented as a series of pragmatic responses to society's need for a literate and numerate workforce in a competitive global market place. This de-politicisation of education, I would argue, disallows consideration of any of the ideological functions that inform any education reform. De-politicisation is a disempowering act and one designed to maximise the instrumentalist forms of knowledge evident in current practices. Understanding the ways in which this act has impacted on teacher knowledge calls for a closer examination of the place of critical theorists within education. I want now to turn to an exploration of the ways in which teachers might re-engage with issues of knowledge, identity and professionalism at a political level, for thus positioned, teachers would become not only guardians of the sacred but active constructors of that knowledge. In order to investigate this perspective, I want to use the work of Giroux, and specifically Giroux's text *Teachers as Intellectuals: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning*. Although this was first published in 1988, the issues he raises are still absolutely central. Giroux's position is to re-politicise the debate about professional knowledge and to place teachers at the centre of that debate:

By politicising the notion of schooling, it becomes possible to illuminate the role that educators and educational researchers play as intellectuals who operate under specific conditions of work and who perform a particular social and political function.  
(1988:xxxiii-xxxiv)

Teacher identities must, therefore, encompass engagement with the political dimension in order to claim ownership of both the discourses emerging from such debate and the forms of knowledge being promoted.

Knowledge is, as Bernstein reminds us, related to power (in Bernstein's terms, the relocation of knowledge to state control). And as McLaren in his foreword to Giroux (1988) points out, knowledge is itself a product of the politicisation of schooling, and both knowledge and power impact on prospective teacher identity:

The concept of power/knowledge is instrumental in ... [the] formulation of the role that teachers should play as critically engaged intellectuals. Knowledge can no longer be seen as objective, but has to be understood as part of the power relations that not only produce it but also those that benefit from it. Every form of knowledge can be located within specific power relations; as time passes certain forms of knowledge are transformed by ruling groups into 'regimes of truth' ...  
(McLaren, 1988, Foreword to Giroux, 1988)

It is these 'regimes of truth' which Giroux looks to reveal; as they transform themselves through policy into the realities of teachers' day-to-day lived experiences, and act to marginalise professional knowledge, Giroux contends that it is only through critical engagement that the teacher can seek to understand the positioning of knowledge as ideological construct . But knowledge itself is related to both power and 'truth':

... certain apparatuses of power produce forms of knowledge that legitimate a particular kind of truth ... Power... as Foucault points out, not only produces knowledge that distorts reality but also produces a particular version of the "truth". In other words, "Power is not merely mystifying or distorting. Its most dangerous impact is its positive relation to truth, the effects of truth that it produces" (Welch:1985:63).  
(Freire, 2000:xxxv)

Engagement with 'truth' is not in itself straightforward. We are not here being asked to identify a single truth. It is the demand of the reflexive and analytical nature of criticality to which our attention is drawn:

...critical educational theory set itself the task of uncovering how domination and oppression are produced within the various mechanisms of schooling. Rather than accept the notion that schools are vehicles of democracy and social mobility, educational critics make such assumptions problematic.  
(Freire, 2000:xxix)

The corollary to this position is that teachers would themselves need to construct a professional and personal identity, which would allow them to contribute to 'the critical intent of knowledge acquisition and education in general' (Giroux, quoted in Kincheloe, 2003:103). This professional and personal identity is, in Giroux's terms, that of teacher as intellectual:

In the broadest sense, teachers as intellectuals have to be seen in terms of the ideological and political interests that structure the nature of the discourse, classroom social relations, and values that they legitimate in their teaching.  
(Giroux, 1988:127)



However, Giroux argues that in order to bring about 'a truly democratic society' (1988:6), the role of teachers must be understood, both within and without the profession, as not only that of intellectual, but as *transformative* intellectual, seeking actively to reveal the ideological nature of education:

... a transformative intellectual, charged with the responsibility of 'interrogat[ing] the political nature of ... schooling. (1988:xxix).

The transformative intellectual has particular characteristics related to the bringing about of a democratic and ethical society, part of which is resistance to knowledge constructed only to further compliance:

Unlike hegemonic or accommodating intellectuals, whose labor [sic] is at the behest of those in power and whose critical insight remains in the service of the *status quo*, transformative intellectuals take seriously the primacy of ethics and politics in their critical engagement with students, administrators and the surrounding community. They work relentlessly, dedicated to furthering democracy and enhancing the quality of human life. (McLaren, 1988, foreword to Giroux, 1988:xvii-xviii)

Far from being a transmitter of approved knowledge, as transformative intellectual the teacher becomes charged with a role which demands engagement with the social and political construction of knowledge, not least for their own students:

Empower [ing] students by giving them the knowledge and social skills they will need to be able to function in the larger society as critical agents ... to educate them for transformative action. That means educating them to take risks ... to fight both *against* oppression and *for* democracy... [teachers are thus] concerned with empowering students so they can read the world critically and change it where necessary... I want to conclude that teachers should become transformative intellectuals if they want to educate students to be active, critical citizens. (Giroux, 1988:xxxiii/xxxiv/127)

Awareness of the politicisation is thus the precursor of choice and action on the part of the students, and this has first to be mediated through the teacher; it is therefore incumbent upon the teachers to themselves be politically aware of the constructions of knowledge.

In politicising education, however, Giroux is not calling for teachers to be placed within a radical education context, which he describes as having 'serious flaws', not least in the ways in which schools are seen as acting solely as agents of capitalist reproduction, with teachers:

...trapped in an apparatus of domination that works with all the certainty of a Swiss watch. Radical educators have focused on the language of domination to such a degree that it undercuts any viable hope for developing a progressive, political educational strategy....  
(2000:xxxi-xxxii)

But instead Giroux calls for teachers to create a discourse of possibility:

For radical pedagogy to become a viable political project, it has to develop a discourse that combines the language of critique with the language of possibility...  
(1988:xxxi-xxxii)

If we map Giroux's language of critique and possibility against the 'singular discourse' (Smyth and Shacklock, 1998) created within the standards and competences model of teacher knowledge, the contrast is stark. The singular discourse does not allow for criticality, either in relation to government policy or associated curricular or assessment selections; nor for transformation since the discourse thus limited offers no potentiality for change. Teacher knowledge is contained by and within the singular discourse. The question is, do all teachers subscribe to that discourse?

The task now is to seek to understand whether and in which ways a discourse might be created which would allow teacher knowledge to move from the contained to Giroux's model of the critical and transformative – that is, the development of the teacher role from compliant professional to that of transformative intellectual – the critical professional.

### ***Organisers and dis-organisers of knowledge***

In order to function as intellectuals, teachers must create the ideological and structural conditions necessary for them to write, research, and work with each other in producing curricula and sharing power. In the final analysis, teachers need to develop a discourse and set of assumptions that allow them to function more specifically as transformative intellectuals.  
(Giroux, 1988:xxxiv)

Developing 'ideological and structural conditions [to enable] a discourse and set of assumptions that allow [teachers] to function ... as transformative intellectuals' is a towering demand, particularly in a context in which, as Giroux himself acknowledges:

... [teachers] are the object of educational reforms that reduce them to the status of high-level technicians carrying out dictates and objectives decided by experts far removed from the everyday realities of classroom life. (1988:121)

Echoing Bernstein's concerns with sacred and profane knowledge (1971), and adumbrating Apple's legitimisation of 'official' knowledge (2003), Giroux (1988:123) sees three major factors acting against the construction of teacher as intellectual: the separation of pedagogy from practice; standardising school knowledge so that it can be controlled; and the devaluing of scholarship in favour of the 'practical'. He quotes Zeichner's (1983) analysis based on teacher training in the USA, perspicacious in the later context of the UK reforms of 1988:

.. that which they [teachers] are to master is limited in scope (e.g. to a body of professional content knowledge and teaching skills) and is fully determined in advance by others often on the basis of research on teacher effectiveness. The prospective teacher is viewed primarily as a passive recipient of this professional knowledge and plays little part in determining the substance and direction... (1983:4)

Giroux's call for the teacher as intellectual is based therefore on a perceived need for teachers to be enabled to make political any examination of the pedagogic, confirming criticality as central to that process and development of a critical dialogue its medium. This, Giroux claims (1988:127-128) is an act of emancipation which unites the language of critique with the language of possibility. The 'how' of this is based, in part at least, on the critical examination of knowledge claims, specifically examination both of questions raised and questions excluded; schooling as legitimisation of relations of power and as a collective process conducted within arenas of contestation.

The construction – narrative - of knowledge by teachers should therefore seek to stand against the conditions described above by Giroux (1988:123) and Zeichner (1983:4) to produce knowledge which is critical and emancipatory in intention. I return therefore to Giroux's earlier statement:

In order to function as intellectuals, teachers must create the ideological and structural conditions necessary for them to write, research, and work with each other in producing curricula and sharing power. (1988:xxxiv)

That Giroux frames the claims for teachers as transformative intellectuals as residing within the context of teacher writing, research and 'sharing power' is critical in defining conditions necessary to achieve the professional status of transformative intellectual. For this thesis, with the focus on the potentiality for teachers to transform their identity in order to act as critical analysts, and critically engaged constructors, of teacher knowledge through teacher research is pivotal, for as Giroux points out:

Institutionally legitimised knowledge organises and dis-organises experience, and educators must know how to ask whose experience and whose interests are supported by different possible forms of education.  
(1988:131)

A key term here is that of institutionally legitimised knowledge; linked to this is an expectation that such knowledge should define practice. Giroux argues, however, that transformation engages with practice in a quite distinctive way. The question of the profane knowledge seekers – will classroom practice be enabled by teacher as transformative intellectual - is answered robustly:

If what we mean by practice refers to a 'cookbook' of 'how-to's' then the answer is a resounding 'No'. To understand practice in these terms is to be at the mercy of a domesticating discourse which establishes a false dichotomy between theory and practice, effectively collapsing its dialectical relation. ... If, on the other hand, we mean practice to refer to a daily engagement in a more empowering language by which to think and act critically in the struggle for democratic social relations and human freedom, then 'Yes'.  
(McLaren, 1988, foreword to Giroux, 1988:xx-xxi)

As such, transformation stands against the instrumental procedures and practices of the classroom. Indeed, any position other than that of transformational intellectual, 'renounce[s] ... the critical intent of knowledge acquisition and education in general' (Giroux, quoted in Kincheloe, 2003:103). Giroux's positioning of teachers as transformative intellectuals has, as its concomitant positioning, a rejection of the instrumental, but within an agenda of change.

### ***Counter narratives***

This position is not without its critics. Andy Hargreaves has attacked Giroux for failing to spell out in what circumstances education can develop independently, and how and when economic factors become paramount. Hargreaves describes Giroux's theory as one in which 'anything goes': 'they appear to want to have it both ways, to

assert both the dependence and independence of schooling; to have their cake and eat it' (Hargreaves, 1999).

However, I would argue that Giroux's position is precisely not about prescription. In the same way that democracy can only exist as a concept by acknowledging the right for all political views to be expressed, even those which are in themselves are undemocratic, Giroux's critical pedagogy cannot demand particular positions be adopted. It can demand that the act of informed and critical engagement be brought to bear on decision-making and that it is the transformative intellectual who is best placed to achieve that; but this is not at all the same as Hargreaves' 'anything goes' position, with its implication of random and literally thought-less decision-making. The transformative intellectual takes seriously the professional responsibility for critically informed decision-making; freedom of outcome, though, has to be inherent in the act: it is criticality given immanence.

Kanpol (1998) also demonstrates criticisms of Giroux's position, although from rather different perspectives:

1. What right do critical pedagogues have to speak for the oppressed and marginalised, particularly when "speaking" comes out of a middle class university or other teaching position.
  2. The language used by critical pedagogues is so opaque that the average teacher cannot understand some basic critical premises made. This would contradict the basic message of challenging forms of oppression, subordination and domination.
  3. Critical pedagogy is theoretically visionary but lacks the practical tools to accompany it.
- (Kanpol, 1998)

Kanpol's responses to the first two relate to the right of any individual to speak out for the oppressed and the need to create a 'new and vibrant' language to represent this social positioning. Although we might say that these responses are in themselves limited (and indeed Kanpol does go on to acknowledge this), it is the third criticism which is of particular interest to us, in that educational research has itself been subject to savage attacks on the basis of lack of 'practicality' (D. Hargreaves, 1996; Tooley and Darby, 1998). Certainly, in relation to the concept of the professional identity of teachers as transformative intellectuals, Giroux's discussion posits a highly theoretical construct. Indeed, even in examining Giroux's argument in the light of A. Hargreaves' comments, it is only through recourse to the

transformative intellectual that the integrity of Giroux's position can be defended. But lack of 'practicality' implies a concomitant lack of 'real use', that is, the ability to bring about change; the criticism that could be made of Giroux and the notion of the transformative intellectual therefore is the question of the actioning of change. If the transformative intellectual remains as an abstract concept, with no classroom reality, in Kanpol's terms (and indeed, in the terms of many others) the third charge, of vision without action, stands unchallenged.

Giroux does have a response, however. Teacher-generated knowledge is seen as rooted in a classroom reality. Kincheloe observes:

*Change* is a fundamental goal of the teacher as a critical researcher. ... Giroux develops this idea with the conception of what he calls the transformative intellectual... Such teachers hold a vision and act through their research to achieve that vision... (2003:47; italics author's own)

McLaren (1988, foreword to Giroux, 1988:xx) refers to 'Giroux's ... pedagogy of the concrete' – the reality of change – and change which is to be realised through teacher action. Indeed, if the transformative intellectual is concerned with the *dialectical relation between theory and practice*, then the possibility of change is not simply inbuilt, but inevitable. The question of how this action might be realised has already been marked out by Giroux (1988:xxxiv), by teachers, '... writ[ing], research[ing], and work[ing] with each other...' the very context of the research of this thesis. For Giroux, the act of teacher research carries with it both the notion of transformative intellectual and practical action. However, teacher research, as we saw in Chapter One, is a contested area, with government agency claims being made on the generation of knowledge within this context. Where and whether the transformative intellectual might feature in such a construction of teacher research, and indeed the types of teacher knowledge thus legitimised, is worthy of exploration.

### **Teacher as researcher**

As legitimised knowledge increasingly comes to define professional knowledge, the teacher researcher has been constructed as knowledge-generator only within these restricted terms. However, if, as I am contending, it is only through teacher-generated research which addresses the knowledge agenda of the sacred that we can position empowered professionalism at the heart of teacher identity, the

literatures which can be said to be productive are those concerned with investigating teacher research as part of a narrative concerning democratic reconceptualisation of professional knowledge.

In selecting my key texts for this chapter, I explored a number of seminal volumes (for example, Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993; Stenhouse, 1975; Biesta, 2007; Elliott, 1991). Whilst all powerful texts, I was looking particularly for those which addressed the political constructions of professionalism, knowledge and identity through teacher research. Kincheloe's *Teachers as Researchers: Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment* (2003) is clearly positioned in the political:

My argument here is direct: reductionist ways of seeing, teaching, and learning pose a direct threat to education as a practice of democracy. (2003:9)

And further it is concerned with the nature and generation of knowledge and its relationship to research:

Just as we understand that the world is socially constructed, we understand that research of any stripe creates a world – it does not reflect a world. ... If knowledge is socially constructed, then critical ... researchers understand that the debate over what knowledge is of most worth is never ending. ... (2003:4).

Part of Kincheloe's case is also rooted in the belief that whilst teacher researchers need to understand research methodology (such as action research) more critically, they need to understand the ways in which certain research frames can generate a reality which comes to dominate educational policy and, from there, functions to shape teacher thinking: in other words, teacher researchers must understand the place of epistemology in research and the implications for them of relative positionings:

...knowledge derived from research about human education [is] constituted by a variety of forces. [Teacher researchers need to] contemplate the nature of this complex notion in light of its effect on educational research. (2003:91)

In the next section, I am going to explore Kincheloe's positioning in relation firstly to teacher researchers as professional transformative intellectuals, and, secondly, teacher researchers and epistemology in knowledge generation.

### ***Transformative intellectuals***

The question is whether Kincheloe could support further exploration of the position espoused by Giroux in terms of teachers as transformative intellectuals. Certainly Kincheloe's position resonates with Giroux's agenda for politicisation of knowledge and the need for change. Kincheloe states, for example, that 'ways in which the present era's ... reductionist view' of teachers and teaching, that is, a knowledge society run by knowledge workers in a knowledge economy', are both 'woefully inadequate' and 'complicit in ... the truncated perspectives that have historically shaped schooling in general and the lives of teachers in particular' (2000:4). 'Awareness', he claims, 'of the social construction of knowledge about the world moves teachers to a new level of reasoning about other people's reasoning' (2003:193).

There are, however, disagreements between the positions held by Kincheloe and Giroux. For example, I would argue that Giroux is positing a more radical construction of teacher as knowledge-generator than acknowledged by Kincheloe. 'Awareness' (2003:193) seems to me an insufficient condition to meet the transformative potential of Giroux's teacher as intellectual. Similarly, Kincheloe argues that 'Critical research by teachers is not a technique for bringing about democracy: it is an embodiment of democratic principles as it ...leads to group decision making, a basic principle of democracy' (2003:45), which stands in direct opposition to Giroux's claims about the role of the transformative intellectual as fundamental to democratic principles in education. Nevertheless, Kincheloe's positioning of teacher research as central in bringing about change aligns with Giroux's key claim in *Teachers as Intellectuals* that it is through teacher research that the emancipatory can be realised:

...in the contemporary conversation about knowledge workers ... developing the scholarly and political skills to move beyond [the reductionist position] becomes even more vital to the future of democracy and the pedagogical strategies that support it. Teachers becoming researchers is a necessary component of this important struggle.  
(1988:4)

With such agreement between the positions held by Giroux and Kincheloe over the claims relating to knowledge generation and teacher research, I have chosen



therefore to critique Kincheloe's text *Teachers as Researchers: Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment* (2003) and, in particular, to explore Kincheloe's perspectives on knowledge construction and the role of teacher research as central to this thesis.

### **Knowledge and teacher research: a conceptual framework**

The conceptual framework which I have constructed thus far builds on and develops the dual narratives of Bernstein's conception of the nature of teacher identity and professional knowledge, and the relationship of these to the state, and on Giroux's argument that to bring about change and control in this relationship, teachers have to develop the identity of transformative intellectual through engaging in teacher research. In this section, I want to extend the conceptual framework in order to explore further the ways in which issues emerging from promoting the activity of teachers writing, researching and working together might be realised in schools, and to do so through a critical engagement with Kincheloe; in particular, I will consider aspects of the political and ideological forces surrounding teacher research and the ways in which these forces act to bring about, or resist, change. Kincheloe's taken-for-granted position is that change is in and of itself desirable, and is predicated upon two major themes: that current education policy is based on a positivist stance, the 'physical science model' (p.143), in a (false) quest for certainty (p.141); and that teacher research should seek to stand against the positivist, validating instead the 'complex web of reality' (p.149):

As Einstein and Heisenberg pointed out long ago, what we see is not what we see but what we perceive. The knowledge that the world yields has to be interpreted by men and women who are part of that world. What we call information always involves an act of human judgement.  
(2003:153)

### ***The critical researcher***

Questioning the unquestionable has never been a picnic in the park. In this complex context critical researchers analyse educational situations with the aim of improving the quality of the activity connected to them. In the spirit of complexity, however, teacher researchers move to a new conceptual terrain, as they raise questions about the situation itself ... critical teachers as researchers develop the capacity to expose the assumptions behind, the interests served by, and the unarticulated purposes of particular forms of educational activity.

(Kincheloe, 2003:19-20)

Kincheloe presents an interesting matrix of issues surrounding practitioner research. Locating his argument within a socio-constructivist position, he argues that the forms of knowledge he perceives to be dominant in education (positivist/neo-Cartesian reductivist) have combined to bring about an education system which is 'based more on the desire for social regulation than for emancipation ... Teachers ... become objects of management, a mode of discipline that serves particular private interests' (2003:5). Adopting a critical stance towards the current situation as he sees it, that is teachers being positioned by the state to promote the state's interests, Kincheloe seeks to empower teachers through a reclaiming and repositioning of the knowledge agenda:

My argument here is direct: reductionist ways of seeing, teaching, and learning pose a direct threat to education as a practice of democracy. (2003:8-9)

The state, Kincheloe claims, serves its own interests through a range of control mechanisms: some overt, namely technical standards (2003:8), knowledge production (2003:18), curriculum development (2003:17), limitation of professional discourses (2003:59); others covert, that is, through ideological means and the exercise of power (2003:17), although Kincheloe also makes the point that the impositional nature of education reforms 'is a naked form of power so confident in its sovereignty it senses little need to mask itself' (2003:18). The urgency to stand against these reforms is, for Kincheloe, clear:

If such power is not challenged, the education it decrees is little more than an effort to produce social, political, and academic mind control. (2003:18)

Certainly the passion of Kincheloe's claims is his own. But the case he is making - that it is critical for teachers to develop an identity which positions them as active in the construction of professional knowledge and to do so in ways which resist imposed knowledge - resonates with Bernstein and indeed, Giroux:

Giroux (1981,1997) ... argu[es] that knowledge is an entity which must be constantly challenged, redefined, and negotiated by all participants in social and educational settings. Giroux counsels teachers to resist the domination of the educational experts. In order to resist, teachers ... must gain the ability to

unveil the truth claims of experts and to uncover the genesis of knowledge which has become official. To be critical, teachers must analyse how knowledge conceals or distorts the social, political, and economic *status quo*. (Kincheloe, 2003:103)

This latter call, to bring about a teacher professional identity which foregrounds criticality – that is, one which is capable of engaging with, and resisting, ideological constructions of knowledge - is, for Kincheloe, made possible through the creation of ‘empowered scholar teachers ... researchers and knowledge workers who reflect on their professional needs ... ’ (2003:18). Although Kincheloe shares with Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) the limitation (for this thesis) of a vision located in an environment where teachers have control over curriculum and indeed pedagogy, nevertheless the energetic political and ideological positioning of Kincheloe’s analysis, particularly with regard to power structures, has contributed greatly to the development of the conceptual framework of this section. I now examine Kincheloe’s analysis of power in relation to teacher research.

### ***Teacher researchers and power***

In arguing that teachers are required by the state to occupy a professional role in an educational world defined through positivism and reductionist policies, Kincheloe is concerned to examine the means by which such positionings are secured. He builds the case that the competences movement – that is, the production of explicit and extensive lists of standards which are used to define and boundary professional knowledge under the heading of school improvement - is itself a shield to mask deeper ideological intents relating to the disempowerment and deskilling of teachers:

...the powerful dynamics that shape education ... are typically hidden from everyday experience ... [but] create hierarchies which disempower teachers... (2003:22)

Such hierarchies call on power structures to maintain control: power is present, Kincheloe states, in ‘all educational visions, it is omnipresent in reform proposals, and it is visible in the delineations of what constitutes as educated person’ (2003:17). It is Kincheloe’s (2003:22) contention that one such power structure is knowledge itself, ‘The notion of *knowledge* has become a source of power’. If knowledge is itself centrally implicated in the construction and maintenance of ideological control, then

ownership of that knowledge is key to dominance. For Kincheloe, the logic is straightforward:

Thus teachers ... must participate in the research act in education. They must help determine what is designated educational knowledge.  
(2003:22)

But a paradox exists. If, as Kincheloe says (2003:22), those in power can sustain their position by defining (legitimising) what is understood by knowledge, then attempts to redefine knowledge will be resisted by the ruling hierarchies in order to maintain their position. Research – the generation of knowledge – is thus left in a contested situation. Knowledge generated through research will automatically be opposed by the ruling hierarchies if it fails to support that construction of knowledge; however, in order to maintain intellectual integrity, knowledge created through research must be reported accurately, whether it supports or opposes the legitimised (ruling hierarchies') version. The paradox is to be found both in the position of the researcher and in the knowledge generated. The previous chapter discussed evidence of this dilemma in the context of the BPRS scheme and the control over the reporting of teacher research.

There remains then the conundrum of power and knowledge. If Kincheloe's scholar teachers are to be effective in 'determin[ing] what is designated educational knowledge' through research, there are some formidable power structures to negotiate in terms of embedded and legitimised government knowledge. This is, I would claim, still unresolved and indeed, one of the research questions of this thesis will be concerned with the ways in which teachers experience the tensions surrounding research, knowledge generation and legitimisation.

### ***Teacher researchers and typologies of knowledge***

The fundamental claim of Kincheloe is that teacher research is the means whereby teachers can reclaim the autonomy of informed voice by exercising a conscious awareness of the political and ideological in order to bring about change. But, as we have seen, bringing about change through research also necessitates challenging versions of established knowledge, which have shaped both curriculum knowledge and teacher (professional) knowledge. By positioning the epistemological within the

ideological, Kincheloe draws our attention to the varying constructs of knowledge with which teacher research is involved. Certainly the aim is clear:

Teachers as researchers who are familiar with the philosophical, historical, and political context in which inquiry takes place, will ... be better able to understand their roles as producers of knowledge...  
(2003:94-95)

But as producers of knowledge, teachers too need to be able to explore and articulate their own epistemological positioning. Kincheloe acknowledges this (2003:95) but moves outside of his own work to use the organisational framework for knowledge positioning first posited by Habermas, and does so in order to argue that teacher-research generated-knowledge can and should be given an epistemological identity. Kincheloe, however, identifies a difficulty with this demand:

To put the point simply, what we designate as knowledge is fickle, subject to change given our contexts and interests...  
(2003:93)

In acknowledging this, however, Kincheloe positions himself within a contradiction. If knowledge is, as he says, subject to change, then seeking to locate it securely within any system of categorisation would be self-defeating. His argument, originally designed to demonstrate the falsity of claims made with regard to certainty by government agencies whose policies define educational practices and who are rooted in the positivist traditions of fact and certainty, contends instead that social knowledge is itself only discernible through critical qualitative approaches which prioritise the human (and therefore the unpredictable) above the technical-instrumental-rationalist approach. However, Kincheloe, in developing the ideas of Giroux, needed to be able to demonstrate the impact of the differing epistemologies underpinning research, and therefore needed a mechanism for organising approaches to knowledge construction. His solution was to turn to Habermas and in particular, his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, which, for Kincheloe, links both knowledge and the human:

The premise on which a theory rests involves the idea that knowledge cannot be separated from human interests. Knowledge [Habermas] argued ... has become the product of an empirical-analytic methodology – the impact of the positivistic tradition. ‘Where did this methodology arise?’ he asks. Did it just emerge from trial and error? ... There are three forms of knowledge, Habermas maintains, and all three exist as a result of specific historical

circumstances. As humans struggle to survive and confront the problems which challenge them, they develop particular concerns (interests) which determine their definition of knowledge...  
(2003:93)

### ***Habermas and knowledge-constitutive interests***

In the preface to *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1971:vii) Habermas writes, 'that we disavow reflection is positivism'. The dominance of positivism has been, Habermas contends, because of the conflation of science, and therefore scientific method (positivism) with knowledge. McCarthy (1984:41) confirms this, 'Knowledge was identified with science. The theory of knowledge became the philosophy of science'. As will be seen in Chapter Six, the relationship between science and knowledge will become increasingly significant in re-interpreting the data from this research through a developing theoretical lens.

In proposing a theory of knowledge which challenges positivism (and therefore science) as the sole repository of valid knowledge, Habermas (1984:41) has sought to understand knowledge as, '...the generation of meaning from structures of experience and action'. In other words, McCarthy claims, Habermas is concerned to bring about the development of a theory of knowledge which would:

... accommoda[te] the different interests that knowledge can serve...  
[Habermas'] theory of cognitive [constitutive] interests is an attempt to radicalize epistemology by unearthing the roots of knowledge in life. ... the 'specific view points from which we apprehend reality' have their 'basis in the natural history of the human species'.  
(1984:40/55)

The critique which Habermas brings to knowledge construction through positivism is based on a new categorisation which he first proposed in an inaugural lecture at Frankfurt University in 1965. He challenges the notion of objective knowledge (through positivism) and instead classifies the processes of enquiry into three categories: empirical-analytical sciences, which include both natural and social sciences in that they both seek to produce nomological (science of laws) knowledge; historical-hermeneutic sciences, including the humanities and the historical and social sciences in that they seek interpretive understanding; and the critically oriented sciences, including the critique of ideology (critical social theory) (1984:58).

For each category of enquiry Habermas proposes a connection with a specific cognitive (or constitutive) interest:

...the approach of the empirical-analytic sciences incorporates a *technical* cognitive interest; that of the historical-hermeneutical sciences incorporates a *practical* one; and the approach of the critically oriented sciences incorporates an *emancipatory* cognitive interest.  
(1971:308: italics author's own)

Of particular concern to this thesis is the category referencing emancipatory constitutive interest (though see Appendix 4 for a fuller discussion of Habermas's knowledge constitutive interests).

The *emancipatory constitutive interest* is characterised by self-knowledge or self-reflection (1996:1). It is 'concerned with a form of knowledge which leads to freedom from dominant forces and distorted communication' (2003:94). The domain of the emancipatory stands against such forces:

If humans are to unleash their rational capacities, a special form of knowledge is necessary to abolish these hidden impediments. The emancipatory interest promotes a relationship between knowledge and interest [concern] [that] connects the act of knowing with the immediate utilization of knowledge. The act of knowing is a form of self-reflection that allows an individual to gain an awareness of the connection between knowledge and interest.  
(Habermas, 2003:94)

The emancipatory position addresses directly the relationship between construction of knowledge and ideological function. It seeks to 'dissolve the dominant forces separating humans from an understanding of their own histories and contexts' (*op. cit.*, 2003:94) and as such, knowledge gained leads to a 'transformed consciousness' or '*perspective transformation*' (Habermas, 1996:1).

Teacher knowledge would thus demonstrate a critical engagement with the production and purpose of educational knowledge, whether produced through policy or research. It would be concerned with documenting the forces which limit self-understanding and social awareness and instead, with seeking to make apparent the means of construction which operate on teacher knowledge for the purposes of critical analysis: thus also the associated research methodologies. In the emancipatory form of knowledge, the teacher researcher must be directed to recognising not how to use such knowledge for control, nor for understanding the content of educational policy documents, but the deeper purpose of understanding

the part such phenomena play in the production and maintenance of dominant social conditions.

### **Empowering Professionalism through knowledge: a critical perspective**

I now want to bring together three strands of the thesis discussed thus far. Firstly, Habermas' forms of knowledge would locate the positions argued by Kincheloe, Giroux and indeed Bernstein within the emancipatory knowledge domain: that is, bringing about 'perspective transformation'. Secondly, in demonstrating the significance of practitioner research in knowledge production, the notion of the critical professional has been developed in this chapter: that is, the teacher researcher for whom knowledge is understood to be a construct and thus to be located within an epistemological (and ideological) positioning. Thirdly, in thus considering the construction of knowledge, practitioner researchers must also therefore be concerned with the means of such production – that is, the research traditions which underpin knowledge generation. The emancipatory category has an even stronger call on teacher researchers at this point: if, as Habermas contends, the dominance of the positivist model of knowledge construction has brought about 'the dissolution of epistemology' – that is, that positivism has turned attention away from the philosophical considerations of epistemology since knowledge and science have been conjoined:

...positivism assumes the prohibitive function of protecting scientific inquiry from epistemological self reflection.  
(Habermas, 1984:40)

Instead we are directed to consider 'a restricted examination of questions about the technique of research ... [as] the role of the knower in the process [of research] faded away' (2003:95), so we must ensure that practitioner research not only acknowledges but centralises and validates the 'knower'. It may be worth noting that much of the research literature I referred to earlier as the 'how' literatures, and which I rejected as unhelpful – as is consistent for this thesis, with its examination of knowledge construction which seeks to empower rather than restrict – reflect the 'objective' model of knowledge, thus contributing to the positioning of teacher researchers as having a 'deficit' model of research knowledge, but which, we now see, may well themselves, inadvertently or otherwise, be part of an ideological positioning privileging positivist models of research knowledge. The question of



epistemology thus becomes of importance in teacher research beyond consideration of methods or methodologies, again recalling the under-theorised position of Cochran-Smith and Lytle and their reference to teacher research as 'almost by definition, case study' (1993:59). It may indeed be case study and this is perfectly acceptable, but it is the epistemological underpinning of those case studies which is now revealed as of central importance for teacher research: without that, case study is in danger of becoming narrative without criticality. But what research position do we need to engage with therefore if we are to contribute to both emancipatory and critical teacher research?

### ***Emancipation and teacher research***

No emancipatory system of meaning can be contemplated outside of the Frankfurt School formulation of critical theory... teacher researchers inspired by critical theory seek to expose what constitutes reality for themselves and for the participants in educational situations. ...Teacher researchers informed by critical theory seek a system of meaning which grants ... different ways of knowing, different forms of knowledge, and different approaches to research. (Kincheloe, 2003:57/58/59)

Habermas' 'perspective transformation' certainly resonates with Kincheloe's call for teacher research to produce 'different ways of knowing'; and even though Habermas' critical theory developed to focus on communicative competence and universal pragmatics (that is, 'the theory of the skills and competences that human beings need in order to communicate' (Edgar, 2006:163)), nevertheless, Habermas' earlier intention, that is, to expose the tensions and contradictions in knowledge construction through the 'critical gaze' (2006:72), remain relevant and significant when exploring teacher research. For Habermas, knowledge realities are the products not of 'out-there' knowledge, but of knowledge produced within the specific cultural and historical circumstances:

As Habermas puts this, there can be no such thing as 'pure theory' (1971:315) ... There can therefore be no objective ... for the very categories ... use[d] to organise and express ... knowledge are shaped by the political and cultural tensions of the society within which they are formulated. Knowledge is therefore always value-laden ... (Edgar, 2006:32)

The nature of teacher research, if its imperatives are perspective transformation through critical theory, will, almost inevitably, reveal knowledge constructions whose

purposes reside within the political, producing 'subjugated knowledge' (Kincheloe, 2003:223) as the dominant form of knowledge available to teachers; and concomitantly in producing teacher professional identities which not only conform to the values of such knowledge but indeed seek to confirm and replicate such knowledge within the school system. Kincheloe's claim is bold: that through teacher research, the value systems are made evident and literally power-less:

Having identified power sources and privileged interests, critical researchers ... can move to the praxis-based dimension; they can transform the distorted situation, emancipating [others] and themselves from the repression, the hegemony.  
(2003:223)

It may be, however, that Kincheloe's claim is not only bold, but also questionable: does the act of research really carry within it the emancipatory potential for which Kincheloe argues? Habermas' construction of both emancipatory knowledge and thereby the emancipated actor offer the intellectual organisation of teacher-generated knowledge the opportunity to contribute to such a values system; but we have also seen the panoply of mechanisms within which teachers are required to work, against which they are made accountable and indeed with which they are expected to identify. Similarly, the ways in which the standards and competences, both at training and established teacher levels, act to produce a professional identity of the 'good teacher' are both powerful and difficult to resist if career pathologies are to be avoided. It is a critical question for this thesis, designed to test whether teacher researchers are indeed able to work within a critical framework, and if so, whether Kincheloe's claims for emancipation through critical teacher research can be said to be realistic.

### **Knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research**

This chapter, in seeking to explore knowledge, professionalism, identity and research, has examined the conceptual frameworks of Bernstein, Giroux and Kincheloe, drawing on Habermas to bring about an understanding both of these concepts individually, and, significantly, of the relationships between them. Investigating the relationships has allowed identification of the ways in which the concepts have been co-opted, in a wider context, to bring about a closely woven 'reality', which directly shapes teacher professionalism, identity and knowledge in

accord with the centralisation and accountability agenda. Simultaneously, I have been able to explore the potentiality of alternative knowledge and, indeed, professionalism and identities, made possible through the act of teacher research, which can bring about differing constructions of reality concerned more with empowerment than with centralisation.

I also want to signal at this point two over-arching constructs which have emerged from this chapter, and from Chapter One: those of narrative and power.

### ***Narrative***

It is increasingly evident that two competing narratives boundary the notion of the impact of teacher research on professionalism, knowledge and identity. However, within the two meta-narratives are numerous sub-narratives. For example, claims about teacher research and enhanced professionalism have been made by both meta-narratives, but clearly must be contradictory in intent if their impact is designed to support opposing positions. The complex interweaving of meta-narrative, sub-narrative and opposing narrative serve to represent an additional dimension of investigation.

### ***Power***

In that question two interrogates the notion of discourse and power, the dimension of power is explicit. However, what also seems to be emerging is the theme of power and legitimation. Not only is the question that of teacher access to power discourses, but more widely, and in Foucault's terms, power used as the producer of reality (1979:194), which in turn intersects with legitimation. This critical dimension permeates not only the central concepts of this thesis, but critically brings to the fore the question of discourse *per se*. Both narrative and power/discourse will play increasingly significant roles in the analysis and discussion chapters.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions guiding this investigation then are fourfold:

- 1. In the 'contested' fields of professionalism, knowledge and identity, what can teachers' conceptualisations of those areas tell us about the**

**impact of the various claims made about those areas by policy-makers and by academics?**

- How do teachers conceptualise professionalism and how does this map against our current understanding?
- How do teachers conceptualise teacher knowledge and how does this map against our current understanding?
- How do teachers conceptualise their identity in a professional setting and how does this map against our current understanding?

**2. To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore these concepts?**

**3. What, if any, claims do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives?**

**4. Can the claims about emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?**

However, and as will be seen, as the work developed, the post-modernist analysis which I offer in Chapter Six suggested quite different constructions of teacher voice. For example, implicit in research question one, as it was originally devised, was the belief that there was the possibility of agreement through teacher voice. The post-modern position suggests that the research question would perhaps better have been framed as 'In the fields of professionalism, knowledge and identity, to what extent can it be claimed that teacher voice can be representative of any agreed construct of these notions?'. Such retrospective reframing however can only be indicative of how the later analysis might have reshaped earlier thinking.

I want now to turn to consider research design and methodological approaches.

### Chapter Three: Methods, Methodology and Epistemology

In a very real sense, every piece of research is unique and calls for a unique methodology. We, as the researcher, have to develop it.  
(Crotty, 2005:13-14)

Perhaps the 'uniqueness' of the research design for this project is to be found in its evolutionary nature. The research developed through a series of stages, related partly to policy changes in the wider contexts of education, and partly to the progress of the internal enquiry of my own research.

Teacher research could almost have been described as an idiosyncratic event in schools when I first initiated the teacher research network CamStar in 1999 (Cambridge, School Teachers and Research, discussed in more detail later in this chapter). In the early 2000s teacher research rapidly became a focus for government policy relating to teacher training and development, and the introduction of the Best Practice Research Scholarships (BPRS) legitimated research in schools, and so the nature of this investigation developed as the wider contexts of teacher research changed.

Similarly, the launch of the Teacher Development Agency's 'Professional Standards' in 2007, since revised (2012), defined the notion of professionalism in teaching as part of government's move to set criteria for teacher development, or accountability, depending on the perspective taken, impacted significantly on my research, which originally sought to understand teachers' *own* constructs of professionalism rather than policy constructs.

Professional identity was drawn into the same debates, as it became, for some teachers at least, defined by the obligation to meet the 'Professional Standards' agenda. The place and purpose of my research therefore developed from initially seeking to understand the classroom impact of practitioner research for individual teachers, to an investigation, focusing primarily on the work of Giroux, Kincheloe and Bernstein, drawing on Habermas, of whether teacher research could be said to be the means by which teachers could continue to claim any degree of autonomous professionalism (Kincheloe), through the generation of research-based teacher knowledge (Bernstein's sacred knowledge), and thus position research as an emancipatory act (Giroux/Habermas).

However, the claims made for teacher research as an empowering and emancipatory act were themselves open to challenge. Certainly the work of Kanpol (1998) discussed in Chapter Two and others (see, for example, Ellsworth (1989)), suggests that at the very least, the pragmatics of centring research in the classroom presents significant issues to be addressed, in that the reality of classrooms is at the heart of any call to change. The research design therefore had to be scrupulous in representing these classroom realities, and the only way to do this was by ensuring that the voices heard were those of the teachers themselves.

### **Teachers' Voices: a research dimension**

Each word is a little arena for the clash of and criss-crossing of differently oriented social accents ... a word in the mouth of a particular individual is a product of the living interaction of social forces.  
(Bakhtin, quoted in Clark and Holquist, 1984:220)

The key dimension of the reality of the classroom contexts leads to a further significant point: in all of the debates examined thus far, all with claims to the classroom and dimensions of teacher knowledge, the voice of teachers is rarely heard. Teachers themselves have yet to have significant representation within this debate (see, for example, Swann, McIntyre, Pell, Hargreaves and Cunningham, (2010:549) '... it has been less common for educational academics to ask teachers how they themselves understand 'professionalism' as it relates to their own work'; and Casey (1993:28), 'the words of ordinary teachers ... need to be taken seriously in the academic world') – a situation which has challenging messages for any research attempting to explore teacher emancipation.

The research task then is to attempt to understand teachers' articulated constructs of professionalism, knowledge and identity, and to map these against some of the claims made within the literature review about these areas, with a particular view to examining the place of teacher research as 'empowerment'. However, it must also be acknowledged that the task of eliciting conceptualisations of professional knowledge is complex, not least because, as Kincheloe (2003:15/20) and Giroux (1988:134) point out, access to discourses associated with such explorations are themselves representative of states of control over teacher knowledge: the language and discourses made available to teachers, and indeed their ability to discuss professional knowledge is, Giroux and Kincheloe claim, evidence of an ideological

dimension operating to bring about a hegemonic control of the very notion of professional knowledge. Crotty (2005:87) reinforces this point:

We are essentially languaged beings. Language is pivotal to, and shapes, the situations in which we find ourselves enmeshed, the events that befall us, the practices we carry out and, in and through all this, the understandings we are able to reach.

Language and discourse are critical areas for this research. If, as is claimed, teachers are disenfranchised by the act of restricting access to certain critical discourses, severe ramifications for representation of teacher voice in ways other than through 'approved' discourses are likely. Since, as will be seen, the first stage of the research is based on a series of interviews, which importantly, in moving from semi-structured to unstructured interviews, require teachers to take increasing control of the interview content, the impact of any limitation of articulation would be an issue. Any finding that teacher voice *is* limited is itself interesting and worth recording; but accessing teachers' views beyond the notion of restricted discourse is equally important in order to evaluate the strength of the claims made by Kincheloe, Giroux, Bernstein and indeed Habermas.

In fact, one of the major methodological considerations was to think through whether and how teachers could indeed be supported in accessing a discourse which would ensure teachers' voices would be heard in this research. Although the issue of alternative means of representation other than articulation has been explored to some extent in the visual arts field (see, for example, Knoblauch, Baer, Laurier, Petschke and Schnettier, 2008), and indeed, graphic representation has been established in educational research for some time (see, for example, Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2010) the very nature of this research meant that visual data would not be appropriate – it was *languaged* teacher voice which I sought.

Approaches and rationales for developing interviews within a context of restricted discourse is discussed later in this chapter, but it will also become apparent that the observations of Giroux and Kincheloe on access to discourse were seen to play out in my research: ways of scaffolding discourses, drawn from approaches to exploring literary texts, became a key mechanism in unlocking teacher voice. The teacher voices I was particularly interested in 'unlocking' were those of teachers who were part of the CamStar network of schools.

### ***The Context: Cambridge, School Teachers and Research: CamStar***

CamStar has developed over some 12 years from very modest beginnings when I simply worked with three English teachers interested in researching their practice, to a project involving 32 secondary and 3 primary schools, a network which includes urban, rural, co-educational, single-sex, 11-18 and 11-16, high-achieving schools, and those, at least by Ofsted results, who were less academically successful, working together as a research co-operative, with involvement of all levels of staff, from NQT to head teacher, and with research ranging from very small-scale non-certificated projects to PhD level research. Schools have entered at different stages of the project. All schools agreed to support teachers in research activities, and take turns to host twice-yearly research conferences at which teachers present their research journeys and findings. The schools have an average of 10 to 20 teachers researching each year, and each teacher receives a termly supervision with me, as well as on-going email and phone/skype support. The close working relationship afforded by CamStar is advantageous for this research, in that a good working relationship has already been established, but also raises issues relating to power dynamics in data collection, which I discuss later in this chapter with particular reference to interviews. Although all schools follow a common and agreed organisational approach with a school-based research co-ordinator working together with myself as project co-ordinator, the actual playing out of approaches to research in schools are markedly individual.

My research took place from 2009-2011 within opportunities to participate offered to all CamStar schools. This was not to establish generalisability, contentious in qualitative research (see later in this chapter), but rather to generate a data set which might usefully address comparability and translatability (see, for example, Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007:137).

### **The Stages of the Research: an overview**

The research design (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Thomas, 2009; Creswell, 2005; Robson, 2002; Crotty, 2005) for this project developed in three stages, themselves evolving as the research developed and progressed.



The data were collected over all three stages, with two major data collection approaches: Stages 1 and 2 through interviews; Stage 3 through a card sort with teacher commentary.

- In Stage 1, 18 teachers from 6 schools took part, and the interviews were conducted over a period of five 5 weeks during November and December 2009.
- In Stage 2, 29 teachers from 6 schools (though not necessarily the same schools) were interviewed, and the interviews were conducted over 9 weeks during the period March to July 2010.
- In Stage 3, 9 teachers from 4 schools took part during the period March to July 2011.

In Stages 1 and 2 some overlap of teachers took place, with 9 teachers being involved with both stages, but as will be discussed later, I was reliant on the pragmatics of teacher availability, so that this overlap was opportune rather than planned. Similarly, Stage 3, the card sort, had some overlap of 6 teachers from Stages 1 and 2, but again this was serendipitous. Additionally a number of teachers who had been involved in the research in stages 1 and 2 had moved into other schools or even left teaching over the period of my research so that attempting to involve the same teachers would have been impossible. I have not therefore attempted to track continuity or discontinuity of individuals over time.

The first stage, contextualised in the very early stages of the project, sought to explore the ways in which teachers themselves understood the purpose and impact of practitioner research. The second stage was seeded by the first stage results and sought to develop in more depth the ways in which teachers linked practitioner research with professionalism and identity, and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the claims of Giroux, Kincheloe and Bernstein with regard to teacher research. The third stage developed directly out of the ways in which Stage 2 demonstrated Giroux's claims about teachers' access to discourse. The inarticulacy evident in many Stage 2 teachers' responses to some of the interview questions relating, for example, to teacher knowledge, suggested that in order to access teacher voice, some way of providing a language to support teachers in exploring the claims relating to professionalism, identity and teacher knowledge was needed. My

approach, that of card sorts (discussed later), would serve as a means of access for teachers in talking about professionalism, identity and teacher knowledge.

Each stage had a particular focus and served to inform the development of the next stage. An overview of each stage is presented below to demonstrate the ways in which each segued into the next. The framing of the research design and the methodological choices of each stage are then explored in the sections following.

Mindful of the need to maintain good relationships with all CamStar schools, I indicated that I would work with whichever schools responded to the invitation to participate. With Stage 1, when fewer CamStar schools were in the network, this was a satisfactory approach. By Stage 2, when more schools had joined, I restricted involvement to the first 6 schools to respond. For Stage 3, which I knew would produce substantial data, I limited involvement to the first 4 to respond. I made these criteria clear in my invitation.

The table (Table 3:1) which follows shows the three stages of data collection and analysis, and the associated time line, followed by a brief overview of each stage.

### Stages of Data Collection

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Collection</b>	<b>Focus of collection</b>	<b>Analytic focus</b>
<b>Stage 1</b>			
November 2009 – December 2009	Interviews with 18 teachers from 6 (CamStar) schools	Place, purpose, sustainability of teacher research.	Identify key issues for teachers relating to the purpose and impact of practitioner research.  Use as part of data feedback in Stage 2.

<b>Stage 2</b>			
March 2010- July 2010	<b>Semi-structured interviews</b> with 29 teachers in 6 CamStar schools.	Revisit teachers' views on teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity. Place and purpose of teacher research. (Bernstein/Kincheloe/Giroux).	Theme and code responses. Map against claims from literature. Analysis taken forward into stage three.
<b>Stage 3</b>			
March 2011 – July 2011	Teacher <b>card sorts</b> using framework of prepared statements which build conceptual frameworks seeded by Stage 2 research. 9 teachers in 4 CamStar schools.	Teacher voice on knowledge, professionalism, identity, research, supported through 'languaged' statements. Opportunity to create own statements.	Critical engagement by teachers with teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity, and the place and purpose of teacher research (if any) in these.

Table 3:1

### **Stage 1**

The contradictions and tensions, yet also positive messages I was receiving from teachers about research at this stage, presented as an opportunity to engage with the debates on professionalism, teacher knowledge and identity and in turn, the place of research within these constructs. Importantly for this research, I wanted to explore these ideas by accessing teachers' voices within these debates – voices which Giroux and Kincheloe claimed had been silenced, but whose legitimacy was central to my own understanding of the issues. The range of unexpected and quite differing responses from those teachers within CamStar to both the act of

researching and the meanings they brought to it thus led me to understand that I needed to explore more explicitly the place of teacher research in schools and the ways it might impact on professionalism, teacher knowledge and identity. I therefore decided to develop a second tranche of interview data in order to explore further the areas of professionalism, teacher knowledge and identity, and the place of teacher research, in Stage 2 (see Appendix 5 for a fuller discussion of Stage 1).

## **Stage 2**

The second stage was seeded by the first stage results and sought to explore in more depth the ways in which teachers linked practitioner research with professionalism and identity, and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed particularly with the claims of Giroux, Kincheloe and Bernstein with regard to teacher research.

I was still interested in the teachers' own views about the impact of any research they were undertaking and in the structures schools offered to those who were engaged in research but wanting to develop the research further to understand teacher constructs of teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity, and to explore the claims relating to teacher research on empowerment and emancipation, and the significance of the limitations suggested by Kanpol (1998). Interviews were the prime means of capturing those voices.

Mindful of the ethical stance of open access that I had previously adopted, I again invited all schools involved at this stage (25 schools) to take part in the research. In inviting all CamStar schools to take part in a much more extended interview activity, I stated that for practical reasons, I would work with the first 6 schools to respond. I chose not simply to return to the original schools since some time had passed since the original interviews, and as well as significant staff changes (including head teachers) taking place in the meantime, schools had also begun to change status (e.g. to Leading Edge – government identified high performing schools networked to share practice with other institutions) so that I could not confidently have claimed that there were any parallel experiences over time to be explored. I received responses from 4 schools on the same day, and another 2 schools that evening, and so these became my sample schools.

It would not have been possible to select a representative sample across all types of school present in the network without working with a very high number of schools, which in data terms would have been unmanageable. However, this convenience sample allowed me to access a wide range of teachers with varying involvement in research. Of the 6 CamStar schools that responded, 4 overlapped with the previous stage, with 11 teachers from across these schools volunteering to be interviewed again. Again for practical reasons, the 6 CamStar schools co-ordinators set up for me a series of teacher interviews of about an hour each. I asked that all teachers be invited, and set no limit on the numbers I was willing to interview over that day. I interviewed 29 teachers in all. The large size of the group being interviewed was entirely due to the response of the teachers who had volunteered to participate.

Without exception, the questions on their own research and on school structures demonstrated the highly engaged nature of their involvement in teaching and learning at a practitioner research level; but when asked about teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity, Giroux's predicted restricted discourse was the most evident outcome. Almost all teachers interviewed, when asked about teacher knowledge, for example, replied saying that that was 'a hard question' and that they would 'need time to think about that'. Although some – a very few – went on to develop a tentative reply, most teachers did not develop their answers to that question at any point, despite prompts. Whilst this in itself was important to note, my research questions were in danger of remaining unanswered, other than by silence.

### **Stage 3**

The third stage developed directly out of the ways in which Stage 2 demonstrated Giroux's claims about restricted discourse through the inarticulacy I had encountered with responses from teachers in this group. My approach, that of card sorts, was drawn from teaching literature where I had encountered similar issues with A-level students in accessing complex texts: in providing a language through a series of statements, I had found that students were able to discuss ideas relating to those literary texts more readily and with greater precision, though the card statements had to be carefully crafted so that they were stimulus points rather than directives. I hoped, following a similar approach, that the card sort would serve as a means of

access for teachers in talking about professionalism, identity, teacher knowledge and research. This process was more time-intensive than the interviews, and in the end, although numbers of teachers replied to the invitation to take part, pragmatics of access and time available meant that I worked with 9 teachers in 4 schools.

## Data Analysis

The data collected were all qualitative, and as I was seeking to understand the individual's experiences in order to illuminate the wider contexts in which they worked, I used semi-structured interviews as the major data collection in Stages 1 and 2, which were transcribed. Stage 3, in reflecting the issue of access to discourse, I used a card sort with prepared statements and a teacher commentary on that sort activity which was recorded and transcribed. Although this was not an interview, there were echoes of that approach: teachers responded to a set of prompts designed to elicit personal perspectives on key issues. The resulting commentary did not include prepared interviewer prompts as a semi-structured interview would, or expect an exchange of questions and views as an unstructured interview might, but as part of undertaking the card sort and then commenting on the ordering, teachers would often offer an observation which required a response from me, even if it was a neutral comment.

However, in that I was dealing in each stage with transcribed teacher responses, I used a coding and theming approach (Creswell, 2002, Robson, 2002).

Coding is the process of segmenting and labelling [sic] text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data. ... As with all qualitative research, a small number of themes, such as five to seven, are identified by the researcher.

(Creswell, 2002: 237/482-483)

Thus the transcribed interviews were analysed for key words or phrases which were repeated across interviewees. The key words were grouped into larger themes, which then themselves were inspected for possibility of overlap and thus open for consolidation, using 'constant comparison' (Thomas, 2009:198). Each stage carried with it though particular data analysis approaches:

### *Stage 1*

For the first set of interview analysis, I used Atlas, software designed to support data analysis through use of generated codes and themes, but found that the data input was unprofitably time consuming, as the software is designed for multi-level analysis, and for this research, opportunities for analysis by gender and so forth were not required. However, from this initial analysis there were revealed a set of themes with far less emphasis on systems and sustainability, my initial foci, than I had anticipated. The focus changed to teacher research as a means of investigating professionalism, knowledge and identity, rather than an exploration of 'approaches to'. Thus Stage 1 data served not to inform this thesis as it now stands, so much as shape a new direction for the research.

### *Stage 2*

For Stage 2, the different focus entailed a different set of interview questions. Additionally, a far larger group of interviews were undertaken. I designed the research questions to respond to both the themes emerging from Stage 1 (knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research) and included quotes from the relevant literatures as part of a stimulus strategy. The coding activity here was time consuming in that the quantity of data generated was significant, and the teachers' answers often intertwined the themes. However the data yielded was also extremely rich. I took each transcript and colour coded the teachers' answers against the headings knowledge (green), professionalism (blue), identity (yellow) and research (turquoise). I analysed the codes into larger categories – themes – and checked the themes to ensure that they were as economical as was possible. I then created a themed grid with the sub headings (themes) on the left hand side and the appropriate comments on the right, identified by the number of the interview transcript, thus building a profile of themes and supporting evidence. For each theme, I mapped the data against my research questions, and then selected what I felt were the most illuminating responses, including those which stood against the mainstream responses. I once again followed Thomas' 'constant comparison' method, visiting and revisiting materials until I felt that I had exhausted the available data and the themes were secure in representing the analysed data. Where I had

comments which did not fit into any of these themes, I retained what I felt might be significant comments in a separate section under the grid for consideration after themed analysis. (See Appendix 6 for an example of coding: knowledge). On occasions, I used these quotes to support claims made by other teachers, but both the pragmatics of word length and to avoid repetition meant that these quotes remained largely outside of the themed analysis.

### *Stage 3*

Stage 3 data analysis brought specific challenges. In order to address the interview silences, I devised a card sort based on the literatures I had used in my literature review chapters, and asked teachers to order in terms of their own preferences ('agree' to 'not agree'), and explain their choices. I thus had two sets of data: ordered card sorts, detailing five numbered sets of comments, each on knowledge, professionalism, identity and research (see Appendix 10) and a teacher commentary accompanying each card sort activity. At the time of the card sort, I took photographs of the re-ordered cards, and noted down each teacher's choices. In analysing this data, I produced a grid which detailed the selected order of each teacher, using the numbered statements, and which allowed an across the board comparison as well as analysis of individual responses. I then analysed responses for both frequency and rejection. Against this, I set a teacher commentary analysis, where, following a similar process to that of interviews, I coding and themed the comments, although this time against the sets of card sort comments I had produced. I then mapped them against the grids to produce both an individual analysis and an across the board analysis of reasons and responses given by the teachers. The final stage was to use the teacher comments to explore and explain the card sort choices, and to identify either congruence or dissonance.

The final analysis (Chapter Five) demonstrates representation and discussion of these outcomes.

## **Sampling**

### ***CamStar schools***

In choosing CamStar schools, I was aware that there could be an issue in that all these schools were already committed to teacher research, at least at one level, and



thus the teachers taking part might be said to be biased toward teacher research. However, as will be seen later in this chapter, not all teachers *were* research oriented (some referring to themselves as ‘research cynics’); schools did not possess any policy statements which suggested a school-wide approach to research; and nor did CamStar schools present as taking a homogenous approach to practitioner research. What CamStar schools did have in common was a research co-ordinator and a group of teachers who had undertaken, or were undertaking research. The development of the CamStar project is precisely towards agreed approaches to teacher research, but it is a work in progress rather than a work completed. Additionally, and for pragmatic purposes, gaining access to schools for extended research has become increasingly difficult as additional demands are made on schools almost on a daily basis. I knew that CamStar schools would be prepared to allow me such access, and that the co-ordinators would be in a position to ensure teachers could be timetabled to take part in interviews. The alternative - accessing a group of ‘non-CamStar’ schools - immediately demonstrated the pragmatic difficulties, which might have been insurmountable as changing circumstances in schools (e.g. a change of head teacher, which did indeed happen in two of the CamStar schools) might have dictated reduction or even abandonment of certain school data populations. Neither could a selection of non-CamStar schools confidently be said to be ‘representative’ of any wider population, since schools are such varied and complex institutions. As Robson points out:

The exigencies of carrying out real world studies can mean that the requirements for representative sampling are very difficult, if not impossible, to fulfil.  
(2002:266)

Within CamStar schools, selection of teachers to take part in my research was again largely driven by practicalities of timetabling and access, and therefore I was dependent on the good will of the schools concerned and the willingness of CamStar co-ordinators to timetable those teachers both interested in taking part and ‘free’ of teaching commitments at that time. As such, teachers in this research can be said to be a convenience sample of some 45 teachers, not all of whom could be described as ‘pro-research’ and indeed at least two of whom declared they had volunteered to be interviewed precisely because they did not find research to be useful to classroom teachers and wanted to put that point of view forward. Cohen *et al.* (2007)

characterise 'convenience sampling' (Robson, 2002:265) as 'opportunistic ... selecting from whoever happens to be available'.

CamStar schools thus presented a practical and positive research population on which to draw for research data.

### ***CamStar teachers***

Working through the research co-ordinators, and as part of my ethical stance, I invited all teachers, including all heads, to be involved in the project by taking part in interviews.

I had anticipated that two or three teachers from each school would be available. In the event, there were over 50 responses in all, including the head teachers. Practicalities of timetabling meant that I could meet with 30. The interviews took place over 3 weeks, and there were some changes to the interview timetables both before and on the day of interview. One head was unavailable, and one declined to be interviewed on the day because of workload, though he was happy to allow all the teacher interviews to go ahead in his school. Two schools had requests from five teachers who, though originally unavailable when invited, later wanted to be involved and were added on to the research interview schedule; on the days of interview a further three teachers were unavailable for a variety of reasons, including illness, so that I interviewed 29 teachers in all.

The demographic of the teachers involved in Stage 2 interviews is indicated in Appendix 7.

### **Validity and reliability**

Sampling inevitably also raises the issues of validity and reliability. As Cohen *et al.* (2007:133) point out:

Threats to validity and reliability can never be erased completely; rather the effects of these threats can be attenuated by attention [to them] throughout a piece of research.

Validity is not a single construct. It has different implications for both qualitative and quantitative research. For my research, located in a qualitative approach, validity can be addressed through some key qualities relating to the research itself, '...honesty,

depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, triangulation...' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:133).

In that this project is reported transparently, with reflection on both the successes and limitations of the research, it can be claimed to be honest; similarly, the data collected are presented as clearly and as cogently as possible, framed by the literature and the discussions therein, and the research can therefore be said to offer depth in its links to previous scholarly works, and in extending the focus of those works to explore teachers' perspectives of key constructs. It seeks to offer a richness of account in addressing the issues through teachers' perspectives and in the establishment of the central area of teacher voice as a research mechanism. The scope of the data, in terms of time and the bounded nature of the research area, is significant in that it allowed data collection to take place over a period of some 3 years and in establishing the as-yet-unexplored area of the relationships between constructs of knowledge, professionalism, professional identity and teacher research. Internal validity – that the explanation of the research data is actually sustained by the data sets (see, for example, Robson, 2002:103) – is evident in that the questions for this research were generated by the data themselves (see the later discussions of stages of research evolution). Triangulation was achieved using data from the three stages of research, drawing on a range of research methods, and using the findings to confirm – or develop – existing results. Similarly, construct validity – that the researchers' definition of a construct accords with wider understandings – was established through the dedication of a substantial section of the literature review chapters to exactly that. Cohen *et al.* (2007:137) further claim that construct validity is established by correlation of the researchers' understanding of a construct with that of the participants. This was a particularly interesting area to explore for this research, since it was the constructs themselves which were subject to examination in relation to consistency in understanding across all participants – it was this laying bare of assumptions and understandings, the critical interpretivist perspective which will be discussed later, which might be said to be the defining approach to this research, and thus the notion of construct validity was forensically addressed. Although claims are made for a great number of other types of validity (see Cohen *et al.*, 2007:133) as Robson (2002:93) demonstrates, it is internal and construct validity which are most significant for qualitative research. The related

concept of reliability in qualitative (as opposed to quantitative) research is itself contested with regard to its appropriateness since no genuine replication is possible (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:148). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest replacing reliability with 'credibility', 'trustworthiness' and 'dependability'. Certainly, as I will be discussing later, this study will make claims to trustworthiness – that is, according to Robson (2002:100), the ability to answer the following:

Have you tried to explore, describe or explain in an open and unbiased way? Or are you more concerned with delivering the required answer or selecting the evidence to support a case? If you can't answer these questions with ... yes and no respectively, then your findings are essentially worthless in enquiry terms.

In that I have already established that the views of teachers on the key research constructs have been reported honestly and represented accurately and without bias, I would confidently answer 'yes and no' respectively to these questions. However, I would also have to layer that honesty of reporting by pointing out that such honesty has to reside within the notion of interpretation, since that is the theoretical lens which informed my research, and thus to state that honesty is an informing principle has to be contextualised within the framework of interpretation: indeed, as Cohen *et al.* (2007:21) state, 'Reality is multi-layered and complex'. Thus, where I have selected quotes from teachers it has certainly been with the intention to represent views honestly, even when that representation has confounded some earlier made claim – but it has been an *interpretation* of meaning. I have 'tried to explore, describe or explain in an open and unbiased way' but also to acknowledge that the construction of meaning is far from a straightforward activity – itself, I hope, an honest approach.

### **Thick Description**

In that the issues being explored are in themselves complex, and their relationships complicated, such an interpretative lens carries an imperative for data which will allow 'thick description', a term coined by Gilbert Ryle in a lecture in 1968 and later reproduced in his *Collected Papers* (1971) to illustrate the need for interpretation rather than reporting (the 'winking boy' argument). Geertz (1973:2-3), in drawing on Ryle's notion, describes thick description as:

... piled-up structures of inference and implications ... a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render.

Data which allow for thick description seek to capture '... diversity, variability, creativity, individuality, uniqueness and spontaneity...' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:169). Acknowledgement of the issues of validity and reliability in interviews as a key method for this research is discussed later in this chapter.

### **Epistemological, theoretical and methodological considerations**

The three stages of the research, whilst discrete in themselves, each informed the next stage following, taking and developing the key constructs which emerged. The stages themselves, however, were research data *processes*, which were framed by the wider consideration of epistemology and theoretical perspective:

... epistemology is the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective; the theoretical perspective, the philosophical stance informing the methodology; the methodology the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and the methods, the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data... (Crotty, 2005:3)

In that my interest in professional knowledge locates itself within the belief that knowledge is not a single, 'given' entity but rather a phenomenon constructed by interaction between individuals, my epistemological stance is fundamental to the entire research design. In any discussion about epistemology and research design, I am therefore seeking a position which allows me to demonstrate how and why this position underpins my research.

Crotty holds that epistemology refers to the 'stance' (2005:9) adopted by the researcher and relates to an understanding of the ways in which knowledge is held to exist. Crotty gives three examples of such stances: objectivism ('...holds that meaning, and therefore meaningful reality, exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness' (2005:8)); constructionism ('... truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world' (2005:8)); and subjectivism ('... meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject' (2005:9)). He acknowledges these stances are 'not watertight compartments' and that the three examples are only that:

other epistemological stances are not denied (2005:9). The significance of the epistemological stance is, however, paramount:

Is there objective truth that we need to identify, and can identify, with precision and certitude? Or are there just humanly fashioned ways of seeing things whose processes we need to explore and which we can only come to understand through a similar process of meaning making? And is this making of meaning a subjective act essentially independent of the object, or do both subject and object contribute to the construction of meaning?  
(2005:9)

The knowledge I am seeking to explore is variously constructed through different agencies and with different import. The methods and methodologies I will be using will therefore need to have their roots in a belief that knowledge is constructed within a social and political context and, as such, the 'subject' (the teachers) can only be said to be engaging with subjective 'realities' of the world, since these realities are themselves constructions.

This research is not based on any idea of objectivism, in that the essential belief is that meaning is created and shaped by individuals and interactions between individuals. Such realities, I would contend, are not 'out there' to be found but rather are constructed by individual interactions:

... [it is] the view that *all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world and transmitted within an essentially social context.*  
(Crotty, 2005:42: italics author's own)

Insofar as this research is seeking to understand knowledge as a created phenomenon, epistemologically therefore it is rooted in constructivism:

Constructivist researchers ... consider that the task of the researcher is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge. The research participants are viewed as helping to construct the 'reality' with the researchers.  
(Robson, 2002:27)

However, as indicated earlier, I also want to bring a particular lens to examine constructivism – that of critical inquiry. The research project is concerned with exploring the claims made by Giroux and Kincheloe in terms of hegemonic control of knowledge and the role of practitioner research as a means of re-establishing

professional autonomy over teacher knowledge. Indeed, Kincheloe (2003:51) claims that:

A primary purpose of the critical constructivist approach to teacher research is to connect teachers to the nature and formation of ... knowledge and, in turn, to learn how to employ it for maximum benefit.

In claiming criticality as central to the production of professional teacher knowledge (Kincheloe, 2003:57), any research approach which did not engage with such a dimension would be uncomfortably positioned in not having a means of addressing the central claims of Giroux and Kincheloe in a meaningful way:

... it may be intellectually immature if we neglect an analysis of the ideological forces which define our methodology, shape our logic, anesthetize our ethical sense and select our questions.  
(Kincheloe, 2003:58)

In meeting the challenge of Kincheloe to take on the notion of the ideological, it becomes important to add the component of criticality to the methodological approach. This, however, is not the same position as that represented by critical theory: rooting the research within a critical theoretical position would itself fail to acknowledge the criticisms levelled by Kanpol (1998) in terms of the neglect of the practical, '... applying critical theory to education can be criticized for its limited comments on practice.' (Cohen *et al.*,2007:32).

Instead, I wanted to hold a position where criticality informed a constructivist position – a more subtle weaving of two approaches which would allow me both to retain the constructivist perspective, but also to draw on the criticality which would enable me to address the notion of ideology as shaping consciousness. Critical constructivism would allow an exploration of Kincheloe and Giroux in terms of teachers' perspectives of professional knowledge construction and ownership, and, furthermore would lead us to a point where representations of knowledge could be recognised as ideological, and therefore open to interrogation, a position which, in Kincheloe's (2003:178) terms, '... involves the free, participatory process of making meaning and creating values', and, for this research, allow me potentially to map teacher awareness of knowledge construction within frameworks which incorporate the political and ideological, addressing Giroux's and Kincheloe's claims in terms of teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity.

## Theoretical perspectives

### ***Constructivism and Interpretivism***

Within a critical constructivist position, knowledge is understood as constructed, and as such constructions are also open to analysis, the claim is that examination of policy is also an examination of ideological positioning of knowledge construction. Understanding knowledge construction through this perspective serves to reveal how teachers' constructs of professionalism and teacher identity are shaped – Foucault's (1979) power/knowledge. The commitment of this project is to gain an understanding of these events through the 'eyes of the participants' that is, the teachers, 'Reality is never simply the 'objective datum' but it is also people's perception of it' (Freire, 1985:15).

The theoretical perspective constitutes the lens of enquiry and interpretation that operate to reveal both the position of the researcher and the narrative structures that the researcher is constructing. In seeking an integrity of design and reporting, it is therefore important to explain clearly the perspectives adopted:

Inevitably, we bring a number of assumptions to our chosen methodology. We need, as best as we can, to state what these assumptions are. This is precisely what we do when we elaborate our theoretical perspective. Such an elaboration is a statement of the assumptions brought to the research task and reflected in the methodology as we understand and employ it ... that is, our view of the human world and social life within that world...  
(Crotty, 2005:7)

Critical enquiry as a theoretical perspective differs from critical theory in that its intention is not to *bring about* 'the emancipation of individuals and groups in an egalitarian society' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:26) but rather to *examine whether and how* the claims Kincheloe and Giroux bring to teacher knowledge and teacher research in terms of emancipation might be said to have an impact on teachers' lived realities: that is, are these claims revealed or dismissed through teacher constructs of knowledge, professionalism and identity? Critical theory would be inappropriate as a perspective for this research too since it is described as '...explicitly prescriptive and normative, entailing a view of what behaviour in a social democracy *should* entail ...' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:26), when this research is concerned more with teacher-driven constructs of knowledge, professionalism and identity.



Understanding teacher perspectives is central, but understanding itself has to adopt a theoretical perspective: if it is believed that there is a 'truth out there', which might be a blunt version of objectivism, then understanding will be seen as a sort of approximation of an extant truth. If, however, as is the case with this research, understanding is an act of interpretation of meaning, that is, the meaning teachers have attached to knowledge, then no single truth exists: representation of understanding has to attempt to reflect a multi-layered reality; in this sense we can claim that the theoretical perspective adopted here is that of interpretivism:

The key is *understanding*. What understandings do the people we are talking to have about the world, and how can we in turn understand these?  
(Thomas, 2009:75: italics author's own)

Interpretivism is entirely consistent with constructivism as an epistemological position; indeed they can be understood as synonymous, 'Constructionism ... flags ... that reality is socially constructed ... it is also commonly called 'interpretive' (Robson, 2002:27). Interpretivism then is not simply representation *of* but, importantly, shapes meaning. However, as Crotty (2005:60) warns, '...interpretivism is overwhelmingly oriented towards an uncritical exploration of cultural meaning...'. This is an inconsistent position for this thesis: whilst certainly truth and realities are understood to be multiple and constructed, simply recording the meanings is an inadequate position. This research is not looking uncritically at the shaping forces but rather takes the position that as teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity are contested, allocation of meaning is a deliberate and conscious event, and, as such, revealing the power relationships which act upon knowledge is in itself emancipatory. However, bringing about revolutionary working practices for teachers is not the intent of this research. In this way, the theoretical perspective stops short of critical theory; but in that it is seeking to investigate the ways in which we might say such choices are shaped by an ideological perspective, it can be deemed critical enquiry. In turn, the criticisms of Kanpol should be reinterpreted as relating to intent to transform rather than intent to reveal: the former, they claim, is unrealised; the question for this research is whether the latter is realisable in theory, and indeed, in practice. It may be said therefore that the theoretical perspective of this research is that of critical interpretivism. A pragmatic example would be that one set of research topics selected by a teacher is not claimed to be better (or worse) than another set; rather

that the selection of research area reveals something about the ways in which that teacher understands knowledge, professionalism and identity.

It is perhaps worth noting here the explicit reference I make to the intrusion of self into the research. My theoretical positioning resonates with self as researcher as a legitimated position, with an emphasis therefore not on the (unsustainable) position of achieving neutrality, but rather on ensuring transparency of decision-making processes and making explicit, insofar as it is achievable, the impact of myself as researcher on the data collection and analysis. Indeed, as Crotty (2005:44) states, 'We construct meaning', and inevitably, 'we' includes the researcher, whose very decision-making process of focus and approaches to data collection and analysis has already acted to represent the world selectively, and, as such, shaped any meaning emerging. My use of interviewing has to be actively acknowledged as a method which inevitably involved me in interpretation. However, in that I sought to represent authentic teacher voice, my interviewing strategies had to be designed in ways which would allow teachers maximum opportunity to ensure that their voices were heard in my research.

## **Stages and methods**

### **Stage 1**

Data collection in this stage was entirely through interview. Substantial research literatures exist on approaches to interviewing (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:349-382; Creswell, 2005:214-219) though much of this literature is concerned with pragmatics (see, for example, Taber: 2007), or with describing the differences between structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Robson, 2002:269-291) and there is considerable interest in approaches to coding (Denscombe, 2008:290-295; Cohen *et al.* 2007:477-81/483-7). Some literatures concern themselves with power dynamics (discussed below) and with ethical issues (Creswell, 2005:382-3): ethical approaches to my research are discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Of concern too with regard to interviewing as a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2005:214) was the need to consider generalisability. However, insofar as my own research does not make claims to generalisability, but rather to 'trustworthiness' (Bassegy, 1999:74), I did not feel that the use of interviews as a research method was in any way compromised by this issue.

Perhaps the greatest contributory factor to the selection of interview as a method was to be found in the fact that teacher voice is central to this research: it was teacher voice which would establish the reality of any theoretical positions in the classroom and demonstrate the extent to which claims relating to emancipation had any realistic place in teachers' lives. As such, the opportunity to discuss directly with teachers their own perspectives was an imperative, and interviews the most suitable medium for capturing authentic teacher voice. As Kvale (1996:11) states, interviews are:

... attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world...

However, this statement also draws attention to a dimension of this research which has been both acknowledged at one level, but remains unspoken at another: that of power.

It is true to say that issues of power interweave themselves throughout this thesis: the notion, for example, that teacher research is in itself an act of empowerment as it reveals the ideology of control over knowledge, professionalism and identity enacted by policy (Kincheloe); access to a professional discourse which acts upon identity as a further means of empowerment (Bernstein); and, for Giroux, empowerment through the (re) claiming of the teacher as intellectual. Later in the thesis, as will be seen, Foucault's (1980) notion of power plays a key role in my analysis of data. However, what have not been made evident are the power relations which reside in research, and specifically in the case of this thesis, within interviews. As Kvale (1996:4) claims, '...the power dynamics in research interviews, and potential oppressive use of interview-produced knowledge, tend to be left out in literature on qualitative research.' I want now to consider the power dynamics of interviewing.

### ***Interviewing and power dynamics***

Overarching dimensions of power dynamics exist: see for example Elwood and Martin's (2000) 'dynamics of location, a focus on feminist research' (Wilkinson: 1998), and access to knowledge (Burgess, 1989). In this section however, I am concerned with the particulars of power within the specific context of my own research – interviewing within CamStar schools.

The first set of power dynamics which can be said to exist is located within the context of the research: CamStar schools. In that CamStar has a whole-school profile, being interviewed by me might well have generated a sense that answers could render participants vulnerable within the school environment. It could be claimed that teachers would seek to protect themselves by masking or modifying any responses likely to be controversial. Although I sought to guard against this defensive response mechanism by providing assurances about anonymity, evidence of an awareness that a power dynamic existed was clear when teachers made comments aside, such as: 'I'll probably lose my job for saying this' or 'I hope the head isn't going to see this'. Having noted this, however, these statements are also indicative that the teachers were, by and large, willing to 'take risks' in answering the questions with a degree of truth which could have left them feeling vulnerable. There is a clear relationship here with ethical concerns: the position of trust invested in any researcher within schools is one which demands a professional sensitivity to the position of teachers, and whilst the pursuit of truth is not to be compromised, nevertheless, protection of individuals through anonymity has to be a key component of any interviewing process.

The second set of power dynamics which relate specifically to this research concerns my own working relationship with teachers in CamStar schools. I had supervised a number of research projects with the teachers I interviewed, and even when the interviewees were not research active, or were 'research cynics', it was very possible that I would have met them within the school in other contexts on my various visits. The dilemma here, variously referred to as 'interviewer effect' (Denscombe, 2008:184) or the 'Heisenberg effect' (Bogdan and Blikien, 1982) is that, as someone who was known to these teachers and who had a professional working relationship with them, was I more likely to elicit responses which the teachers knew would meet approval (or perhaps the converse in some instances). Certainly, in developing the questions, I was aware that I was occasionally asking about areas which I had previously discussed with the teachers during supervisions; indeed, some acknowledged this in their replies, saying, 'Ah yes, we've talked about this before haven't we?'. I managed this situation to some extent by prefacing all interviews by saying that I was genuinely interested to hear what the teachers had to say because many of these questions I was about to ask I did not myself know the

answers to; and in my previous working relationships with teachers I had always been scrupulous about presenting supervision as an act of shared exploration of an area, always acknowledging the legitimacy of their views. The answers I received in interview were reassuring: for example, two teacher responses noted, 'Well, we have disagreed on this in the past' or 'I know what you think on this and you know I don't see it that way'. However, teachers also demonstrated agreement with previously expressed opinions. It is not possible to state categorically that these agreements were not simply teachers seeking to please the interviewer. However, I would contend that all research responses are potentially open to distortion (e.g. questionnaire responses which are deliberately misleading (Robson, 2002:233)) and that interviews do at least offer the potentiality of 'reading' the person rather than only their words (Thomas, 2009:161). Ethically, developing trust relationships as part of the interview is fraught with contradictions and most research texts advise on building such trust relationships (Thomas, 2009:161), but at the same time, such 'manufactured' trust could be seen as a manipulative strategy designed to facilitate interviewee openness. CamStar did at least have an authentic trust relationship, but this did not necessarily obviate the ambiguous power dynamic working within this context.

A third set of power dynamics relates to the use of and access to the knowledge gained through interviewing (Burgess, 1989) – that is, who owns, and who ascribes meaning to that data. In that the interviewer has an ethical responsibility to ensure that the transcribed tapes are accurate and therefore the ethical position is to return and check the tapes with the teachers for accuracy, as I did, nevertheless, data gained in this way cannot be subject to change after the event by the interviewee. I set out too to check that the teachers were still content with their interviews being used: in that sense, the teachers still owned their data. However, it was unlikely that any teacher would withdraw their interview transcript at this stage. Ethically, I also offered teachers full access to all or any part of my writing up of their interviews in this thesis. Again, all the teachers involved were aware of the purpose and potential audience of their interviews. However, what could not be negotiable was that I 'own' the writing up of the materials, the interpretation of findings, and ultimately, the dissemination of those data. To this extent then, the power dynamic of data analysis and dissemination still exists.

It might be said that all research involves a power dimension (e.g. Ball, 1990) and that that is inescapable. Indeed, Denscombe (2008:184) states:

Research on interviewing has demonstrated fairly conclusively that people respond differently depending on how they perceive the person asking the questions. In particular, the *sex*, the *age*, and the *ethnic origins* have a bearing on the amount of information people are willing to divulge and their honesty about what they reveal... From the perspective of the small scale project researcher there is a limit to what can be done ...

The position I have adopted in relation to managing the power dynamics of interviewing has been to report the data as faithfully as I can, bearing in mind that the position of trust and 'insider' knowledge is a double-edged sword, and openly acknowledging that in this 'human relationship' (Thomas: 2009:161) some answers may reflect subjective and possibly biased responses, conscious or otherwise. Management of the interview process at all times was mindful of this and I sought to mediate such impact whenever and wherever I could.

Validity and reliability are also linked to notions of bias, and I turn now to examine these.

### ***Validity and reliability in interviews***

As indicated earlier, validity and reliability in qualitative research are central but debated constructs. Following Cohen *et al.*'s (2007:150) directive that validity and reliability are attainable in qualitative research only by paying attention to those issues throughout the research, I want to consider those constructs here as interviewing was the major method of data collection throughout this research, 'Perhaps the most practical way of achieving greater validity is to minimize the amount of bias as much as possible' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:150).

Bias is to be found in both interviewee and interviewer attitudes, conscious or otherwise, towards 'race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, status, social class and age' (Lee, 1993; Scheurich, 1995). In some ways, controlling bias as a conscious act can only be achieved through establishing a trust relationship, that is, one in which 'interviewer effects', as discussed above, are ameliorated through a long-term professional relationship, which allows such characteristics to be set to one side in favour of a mutual searching out of truths. In that I had worked with CamStar schools for a considerable period of time, such trust relationships were well established.

However, and as discussed above, trust can also be a quality which can generate bias in an attempt to please the interviewer or indeed interviewee. Further, I would have to acknowledge that not all teachers knew me for the same length of time, nor in the same working contexts. Denscombe points out though that interview neutrality is a 'chimera' (1995, quoted in Cohen *et al.*, 2007:150). Validity through minimisation of the 'amount of bias as much as possible' is thus addressed throughout this research, as illustrated above.

That reliability is effectively controlled through 'highly structured interviews' (Silverman, 1993, quoted in Cohen *et al.*, 2007:150) is a concern to this research in that the interviews were either semi-structured or unstructured. However, 'Controlling the wording is no guarantee of controlling the interview' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007, 150). If bias is once again an issue, then Oppenheim's identification of causes (1992:96-97) which includes 'poor rapport between the interviewer and interviewee' and '... biased probing' have again been answered in earlier descriptions of the trust relationship and honesty of reporting.

To return to Cohen *et al.*'s (2007:133) earlier point:

Threats to validity and reliability can never be erased completely; rather the effects of these threats can be attenuated by attention [to them] throughout a piece of research.

By a constant awareness of the issues of validity and reliability and with particular reference to interviewing, I hope clearly to demonstrate that I have attempted to address and control as far as is reasonable in any research the threats presented to the findings of this project.

As indicated before, my initial interest in capturing authentic voice meant that interviewing was a key method. If I were still to take advantage of the ways in which interviewing could allow me to address the dimension of teacher voice, I had to deal with the possibility of restricted teacher discourse, as indicated by both Giroux and Kincheloe. But I had not yet established if, or indeed where, such discourse restrictions might lie. I felt it important to explore the dimensions of such areas, and simultaneously to see whether interviewing was indeed going to allow me to collect appropriate data for the research.

My original intention was to use non-directive interviews throughout the research (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:377-9; Robson, 2002:282) in that I wanted to see which areas teachers would choose to talk about when issues of teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity were used as starting points. However, a pilot study undertaken in relation to ethics in teacher research led me to select semi-structured interviews for three reasons: firstly, teachers were unfamiliar with the areas I asked them to consider and therefore the unstructured interviews, far from being rich and productive, emerged as limited discussions of practice. In that I was going to be asking teachers to consider quite complex ideas relating to knowledge, I felt this outcome was contra-indicative for non-directive interviews as a means to gather data in the main body of work. Secondly, in that these were unfamiliar discourses, teachers themselves expressed unease with an open approach; retrospectively, this accorded with Giroux's and Kincheloe's observations about language and discourse. Thirdly, with the number of interviews I wanted to undertake, the pragmatics of transcribing and coding were going to be prohibitive in terms of time if the interviews were unstructured. Although this was the least of the three concerns, it was a factor in deciding to use a semi-structured approach, which would allow for probes and prompts (Robson, 2002:276), which might serve to both support teachers in their responses and allow me to explore in more depth areas which I felt to be significant for the research as well as also facilitating transcription and subsequent coding.

The interview questions were divided into three sections: the first asked teachers about their research topics and any classroom impact they had observed; the second explored the reasons behind the research choices, including any role the school had played; and the third section then offered the teachers the opportunity to discuss any impact they thought research might have had on them or their practice. All three sections are discussed in the next chapter, but it was this latter section which began to indicate to me the existence of an interesting paradox. Teachers were convinced that research had an impact, but were struggling to express how and where this might be identified, and I began tentatively to consider whether this was one example of the discourse limitation that I had read about in Giroux's work, and to consider the significance for my research of collecting data on the unarticulated – a conundrum I was to wrestle with in the research design. But I was also not yet convinced that this was the phenomenon Giroux wrote about, and needed to



establish clearly that restricted access to discourse was indeed something which prohibited teacher discussion.

The next stage of data collection comprised an exploration of the key concepts of professionalism, identity, knowledge and teacher research by accessing teacher voice in far more depth and with far greater specificity.

## **Stage 2**

Stage 2 interviews, as already discussed in the outline section above, were again a convenience sample within the 6 CamStar schools who responded to the invitation to be part of this research (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:114). Pragmatically, as cover had become almost impossible to arrange with the 'rarely cover' policy in place, (introduced in 2009, School Teachers' Pay and Conditions indicated that cover should only be expected of teachers in 'unforeseen circumstances') sampling had to respond to the twin pragmatics of teachers who were willing to be interviewed, and who were free at some point in the day, which would allow a sensible timetable of approximately 60-minute interviews to be conducted. In some ways this selection process was helpful in that the sample of teacher perspectives were not shaped by any decisions I might have made, which would have perhaps skewed choices (e.g. teachers currently and actively engaged in research in the (mistaken) assumption that they would be the only teachers interested in talking about research). In the event, I had a number of teachers who had volunteered to be interviewed because they were, as one teacher put it, 'the cynics'. That was in fact, as will be seen in the next chapter, a very helpful perspective to include, particularly with reference to the issues raised by Kanpol in relation to the counter-claims about teacher empowerment through research.

On the other hand, a number of teachers who had strong views on teacher research and were keen to be interviewed could not be included simply because of the school time element; several did ask to be interviewed after school, and I did conduct a small number of such interviews. Many teachers were fitting in interviews with teaching and meetings, and so were concerned about time; and indeed, all were being interviewed during the school day (including time after school teaching sessions). Further, this set of interviews took place at the end of the summer term

which meant they were physically and mentally tired. As one teacher said, ‘... I really wanted to talk to you and now I can’t string a sentence together.’ (Angela).

I divided the interview questions up into seven groups:

- the story of the teachers’ own research;
- the story (as they saw it) of research in their own institution;
- the wider (policy) picture on research;
- teacher professionalism with quotes from D. Hargreaves and A. Hargreaves;
- teacher knowledge with quotes from Bernstein and Giroux;
- teacher identity with a quote from Bernstein;
- teacher research with a quote from Kincheloe.

After piloting these interviews with teachers from one school not involved in the research, I edited and re-ordered the sections. I had originally thought that asking teachers to talk about their own research would provide a comfortable entry into the area (Robson, 2002:273-4); in fact, it proved to be a threatening start for interviewees, who clearly felt, despite all reassurances, that in the culture of accountability they were being judged by me on their research, a phenomenon which echoes earlier discussions on power dynamics. I began therefore with questions about their school, which proved a less stressful starting point. Similarly, I excised the questions relating to teacher views on national policy as teacher responses about this area, relating to my key areas of interest (professionalism, identity, teacher knowledge or teacher research) were unproductive, eliciting in the few responses given only a list of policy documents such as the Literacy Strategy.

I therefore had five sets of questions:

- the story (as the teachers saw it) of research in their own institution (as an ‘entry point’ question);
- teacher professionalism with quotes from A. Hargreaves and D. Hargreaves;
- teacher knowledge with quotes from Bernstein and Giroux;
- teacher identity with a quote from Bernstein;
- teacher research with a quote from Kincheloe.

The interviews were recorded digitally with full permission of the teachers involved (see Appendix 8 for the permission letters to teachers and research co-ordinators) and transcripts were returned to teachers to allow them to check for accuracy, with a request to contact me if they had any corrections or queries. I had only four emailed comments, one pointing out a school acronym had been mis-spelled, two elaborating on their answers (elaborations which I have not included in my analysis since it was post the event) and one saying that the participant had taken time after the interview to go and read up on teacher knowledge and CPD. I have, however, no way of confirming that all teachers read their transcripts and so have to proceed on the assumption, rather than the knowledge, that teachers agreed that their transcripts were accurate (see also the section on ethics later in this chapter).

I themed and then coded the interviews using key words and phrases, categories derived from an in-depth reading of the transcripts, and organised them around the five interview headings outlined above (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:478-9).

Analysis of the interviews proved richly rewarding in many ways, but still I felt that interviewees' conceptualisation of teacher professionalism, knowledge, identity and research were incomplete. In analysing the data, it became apparent that there were indeed silences in response to questions dealing with knowledge, and with some of the key constructs associated with the work of Giroux and Kincheloe. Almost without exception, for example, the question relating to teacher knowledge brought long pauses, exclamations of difficulty, and only tentative or exploratory answers, often accompanied by caveats about 'not really having had time to think about this' (see next chapter for a fuller discussion). Certainly the questions were searching in intent, and using the quotations designed precisely to test teachers' conceptualisations of professionalism, knowledge and identity was a useful development in that at least teachers had something to respond to. Nevertheless the responses remained limited, and these limited responses said something quite revealing about the place these constructs occupied in teachers' thinking. Although I had expected, following the literature (Giroux, 1988:306-7), to encounter a paucity of professional discourse within this area, I was taken aback to find quite such restricted responses. To explore this area further seemed important. This stage was extremely useful for pointing up such lacunae: what it did not allow me, though, was to further my understanding of knowledge, professionalism, identity and the place of teacher

research. Stage 3 of the research had, crucially, to take on the paradox of silence and discourse.

### **Stage 3**

I was concerned in this stage with managing a key contradiction: that it was both teacher voice that formed the basis of my own data, yet in Stage 2, and confirming the findings of both Giroux and Kincheloe, these were the very voices demonstrating restricted access to central discourses relating to professionalism, identity, knowledge and research. In some ways, it could simply be claimed that ideological intent would be revealed through teacher inarticulacy. But this felt unsatisfactory – a negative result, albeit a result. Instead I felt that a fundamental paradox had to be addressed if teacher voice were to be represented successfully and in ways which would allow access to understanding teachers' perspectives on knowledge, professionalism and identity, and the relationship to teacher research. To leave the paradox intact would perhaps be interesting in confirming the claims of Giroux and Kincheloe in relation to discourse and hegemonic intent, but would take this research no further in terms of understanding the constructs involved. Untangling this knot was to prove methodologically challenging.

I had already undertaken two sets of semi-structured interviews, albeit one without and one with quotations as a stimulus response. Yet I felt that I was encountering the same phenomenon on each occasion – that teachers were willing and indeed eager to discuss their views, but unable to use or engage with discourses which took them outside of their usual and practical classroom focus. In exploring alternative approaches, I had to bear in mind the primacy of teacher voice, and yet the paucity of discussion emerging about certain key areas for this project. Alternative approaches such as questionnaires were unlikely to be any more productive than interviews thus far; observation of classroom practice would yield, I suspected, little data relevant to the research; graphic representation of such abstract concepts as knowledge was unlikely to be fruitful. At this point, I could perhaps have chosen to interview again with a limited number and narrower focus of questions. However, it seemed to me that the teachers I had interviewed (most of whom expressed pleasure at having the opportunity to discuss ideas about teacher knowledge, professionalism and research: 'This has been very stimulating. You've made me

think hard – I've enjoyed it'), nevertheless, had said all they could, both in the time available to them and also in the light of the restricted responses indicated above. I wanted still to collect authentic teacher voice, but not to risk repetition of views.

I therefore drew on my previous experience of exploring understanding and meaning, namely teaching literature, and the use of card sorting, discussed earlier in this chapter. Card sorting was also a strategy used, for example, by Shulman (1987) when investigating PCK, and MacBeath (1987) in his examination of leadership issues, involving the opportunity to select from and to reorder a number of statements and to then add individualised responses, which represented a clear development of this research method.

For the purposes of creating these statements for this research, I drew on the literature review and also on the types of views which I had heard during the interviews conducted with teachers. I then developed sets of statements relating to knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research, which in themselves offered a coherent narrative and were in accordance with the positions explored within the literature review. I grouped my statements around major professional identity/knowledge constructs, drawing on the work of Bernstein, Habermas, Giroux and Kincheloe, as well as Bottery and Wright and Dainton, as discussed in Chapter One. I then set these statements against other groups of statements based on D. Hargreaves, Barber, Gibbons, and Kanpol as contrasting voices. The statements were developed further by reference to the teacher interviews into a style and vocabulary which I felt teachers would find accessible in terms of representing the complex and competing positions explored. The coherence of these sets of statements was designed both to ensure that the statements cards I created were representative, but also to guarantee that analysis of data would allow a direct comparison of teachers' constructs with those emerging from the categories I had created within the literature review and which formed my research questions.

Specifically, the stimulus statements were arranged into four themes: one focused on teacher knowledge, one on constructs of professionalism, one on teacher professional identity, and one on teacher research. I then organised these into five sets of statements relating to the positions argued by those major scholars, as outlined above. Using the theoretical thrust of the scholars whose work had informed

these statements, I labelled these New Professionals, Realists, Traditionalists, Compromisers and Emancipators in order to capture and reflect a spectrum of beliefs. These labels were also designed to ensure conceptual coherence when devising the statements, but were not revealed to teachers.

The stimulus cards were colour-coded with knowledge (red), professionalism (pink), identity (yellow) and research (blue), and presented to the focus groups arranged in colour-coded groups, with instructions to select from each colour group as many statements as they felt represented their own views, and to ensure that all colour-coded groups had to be represented. I was not seeking to identify any sets of 'ideal types' but rather to see which statements teachers selected as best representing their values and beliefs.

The teachers were asked to read through the cards and to select those statements which seemed to them to represent most closely their own point of view, and to order the cards with 'most like me' at the top of the group and 'least like me' at the end. I then asked them to talk through their reasons for selection and recorded their justification for their choices.

Appendix 9 shows the full card sort statements.

### ***Piloting the card sorts – amendments and qualifications.***

After piloting my statements (Robson, 2002:383) I decided to add a further dimension. My 'trial' teachers, none of whom were involved in the main research, frequently commented on their desire to amend or qualify statements. I therefore added the option of using 'post-it' notes which teachers could use to add views to the card statements.

### ***Amending and adapting: from paired peer interviews to individual response***

I had originally intended to invite 12 teachers, two from each school who had taken part in Stage 2 research and were willing and free to take part in the card sort, to work in pairs so that discussion was facilitated. I intended then to have a post card-sort interview to establish why the choices of ordering had been selected. Once again, I worked on 'first response' principles, but this time teachers had to volunteer in pairs from the same school, both to facilitate the practicalities of organisation and

also to ensure I did not inadvertently pair teachers who might not have been comfortable working together. In the event, only nine teachers were available using this approach. Additionally, during the pilot, it became clear that two teachers working on the card-sorting approach led only to some teachers observing and one leading. I also saw evidence that engagement with the cards led to some degree of critical engagement with ideas, but that this was limited, with some paired teachers saying almost nothing.

I was led then to review the purpose of the pairing: essentially I wanted to set up a situation which would support teachers in discussing the key constructs of my research in a research environment which would in turn address the limitations of discourse. Addressing issues of discourse through stimulus cards was, I felt, a step towards addressing the paradox of silence and access to discourse. However, I was still finding silenced teachers but, this time, precisely as a result of being in a pair. It was at this point I decided I had to change my approach by inviting the nine teachers who had volunteered to undertake the task individually, and to explain to me their reasons for selecting particular cards as they completed the card sort rather than during a post event interview, thus providing a type of unstructured interview commentary, which was digitally recorded:

The interviewer has a general area of interest and concern, but lets the conversation develop within this area. It can be completely informal. ... [It is] non-standardized, open-ended and in-depth. It has been compared to a lengthy, intimate conversation; as a research tool, it is not an easy option... (Robson, 2002:270/278)

Coding such unstructured data is indeed challenging in that no questions have shaped the discussions, and therefore cannot be used to create codings; instead, theming by identifying key words and phrases was used to organise teacher responses for analysis.

In the pilot, I provided some key questions (Why this order? Why have you added this written statement?), which teachers could use as prompts in starting their explanations. In the event, and once confidence had quickly been established, the teachers rarely referred to the questions prompts supplied. As I moved to individual card sorts, the discussions were unprompted beyond the use of the cards, since the purpose of the unstructured interviews was to understand in more depth the choices

teachers brought to understanding knowledge, professionalism, identity and research, including the relationships that they believed existed between these concepts. The final card-sort sequences were photographed (see Appendix 10 for the original order and a selection of the cards as teachers had both sorted and amended them).

### ***Stages and reflections***

Data collected in all three stages therefore used increasingly focused interview approaches (semi-structured, paired peer and self-reflexive), which sought to address the 'language' issues identified by Giroux and Kincheloe, and the possibility of restricted discourse as a desired outcome by policy-makers through providing articulated concepts in framework statements, which were then used by the teachers to organise and comment on as they saw fit. Each stage methodologically informed the next in that identified concepts were used to refine the thinking and methods development for the following stages; but also conceptually, in that each stage of data gave rise to new structures of thinking within the project: the semi-structured interviews at Stages 1 and 2 pointed up a level of teacher belief, but also demonstrated inarticulation as predicted (by Giroux and Kincheloe) but at that point not seen as a phenomenon; Stage 3 used card sorts with unstructured interviews so that both vocabulary and discourse were scaffolded to allow teacher views to be articulated.

### **Ethics**

This research has been bounded by the BERA guidelines (2011:4), which demand an ethic of respect towards the person, knowledge, democratic values, the quality of educational research and academic freedom, with a particular focus on responsibilities to participants and the code for voluntary informed consent, and in particular, code 10: participants agreeing to involvement without duress, and code 11: understanding the process, why involvement is necessary, how it will be used and to whom it will be reported. Specifically, all teachers in participating schools were invited to take part through a written letter from me, distributed via the research co-ordinator, which explained the purpose, focus and context of the research. At the beginning of the interviews, I reiterated these to the participating teachers and invited them once again to withdraw if they felt that these conditions were inappropriate for



them (code 15). I had no withdrawals. Privacy (code 25) was observed through the anonymising of all research data, and a guarantee that at no point would any part of the interview or card sort be used in ways other than those already discussed without prior and specific written permission from participants. I did offer, should any publications emerge, to share that activity as I had done with a previous publication (McLaughlin, Black-Hawkins, Brindley, McIntyre and Taber, 2006) (code 25), although I had no expressions of interest in that at that time or indeed since that point. I returned transcripts to check for accuracy (code 31) and checked too at this stage that participants were happy to have their interview transcripts used as data for this research. I had no requests to withdraw from the research, and the four amendments to transcripts have been described earlier. All data were stored on a password-protected site (code 28) and access was not allowed to anyone other than myself, and any individual who wanted to access their own transcript. In the event, no such requests were made.

However, and as indicated earlier, the context of this research brought particular ethical concerns in that I was in an ongoing professional working relationship with both teachers and the wider school. Involving teachers in my research had, I felt, to be through a policy of 'open access' – that is, all teachers were invited and selection took place on a 'first response' basis, the fairest and most transparent approach I could devise. A further complexity was to be found in the fact that the CamStar working relationships were founded on a basis of trust, which was positive for the research in that the need for facilitation of interviews (e.g. Thomas, 2009:160-161) was precluded, but simultaneously formed an additional responsibility in that 'interviewer effect' might be exaggerated through such trust. It meant too that I felt an additional responsibility to the teachers, so that ethical decisions became a 'moment-by-moment' set of responses. Insofar as I responded to ethical concerns beyond BERA guidelines, I would claim that my approach incorporated Simons and Usher's (2000:1) 'situated ethics':

While ethics has traditionally been seen as a set of general principles invariantly and validly applied to all situations ... on the contrary, ethical principles are mediated within different research practices and thus take on different significances in relation to those practices ... an applied ethics...

Situated ethics demands that consideration of ethical behaviours infuses all decisions made in research, from the initial selection of an area to reporting of outcomes. Simons and Usher's premise, that 'the whole point about a situated ethics is precisely that it is situated, and this implies that it is immune to universalization' (2000:2) had significant implications for my research, in that I operated on a 'self-monitoring' ethical basis with each teacher, and was careful to avoid placing any teacher in any ethical dilemma in as far as I knew the circumstances. For example, one teacher, after agreeing to take part in the interviews, had very sadly been diagnosed with terminal cancer. I did not simply offer her the right to withdraw, but gently emphasised this throughout the preceding time by contacting her individually via email, usually with this message embedded informally in other information so that she did not feel 'different' from other participants. Further, during the interview, and again in informal ways, I frequently invited her either to stop if she felt tired, or to end the interview altogether. She participated fully in the interview and in fact said how much she had enjoyed the opportunity to talk: in response and in turn I took the opportunity to emphasise her valuable contribution to teacher research and to my own project in ways which were designed to validate as fully as I could her presence in the project. In some ways I was simply adhering to the BERA code by offering her the right to withdraw; in fact, Simons and Usher acknowledge that, 'it is not to say that ... universal statements ... are inappropriate and unhelpful. However, it is to say ...any such statements or principles will be mediated by the local and specific' (2000:2). But I undertook this task in ways that were substantially different from those I used with other participants and tried to respond to this teacher on an individual, and indeed caring, basis. Simply to offer a set of guidelines, then, as 'rules' to be administered, without discussion or engagement in use, stands against a recognition by Simons and Usher (2000:2) that:

Researchers cannot avoid weighing up often conflicting considerations ... which are located in the specificities of the research situation and where there is a need to make ethical decisions but where those decisions cannot be reached by appeal to unambiguous and univalent principles...

a recognition which informed my day-to-day ethical decision-making activities during this research.

## Research questions

Finally, and as a summary reminder of the scaffold of this section, and bearing in mind the earlier commentary relating to research question one and its post-hoc revisions, I reproduce the research questions emerging from my literature review, with indicative data collection approaches shown (Table 3:2), as a bridge to Chapter 4 which addresses findings and discussion:

### Research Questions and Data Collection

Question	Data collection
<p><b>1. In the ‘contested’ fields of professionalism, knowledge and identity, what can teachers’ conceptualisations of those areas tell us about the impact on practice and policy, if any?</b></p>	<p>Use of teacher voice through interviews and card sorts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do teachers conceptualise professionalism and how does this map against current understanding?</li> </ul>	<p>All Stages but particularly 2 and 3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do teachers conceptualise teacher knowledge and how does this map against our current understanding?</li> </ul>	<p>All Stages but particularly 2 and 3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do teachers conceptualise their identity in a professional setting and how does this map against our current understanding?</li> </ul>	<p>All Stages but particularly 2 and 3</p>
<p><b>2. To what extent can it be said that</b></p>	<p>Teacher responses to Stage 1 and 2</p>

<p><b>access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore these concepts?</b></p>	<p>interviews; analysis of 'silences' within those. Response to stage three card sorts.</p>
<p><b>3. What claims, if any, do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives?</b></p>	<p>Analysis of Stage 2 interviews; responses to Stage 3 card sorts.</p>
<p><b>4. Can the claims for emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?</b></p>	<p>Analysis of teacher selected statements from Stage 3 card sorts 'Emancipators' grouping. Analysis of teacher responses to Stage 3 card sorts.</p>

Table 3:2

I turn now to the analysis of the interview data in Chapter Four, and the card sort data in Chapter Five, and a discussion of the ways in which my research questions were both answered and challenged by the findings.

## **Chapter Four: defining the territory, finding the pathways**

### **Stage 1**

In 2002-5, I had worked on a teacher research project associated with NCSL, which focused on networks (Brindley, 2006). Following this research, I planned to draw on the work and explore how best to help teachers research with a particular focus on the sustainability of research within the incessant demands of a school environment. 'Problematising' the area seemed to me at that time to be about examining structures in schools which either supported or prevented teacher research taking place. At this stage, I had not anticipated that research would be linked with professionalism, knowledge or identity. Retrospectively, this early focus on place and purpose of teacher research was in fact simply a first stage in thinking through the final research area.

My initial attempts at understanding this field were to take place through interviews with teachers interested in research or already undertaking some research in schools which had committed to CamStar.

The interview questions (see Appendix 11) were therefore designed to explore ways in which schools had approached supporting research, and my interview subjects were head teachers, research co-ordinators supporting teacher research in schools, and teachers who had undertaken some research. I had designed the interviews to have a 'core' set of questions, and then a short section focusing on the role of the head, research co-ordinator or the teacher.

In that my research subsequently took a quite different route from that I had first predicted, I do not propose to undertake an in-depth analysis of all the responses in this stage, since many were associated with thinking about school structures, which subsequently became a redundant area for me. Instead, following Tripp (1993) and Cunningham (2008) I have taken interview 'critical incidents' which indicate how my research focus began to shift during Stage 1.

#### ***Critical Incident One***

During the interviews, one question I asked all heads related to whether they felt research areas selected by teachers should be agreed by heads or research co-

ordinators, or whether teachers should be allowed to define their own research areas (this related to an issue concerning schools' incentives to teachers to research such as school bursaries). The head of school A had established that teachers should be able to research any area of interest to them. This had led to some fascinating outcomes, which might not have obvious links to 'raising standards' (one Art teacher for example decided that he wanted to improve staff dynamics, and so designed a presentation of photographs he had taken of staff taking part in hobbies, showing, as he put it, 'That we are all people underneath the carapace'). This teacher's head argued, persuasively and with conviction, that his approach demonstrated 'trust' in the staff that they would approach research with 'professional' intentions. This contrasted strongly with the head of school D, then recently appointed, who saw research as a mechanism for bringing about an agreed focus for staff (in his case, a directive that all staff would undertake research into one major area of assessment), which he felt, 'enhanced the professionalism of all teachers'. Although during the interviews I did not pursue the idea of professionalism in relation to these answers, afterwards I found myself more and more intrigued by not only the linking of research to professionalism, but also the heads' respective approaches, one allocating autonomy to teachers in his school *because* teachers were professionals; one believing that research was a means of *bringing about* a particular form of professionalism, that is, one which accorded to the school's demands. This strongly resonated with Furlong's (2005) distinction between individual and school professionalism. In both schools, the research coordinator took the same stance as the head. However, the teacher I interviewed in school D contrasted the approach of his 'new' head to that of the previous head:

Before, where Mike [previous head teacher] started to encourage teachers to do research it was quite unique because it actually gave me control over what I did and I think that to me that has been very powerful. Never had that before in school basically. ... I know it's changed now and although we're still doing research to me I have lost ownership, I don't have ownership at the moment at all and it's much more the sort of thing that I've been used to over the years. And it's sort of 10 years ago, 12 years ago, we would be doing, working parties would be taking place and we might not have called it research but it was similar sorts of things to what we're doing now. So to me that ownership has been lost.

Ownership was clearly an important issue for this teacher, and in juxtaposition with the head's interviews, this constituted for me a critical moment. I began to consider

not how research might be organised in schools, but looked instead at the ideas of ownership and responsibility. These seemed to me to be located within the area of professionalism. I decided that Stage 2 should therefore look at professionalism, although at the time it was to run parallel with my main themes of structures and sustainability.

### **Critical Incident Two**

One of the interview questions related to structures which the schools had put in place. Here, it was the reply of the research co-ordinator from school C which first stimulated thinking about structures in different ways. In response to my question, she said:

In my role as co-ordinator I have some of the time ... freed people from teaching to come and talk to me about ideas and proposals and I have tried to help them to narrow down their questions in a way that I have been taught by other people. It's all quite low level and simple ... really it has been a kind of personal INSET on how to promote and justify research and practise it. It's changed the way I think about myself really and I think it's changed the way people in school think about me. I'm more than a moderator, more well, somebody that knows about bits of teaching and learning sort of thing. I quite like this new image (laughs).

The two teachers I interviewed in school C both mentioned the research co-ordinator in response to the question 'What structures here in school support research?' one, a Maths teacher, said 'Well, it's very much [the research co-ordinator's] dynamism and a bit being nagged her by that keeps everyone going I think.' But it was his follow-on comment which caught my attention:

There is a formal mechanism with the school research community that I'm doing research within but I think it's extremely important to model for students how learning happens and that I am a learner too and don't have all the answers. It's something about freeing me up to think of myself differently in my classrooms ... I operate a much more open system within my classrooms than I did before I started researching.

The second teacher in school C echoed this: 'I think it's a great kind of personal development ... I think [research] has made me go back and look at myself as a teacher. I think far more deeply about things than I used to.'

A teacher from school D reinforced this:

I'm doing two projects really, I'm looking at ICT in Geography and I'm investigating myself. You take a step back, just stepping to the side, a built in different perspective that you find yourself in ... being a little bit more aware of things, so I think I'm more reflective, more aware, I feel a little bit more balanced as well. I'm more aware of me as being *this type* rather than *that type* of teacher.

The move from structure to self was important. Initially I coded this as 'impact' but then found I was having to sub-code to accommodate 'impact on self', and that the more I used this coding, the more evident it became that 'impact on self' was in fact a major category. It also became clear that the responses in this category came largely from the teachers' interviews, in part and inevitably because of the interview questions, but I also found teachers returning to this theme throughout the interview. This 'critical incident' raised two issues for me: the place of 'self' in research and teaching, which I subsequently labelled 'identity'; and the need to explore this area with classroom teachers, which developed the notion of 'voice'.

### ***Critical Incident Three***

Interview questions for the research co-ordinators included 'What support have you offered teachers who are undertaking research?'. Some co-ordinators' answers referred to teachers' requests for help with research methods or methodologies (for example, questionnaires or action research). However, a number of research co-ordinators referred to subject specific demands made by teachers (for example, access to information about recent classroom developments in their subject). Research co-ordinators found these demands particularly difficult to answer, since they themselves usually had access to resources relating only to their own subject, and then not necessarily recent research. In school E, the part time research co-ordinator had found herself in a difficult situation in that her Science colleagues were looking to her for help with a research project linked with the local university on innovation in Science. She said, 'I am part-time because I have two small children and I want to be at home with them. I am probably further behind in my own subject knowledge than I have ever been'. I began then to think about ways of sharing subject knowledge between CamStar schools, but almost immediately ran into a further issue. Within that same project, a Science teacher had contacted the research co-ordinator with a request for research on 'using pupils' feedback on lessons (so that we can find out) how far this can inform and improve the quality of



teaching'. Neither research co-ordinator had access to recent research, although they did have policy documents on structuring lessons. However, the teachers in question already had access to that information. It was research findings that they wanted to know about – a different sort of knowledge from that in policy documents. A number of issues arose from this exchange.

Firstly, it became evident that my original coding of 'curriculum' was not going to allow me to recognise associated issues such as planning and pedagogy. In addition it was becoming clear, as I began to add 'pupil voice', 'feedback' and so forth, that the list of areas in this field could quickly become unwieldy. In response I widened the code to 'curriculum and associated areas'. However, as I read further about teachers and curriculum, the teacher knowledge models presented as useful, not least because I could then see whether the areas the teachers were identifying mapped against these models. I therefore adopted the coding 'teacher knowledge'.

Secondly, it became clear that teacher research in this area was being driven in two ways: firstly to meet policy demands, and secondly (in this instance through university associations) to look beyond policy. For co-ordinators, the latter demand seemed almost impossible to meet, not only because of resource access issues, although this played a large part, but also, as the part-time co-ordinator said, 'I haven't got time to go searching through articles. I just use [the documents] I have to know about.' – that is, policy documentation. It became clear that there were different types of knowledge under consideration, and that primarily teachers were being asked to engage with the knowledge that was contained in policy generated documents. Although I had a sense that teacher 'research-generated' knowledge was something different, it was not until I read Bernstein's (2000) account of Durkheim's 'sacred' and 'profane' knowledges, and Gibbons *et al.*'s (1994) mode 1 and 2 knowledges, that I began to consider that knowledge might have different constructions according to agency.

Thirdly, I began increasingly to be convinced that the notion of agency as definer of knowledge needed to be explored through teachers. In looking for the literature *about* teacher voice, it became apparent that much of the research reported on or about teachers, but relatively little reported *directly using* teacher voice to explore teacher knowledge. In reading further, the same phenomenon presented for both

professionalism and identity. From this critical incident, the idea of researching teacher knowledge emerged, and further teacher knowledge as constructed by different agencies. This also ran alongside a strengthened belief that teacher voice would be the mechanism for exploring these themes within the arena of teacher research.

Of course, the neatness that these three critical incident accounts offer in writing was, in reality, less clear, and indeed less well-ordered. The original conceptual framework I had developed had informed my interview questions, and I had therefore gathered significant data about structures, albeit that the data emerging were not adding in innovative or enhancing ways to any investigation about research and structures. The four themes which I eventually developed in relation to teacher research, teacher voice, professionalism, knowledge and identity, were distributed throughout the interview data and emerged as significant largely when I began to analyse the data, although a number of these critical incidents had already caught my attention during, and whilst reflecting about the answers after, the interviews. Nor, as I indicate above, were the themes clear cut: 'impact on self' became 'identity' only after I began to read around the areas of teachers and self, and saw that the notion of self could be said to be constructed differently by different teachers. Similarly, the meta-label 'teacher knowledge' was originally 'curriculum' until I engaged with literature which suggested that a wider construct would be valuable in examining the ways in which policy and professional knowledges might be said to be in tension one with another. Most important here were the debates opened up through the work of Kincheloe (2003) which indicated that teacher research might be one significant way for teachers to be active agents in constructing professionalism and knowledge, through ways that he described as 'emancipatory', drawing on the work of Giroux (1988).

Thus, although not fulfilling its original intention, Stage 1 data nevertheless proved to be critical in shaping this thesis in ways which I could not have predicted before the data analysis and subsequent literature review. The development of the themes, professionalism, knowledge and identity within research, and the exploration of these areas through teacher voice, are investigated in Stage 2.

## Stage 2

Stage 2 became the place where I began to shape and develop the research which would finally lead to this thesis. Although still interested in the original areas of structures and sustainability, increasingly throughout Stage 1 I had felt these to be limited as research areas. I decided instead to focus on the impact of teacher research on constructs of professionalism, knowledge and identity, through teacher voice. This meant that I needed to interview a far larger number of teachers than my original 7, and that I had to do so with the intent to explore with them my themes and their place in research. I therefore developed a new set of interview questions (see Appendix 11).

My research questions thus also changed significantly, addressing each of these issues in turn. In developing these questions, I was using teacher voice to help me understand the ways in which teachers' experiences of professionalism, knowledge and identity might illuminate the place and significance, if any, of teacher research on teachers' lives in these areas. In piloting the interview questions (see Chapter Three) designed to address the research questions, however, I encountered what was clearly a major problem. In asking teachers about their views on professionalism, on knowledge and research, and any impact on their own professional identity, all of the teachers were struggling to answer the questions. In some ways, this phenomenon had been predicted. Reading about sacred and profane knowledge, for example, Beck (2002) had indicated that the discourses surrounding teacher professionalism and knowledge were being marginalised, and that teacher access to such discourses was in danger, thus leading to problems in articulating views outside of those promoted by policy-makers. In 2009, Beck had developed this finding in relation to teacher standards in both initial and continuing teacher education, asserting that the discourse thus generated resisted critique, 'The capacity of this training discourse [is] to suppress awareness of its own presuppositions and of alternative or competing conceptions of professions and professionalism' (2009:3). Giroux (1988) had also discussed a similar phenomenon in relation to access to discourses of power. Nevertheless, I had not expected to find such a stark realisation of inarticulacy. I thus decided to add a fourth research question related to this specific point:

## **To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore the concepts of professionalism, knowledge and identity?**

In the analysis which follows, I use the headings knowledge, professionalism, identity and research in order to organise my findings. I have not reported on Question 1, research in the teachers' own institutions, since in part this was still designed to consider the place of structures, but acted too as a question more designed to put teachers at ease than as a contribution to understanding my themes.

### **Teachers' views on teacher knowledge**

The data here refer to Research Question 1: How do teachers conceptualise teacher knowledge and how does this map against our current understanding? and Research Question 4: To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore the concepts of professionalism, knowledge and identity?

#### ***Interview question one: What is teacher knowledge?***

This question was originally designed to elicit information which could be mapped against existing models of teacher knowledge, in order to see whether the models' categories of knowledge were still seen as relevant by and for teachers, or indeed whether teachers had models of knowledge not included in the existing models. Analysis of such data was to be charted against the composite model of teacher knowledge in Chapter One. However, in the light of the development of the fourth research question relating to teachers' access to the discourse of power, and concomitant articulation issues, I also wanted to explore whether or not teachers found difficulty in finding the language to deal with a question which potentially related to a politicised discourse.

#### ***Teacher Voice: Research Question 4: access to discourses of power***

The first responses were indeed seemingly confirmatory of the predictions about articulation and access to discourses of power. Of the 29 teachers interviewed, 27

offered responses which indicated they found expressing views about teacher knowledge problematic:

Christina: It's really difficult, I... [pause] you know, it's really difficult. Yeah, it's a hard one.

Tom: Well it's one of those sort of questions where, you know if you could write that down in a sentence it would be of... it... there are so many variables, aren't there? What is teacher knowledge? I suppose it... Ultimately, if you really ma-... refine it down, it's a very specific sort of... [laughs]

Sheila: Erm [pause] I think that teacher knowledge is [pause] I'm being really wary of my words now because of the fact that knowledge is such a funny thing [does not elaborate].

In their responses, teachers seemed to be struggling towards articulating a sense of understanding about the complexity of teacher knowledge, but simply not having the words:

Frances: Teacher knowledge, you see, I mean... to me it's a... you see to me it's a very simple thing, er... teacher knowledge, there are two parts, well there are pro-... there are more than two parts. And what you do in the classroom can be broken down to a lot of different things. I thought I knew the answer to this.

It could be argued that Frances did indeed 'know the answer to this' and that what failed her was not her own understanding but *access to a discourse* which would allow her to express her views. She has a sense that there are 'parts' to this knowledge and that these can be 'broken down to a lot of different things'. Her hesitant move towards 'two parts' (almost instantly retracted) might also indicate that she sees at least a 'classroom part' and one other, though she does not say what that 'other' might be. The 'struggling towards' phenomenon was evident with other teachers. For example, Emma says, 'There's something else there that's quite... quite difficult to grasp. But just takes you a step further erm and... I don't know'. Ray similarly states, 'It's about that ... teacher knowledge is quite an innate thing, is that the right word? I don't know. But it's not in any curriculum.' There is a sense of knowing without having the means to express that knowing. The hesitation, and indeed silences, that met this interview question might at this stage tentatively suggest that the claim that access to the discourses of power impact[s] on teachers' ability to explore the concept of knowledge is evident, although further evidence would also be needed to confirm whether the impact of restricted access to

discourse within professionalism and identity is also extant. I will address these later in this chapter.

Research Question 1: How do teachers conceptualise teacher knowledge and how does this map against our current understanding? was therefore hampered to some significant degree by teachers' restricted access to discourses of power.

Nevertheless, although often obscured by the on-going difficulty of expression presented by the teacher knowledge question, some components of teacher knowledge were identified. One such area was that of subject knowledge, where 14 of the 29 teachers interviewed mentioned 'subject knowledge' as a component of teacher knowledge.

### ***Subject knowledge***

Subject knowledge was the most frequently mentioned component of teacher knowledge by this group of teachers, perhaps also reinforcing the claim in Chapter One of the ways in which teachers were increasingly focused on subject:

Mark: What is teacher knowledge? Teacher knowledge. Well apart from the obvious which is your subject knowledge, teacher knowledge is, [pause] it's difficult isn't it.

Sheila: Well, the subject knowledge part, and [pause] I think that's the most important.

Elaine: Erm well I mean the one that springs to mind is subject knowledge. I guess if you don't know your stuff then you can't teach.

Mapping teacher comment against the knowledge models was therefore not a straightforward task in that the teachers themselves, despite interview prompting, were rarely explicit in their understanding of what subject knowledge actually was. Nevertheless, it is useful to examine where, in my research, the mapping exercise allows a pinpointing of teacher conceptualisation against the knowledge models.

Subject knowledge is most directly represented in the composite teacher knowledge model through two categories: Subject Matter Content Knowledge and Curriculum Knowledge. These two categories are reproduced below for convenience (taken from Table 1:3) and for ease of reference Shulman is represented in green; Elbaz in pink and Grossman in purple.

<p>Subject Matter Content Knowledge</p>	<p><i>Academic-related knowledge</i></p> <p>Subject matter knowledge includes information or data and the structures, rules, and conventions for organising and using information or data.</p> <p>Subject matter is both the subject discipline but also theories related to learning.</p> <p>Subject matter content and pedagogical content.</p>
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<p>Curriculum Knowledge</p>	<p><i>Materials and programmes that serve as 'Tools of the trade' for teachers</i></p> <p>Knowledge of the curriculum can be considered vertical (within a discipline area across grades), or horizontal (within grade and across disciplines).</p> <p>The structuring of learning experiences and curriculum content.</p> <p>Includes processes of curriculum development and of the school curriculum within and across grades.</p>
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(taken from Table 1:3)

In mapping teacher voice against subject knowledge, it has to be acknowledged that the modes of teacher knowledge which made up the composite model were developed by scholars outside of the UK (England and Wales) context, and therefore without consideration of any impact of the national curriculum, either because of time of development, or context. Nevertheless, the claims of the scholars were that these models represented a universal 'teacher knowledge', and therefore use of these models remains valid.

### **Mapping subject knowledge**

Of the 14 teachers who referred to subject knowledge as a component of teacher knowledge, 11 defined subject knowledge as that required by the national curriculum. For example, Kathy stated, 'The national curriculum is quite comprehensive in Maths, so I need to be able to teach all of that in order to get the pupils through exams'. John had a slightly different frame with the subject structures of the national curriculum and 'traditional subjects' apparently being seen as identical:

I mean certainly the way I was brought up one started with subject knowledge ... so it's the school's policy, and I think most of the teachers who teach here believe this, that the traditional subjects still represent a very useful framework to actually structure children's knowledge.

These comments were representative of many of the other teachers' responses where 'subject knowledge' was actually expressed as 'curriculum knowledge' in terms of the knowledge model. Thus Elbaz's 'curriculum content', Grossman's 'school curriculum' and Shulman's 'vertical knowledge' might all be said to have resonance with this group of teachers' views. However, subject knowledge as defined in the knowledge model is less obvious in application for these teachers. One teacher seemed to hint at the distinction. Sara found the English national curriculum to be, 'overwhelming in its demands, so I never get the chance to actually teach a text properly'. The latter comment is perhaps helpful in indicating a perceived difference between subject knowledge and curriculum knowledge. To teach a text 'properly' suggests drawing on a wider range of subject knowledge than might be found in a curriculum, and might therefore be closer to Elbaz's 'subject discipline'. Only one teacher, James, was clear that curriculum was different from subject knowledge:

Well let me take for example if you had a University Maths teacher who was a competent teacher and a very able mathematician, I'm not convinced that they could come straight into a school setting *with materials provided by the government* and do a good job of teaching pupils. (italics mine)

However, none of the teachers referred to Elbaz's 'theories relating to learning' nor explicitly to the ways in which their subject might be organised (Shulman).



As such, it would appear that for this group of teachers, subject knowledge is almost exclusively defined by the boundaries of the national curriculum, which itself was originally constructed as a 'selection from the knowledge' but now seems to translate for this group of teachers to mean *the* 'subject knowledge' – a version of subject knowledge which is thus policy driven rather than teacher driven. Indeed recent emphasis from policy-makers on 'teachers' subject knowledge' refers only to that which is needed to teach the national curriculum and GCSE syllabuses, which are closely tied to the national curriculum. In this sense, what might be seen here is that teachers' abilities to define subject knowledge is, in the group of teachers I interviewed, almost entirely contained within policy rhetoric. Understanding these teachers' construction of subject knowledge indicates that it is almost impossible to separate this from the knowledge needed to meet national curriculum demands.

### ***Pedagogy***

A second component of teacher knowledge identified by this group of teachers concerned classroom practice. Subject knowledge was mentioned specifically by 4 teachers as different from knowledge of classroom pedagogies:

Elaine: So I think someone with a first class degree can be a worse teacher than someone with a third class degree because all sorts of other things that come into it.

Ellen: I think you would be a far more effective teacher knowing nothing about the subject but knowing the skills to teach, than being an expert in the subject but not being able to teach it.

Emma: you have to have knowledge of your subject area of course, but then knowledge of different methods and practises, how you can implement that, which is much more general.

John: And certainly when I started, when I was trained as a teacher in the late '70s there was ... very much the assumption was still there that really anybody could teach provided you were bright and academically and had the subject knowledge then you would automatically be able to teach. And sort of I think looking back over 30 years what that now, that idea has been completely rejected and wisely so I think.

In terms of the knowledge models (below taken from Table 1:3), pedagogy is clearly distinguished from subject knowledge:

General Pedagogical Knowledge

*Principles of classroom management and organisation unrelated to subject matter*

General pedagogical knowledge is unrelated to specific subject matter and can therefore be implemented in a vast array of classroom settings.

Uses 'instruction' which includes classroom routines and management, and student needs.

Includes knowledge of classroom organisation and management, and general methods of teaching.

(taken from Table 1:3)

Shulman states that pedagogy is 'unrelated to subject specific matter'. Grossman defines pedagogy as 'general methods of teaching'. The sense that pedagogy is a wide ranging field evident in the knowledge models is echoed in this group of teachers:

Nick: There's the sort of, I suppose the pedagogic sort of knowledge, how you work a classroom, what do you need to do in a classroom.

Nevertheless, there are specific aspects which map directly against the knowledge model. Elbaz's 'routine' is an example:

Kathy: So teacher knowledge of course, teacher knowledge... there, but also some straightforward pedagogies really, things that you just do as part of the... the routine of being a teacher.

Grossman's 'classroom ... management' is also a clearly agreed component:

Christina: Managing relationships, managing the classroom.

Nick: You know, there's a need for you to manage things as well which is I suppose another sort of knowledge as well, that planning and those sorts of things. So there's formal sort of knowledge as well as content as well as, you are, you are many things.

Tom C: Sort of management of groups, of people, aspect of it as well.

Elbaz's 'awareness of student needs' is also evident in this group of teachers:

James: Appropriate strategies to teach them, when it might be useful to use something physical to teach it, when it might be useful to use a diagram to

teach it, when it might be, you know, lots of kind of different approaches to teaching them .

However, there seems to be substantial overlap with the 'Knowledge of Learners' category of in the knowledge models (taken from Table 1:3) below:

Knowledge of Learners	<p><i>Specific understanding of the learners' characteristics</i></p> <p>These characteristics can be used to specialise and adjust instruction.</p> <p>Uses 'instruction', which includes student needs.</p> <p>Adds 'and learning'. Includes learning theories, the physical, social, psychological and cognitive development of students; motivational theory and practice; and ethnic, gender and socioeconomic diversity.</p>
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(taken from Table 1:3)

So, for example, in discussion about pedagogy Kathy cites, 'So things like questioning techniques and assessment, and differentiating in a very sensitive and subtle way', which could map against either of the categories in pedagogy. However, this was a highly significant dimension of teacher knowledge for this group of teachers, generating extensive comment:

Becky: It's knowing the children. So I know certain students and certain classes that I can have a laugh with, and I know they say you should never use sarcasm, but sometimes if you've got a certain sort of class, like a top set Year 11, it's floating around all the time and it just adds an extra sort of thing and makes the lessons a bit more enjoyable and quirky. Because sometimes the subject matter isn't the most stimulating so you need other things there. So [pause] knowing the students.

Josie: Your knowledge of young people and how they work, and how they function, and your ability to empathise, and sympathise, and interact with them, develop relationships with them.

Emma: Knowing the students, and knowing how to communicate with them. So just on a very basic kind of human interaction almost, that's teacher knowledge as well, because not everybody can do that. Not everybody could come into a classroom and interact, communicate effectively, and motivate

the students. Not everyone is in the position to do that. ... you also have knowledge of students, just on an individual level, and from person to person.

Elaine: Knowledge of the pupils themselves. I think you can be an excellent teacher in one setting but not be able to adapt and if you can't understand your audience as such then you're not going to do very well.

Mark: Because I'm totally affected by this pupil-teacher relationship and I'll adapt my class, my, I know I do it, my demeanour to the class I'm teaching, yeah. And I know I can control a class, the same as any teacher isn't it. You can go in there and just by your posture I know that I can actually change a class. I don't have to say anything or anything like that.

The knowledge of students here begins to segue into both knowledge of self and knowledge of pedagogy. It is a perfect example of the conceptual 'bleeding' experienced by teachers whose access to teacher knowledge discourse is uneven and for whom conceptual boundaries are at best fuzzy, and at worst unknown. Certainly, for the teachers in this group, the two categories of 'General pedagogical Knowledge – needs of learners' and 'Knowledge of Learners' were conflated to bring about a single notion of 'Knowledge of Learners and Needs' as integral to pedagogy.

Shulman's central pedagogical content knowledge category below (taken from Table 1:3) although not mentioned by Elbaz or Grossman, was a frequently cited aspect of teaching by this group of teachers:

Pedagogical Content  
Knowledge

*The combination of content and pedagogy*

Information or data that helps lead learners to an understanding would be classified as pedagogical content knowledge. This includes any way of representing a subject that makes it comprehensible to others.

Subsumed under Subject Matter.

Subsumed under Subject Matter.

(taken from Table 1:3)

The category of 'representing a subject to make it comprehensible to others' here seemed to be a central component with 22 of the teachers making references which could be linked to this area. Indeed, many teachers presented this category almost

as the 'job' of a teacher, and the question is therefore whether this category is in fact different from pedagogy for this group of teachers. Nevertheless, examples of PCK were given:

Mary: You know, a combination of subject knowledge whatever your territory of knowing about something is. And then how you mediate that and use that with young people, or older people.

Ellen: Being able to break down a problem into smaller chunks.

Christina: Asking the right questions.

Nick: Yeah, so I'd break it up into bits and you know, and just knowledge of structures and all that kind of stuff as well.

For some, it was making clear the relationship of one set of knowledges to another:

Tom C: If you're going to teach a good Maths lesson you've got to sort of feel it, in a way, how it ties together, or why it's important, what the connections are with other things. You can't just deliver it as a kind of slab. And I suspect the same in any subject really.

Ellen: Being able to forge links between things, providing models and analogies.

Although not specifically in the 'Pedagogy' section of the models of knowledge, this group of teachers mentioned, in connection with pedagogy, the art of teaching, though this remained undefined:

Becky: and then there's the sort of the art of teaching knowledge thing which is, erm. *[Does not develop the idea further]*

Kathy: Knowledge of erm the subtleties of the art... the... having those tools at your fingertips, so that you can chop and change as you need. ... Well I suppose once upon a time we would have said it's all about subject knowledge, but of course it's far more subtle than that.

[I: So what do you think the art of teaching is?]

Kathy: Good question.

Craft knowledge was also mentioned in connection with pedagogy:

Ray: It's the classroom, the craft of the classroom, as it were. It sounds very simple but actually it's very, very complicated and people say it's impossible to teach [it] and it probably it is.

John: Because I still like that phrase in Michael Miles' [sic] book, *The Craft of the Classroom*, was that written in the '70s, or the '80s I think. And I think there is a craft of the classroom.

There seems therefore to be more direct overlap between this group of teachers and the pedagogy knowledge models. One hypothesis might be that, unlike subject knowledge, pedagogy remains *relatively* free from policy-makers' intervention within politicised debates, and it could be argued that teachers therefore retain a version of this which is not driven by policy demands. Notions of pedagogy as 'art' of teaching and of 'craft knowledge' may hark back to earlier debates (certainly the reference to Marland's ['Miles' book'] suggests this) retained by teachers. Strikingly, however, it was 'Knowledge of Learners' which brought the most voluble responses from this group of teachers, and perhaps the area which is most protected from policy intervention. It may be that this is a component of teacher knowledge which therefore could be located within a 'sacred knowledge' discourse.

### ***Knowledge of Educational Contexts***

Knowledge of Educational Contexts

*An understanding of the classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, the character of school communities.*

Knowledge of the big picture surrounding the classroom helps to inform teachers about how the community may perceive their educational actions. This knowledge of educational contexts may also inform teachers about how to proceed in the classroom in relation to school, community, and state conventions, laws, and rules.

Uses the term 'milieu', which refers to the social structure of the school, and the wider school environment.

Includes knowledge of multiple and embedded

situations and settings of teachers' work-school district, region and state; also knowledge of students, families and local communities, historical, philosophical and cultural foundations of education in particular countries.

(taken from Table 1:3)

In this broad knowledge model category (Table 1:3 above), teacher knowledge is structured to include an ever widening awareness of the contexts of teaching, from classroom to 'state', and encompassing the historical, philosophical and cultural foundations of education. The teachers in this group only identified 'local' knowledge - knowledge of the staff and the workings of the school. This was, however, seen as an important component of teacher knowledge:

Becky: And then knowing who you can draw on in your department or within the school for ideas or who can be a sounding board or who's done something ... So it's knowing who's done what and how to get that.

Josie: Oh... Knowledge of the politics of the staffroom. You know? That's a huge part of being a teacher that I don't think anyone prepares you for.

Elaine: Knowledge of the school, I guess understanding the kind of ethos of the school and what it's aiming for.

Acknowledging once again that the context of the production of the knowledge models is not that of the UK, and that the group of teachers in this research is a small sample, the responses from this group of teachers nevertheless reveal enormous gaps in the category of Educational Contexts. It may be that in the present climate in the UK, knowledge of educational contexts is multi-dimensional, so that it may be teachers only felt able to comment on their immediate knowledge. As policy-makers drive schools in numerous different directions, 'knowledge of the big picture' shifts and changes almost daily, and many teachers are overwhelmed by these changes. It is, however, telling that no teacher in this group made any reference to the historical, philosophical and cultural foundations of education. These would seem to be discourses which do not relate to policy-makers' constructions of teacher knowledge. It could be argued therefore that these are areas which relate to sacred knowledge, and that associated discourse is thus treated by policy-makers as redundant. Research Question 4 might therefore also expand to take into account

whether it is in fact access to the discourses of power which is significant alone, or whether a concomitant withering of the discourses of professionalism is also significant.

## **Self**

I am going to take the final category of the knowledge models, that of self, out of sequence because the remaining category 'Knowledge of Educational Ends' refers to a politicised sense of teacher knowledge which I want to deal with separately.

The knowledge models define self ((taken from Table 1:3) below thus:

Knowledge of Self	<p><i>The place of teacher self-awareness in teacher knowledge</i></p> <p>Category not used by Shulman though some qualities represented in Knowledge of Educational Ends.</p> <p>Knowledge of Self includes personality, values, beliefs and personal goals.</p> <p>Includes knowledge of personal values, dispositions, strengths and weaknesses, personal educational philosophies, goals for students and purposes for teaching.</p>
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(taken from Table 1:3)

Self is not a category explicitly defined by Shulman, but both Elbaz and Grossman specifically refer to self as one of the categories of teacher knowledge. For Elbaz, this includes the notions of personality, personal goals, values and beliefs.

Grossman has a number of overlaps:

... knowledge of personal values, dispositions, strengths and weaknesses, personal educational philosophies, goals for students and purposes for teaching.

The category of self is complex. With both Elbaz and Grossman, it appears to deal with the psychological (personality), the philosophical (values and beliefs) and the



sociological (purposes for teaching). Self as a teacher knowledge category can appear vague precisely because it accommodates so many aspects. It was however a category identified by teachers in my group:

Kathy: If people have a little bit of arrogance, or if people are basically a bit nervous about their own abilities, then they probably are also less reflective, and less likely to change their practice. So where does that link back to teacher knowledge? So it's a self-knowledge, isn't it?

Tom: And it's that sort of... You have to... you have to know yourself, you have to.

The means of achieving knowledge of self were uncertain though for this group of teachers, it seemed to be linked to personality, a characteristic identified by Elbaz:

Frances: a practical, emotional, personality relationship type of thing, none of which in the end comes to you from a book.

Tom: There's also a knowledge of a sort of the... the meta-processes around that: so, how do I get to know the student? How do I get to know myself?

Becky: and then I think a lot of it is personality as well which obviously isn't a knowledge thing, but...

Christina: And then I suppose, yeah, and then a lot of it, I think, I think we rely on our personalities a lot.

Schon's 'reflective teacher' was a significant component of the notion of self in teacher knowledge, and aligns with Elbaz's 'strengths and weaknesses':

Kathy: I think probably teacher knowledge is also about being very reflective. You have to be able to say to yourself, well how... how good was that?

Emma: It's interest in yourself as a teacher, and the ability to reflect upon what you do, and want to reflect on what you do. Just that constant reflection that I think... I think if you're a good teacher then... and you do that, then you look to do that all the time. ... the ability to reflect upon what you do, and want to reflect on what you do. It's, you know how can I make myself a better teacher?

Self in teacher knowledge is, as will be seen later in this chapter, an area vulnerable to policy intervention through the shaping of teacher identity. But for this group of teachers, it is the component of teacher knowledge which facilitates development as *a teacher*. The teachers in this group were not however explicit about whether 'values and beliefs' were part of the sense of self as teacher knowledge.

It is also possible that the self is an area which locates for teachers within Bernstein's 'sacred' knowledge. Although increasing exclusion from the discourse of the sacred renders discussion about self in teacher knowledge inaccessible, it remains, nevertheless, emotionally powerful.

In terms of the knowledge models, what does seem to be evident is that for this group of teachers, it is an area of teacher knowledge which does constitute a separate category, though evidence from this group relates fundamentally to Elbaz's notions of personality, and with Grossman's strengths and weaknesses as a possible underlying element of reflectivity and reflexivity.

### ***Knowledge of Educational Ends***

Knowledge of Educational Ends

*The purposes and values of education as well as their philosophical and historical grounds*

*An understanding of the purposes and values of education will help teachers motivate learners.*

*Category not used but present in Knowledge of Self.*

*Category not used. Elements e.g. motivation present in other categories (Knowledge of Learners) but also in additional category of Knowledge of Self.*

(taken from Table 1:3)

This final category (taken from Table 1:3 above) is interesting in itself in that only Shulman develops the idea that teacher knowledge should include an understanding of the purposes and values in education. It is important for this thesis in that any such understanding could serve to reveal teachers' commitments to a version of education either based in, or in opposition to, that constructed by policy-makers. It was therefore particularly significant that only one teacher offered any comment about this area of teacher knowledge, and that was indicating a moral imperative, echoing Sockett's challenge to Shulman:

Tom: You have to have a sort of moral purpose, sort of really. So there is a... under... there's a core of principles around that, it's very... at a deeper level.

The lack of comment is concerning. It would appear that this category does not resonate with current thinking of this sample group. However, the reasons are not clear. It may be that teachers see Educational Ends as those defined by policy – localised and immediate, for example, high levels of exam success, successful university entrance rates, rather than any longer term, or less instrumentalist, viewpoints. There is the possibility too that this dearth of response is indicative of the paucity of discourse available to teachers in this area, which again might mark it out as belonging to sacred knowledge. Certainly it does indicate that teachers in this sample group at least do not seem to have any sense that educational ends are other than those defined by policy, that is, not within teacher ownership.

### **Professionalism**

The research question addressed in this section is:

- How do teachers conceptualise professionalism and how does this map against current understanding?

Based on the literature review, this interview question sought to explore three major areas: definitions, characteristics (to map against the Hargreaves/Barber matrix), and discourse. See Appendix 13 for the interview questions.

### ***Definitions***

Bearing in mind Hoyle and John's claim (1995:1) that professionalism, 'defies common agreement to its meaning', I was not expecting to find a single definition of professionalism emerging, nor even to be able to map descriptive statements in the literature against parallels in the teachers' descriptions; rather I wanted to see whether the central distinctions illustrated in the comparison between the Tawney and the DfES 'workforce' argument discussed in Chapter One also appeared in the teachers' discussions. Briefly, Tawney (1921) constructed the professional as 'commitment to duty, as opposed to pecuniary gain'; the DfES (2004b) constructed the professional as belonging to a 'workforce' which needed to be told to 'put the consumer first, to develop a passion for improving public services'. This stark opposition is illustrated particularly when examining key themes identified earlier in Chapter One: for example, status (Hargreaves, L., 2006), autonomy (Larson, 1977), accountability (Ozga and Lawn, 1981) and the nexus of control of education (Bottery

and Wright, 2000). In asking the teachers in my sample group about definitions, I was interested to know whether their own views addressed any of these key issues.

As would be expected, therefore, from the literature review, no single definition of professionalism in teaching emerged from my sample group. Its definition was as elusive for this group as for those reviewed in Chapter One. One teacher, Jesse, attempted to define professionalism through a series of questions:

...what do we believe in and how do we, you know, where do we, where do we allow this to happen, where do we show that?

However, he could not offer answers to these questions.

Another teacher, Becky, stated:

Yeah, well, there's lots of definitions, but like G and T [gifted and talented] you know it when you see it kind of feel.

Professional 'behaviours' were also cited in attempts to define professionalism. John, for example, explained professionalism through teacher actions:

And at its very simplest, I take quite a simplistic view of this, teachers continuing to, thinking [sic] about their teaching, their classroom teaching, what's working, what isn't working, talking to colleagues about what they're doing and thinking about ways in which lessons can be structured better, have activities which draw children in better, lessons which overall allow children to make more progress across the periods of lessons and so on.

This was echoed by Rachel:

Well, it seems to me the staff here are expected to be professional in every sense of the word, well in every sense of the word, I take it you do your job well, you go in your classroom, you teach as well as you can. ... But also there's the extension of not just going in and teaching a lesson, it's what you do afterwards, how you evaluate.

Interestingly, both these responses identify professionalism as linked to classroom teaching, which, as it is largely currently defined by policy, places professionalism within a policy arena. It is not of course that such behaviours do not necessarily reflect professionalism as a construct per se, but rather that there is no critique given of its context, no sense that professionalism should do other than promote a policy version of teaching and learning. In these comments we might see the presence of New Professionalism:

[Workforce reform] will usher in a new professionalism for teachers, in which career progression and financial rewards will go to those who are making the biggest contributions to improving pupil attainment; those who are continually developing their own expertise, and those who help develop expertise in other teachers...

(Department for Education and Skills, 2004b:66)

Rachel's 'every sense of the word' fuzziness in defining professionalism was evident throughout the interview responses, with many comments reflecting what appeared to be a largely unarticulated positioning. This might once again reflect restricted access to discourse encountered in the section on knowledge, with professionalism as a construct co-opted by policy and thus now associated with the discourse of policy. Yet there seemed to be an uncertainty by teachers about the very concept of professionalism. The language of policy was not dominant, but rather there seemed to be a sense that teachers wanted to recognise themselves as professionals, and believed this accorded to particular attitudes or behaviours (see later in this section) but that professionalism itself was an elusive concept, difficult to explain, almost liminal in nature. The themes I had seen in the literature, status (Hargreaves, L., 2006), autonomy (Larson, 1977), accountability (Ozga and Lawn, 1981) and the nexus of control of education, were addressed by the teachers, but often without deep exploration of the areas:

### **Status**

Status *per se* was not mentioned by any teacher except Jesse, who remarked, 'is teaching a profession?' in response to my question, and as explanation as to why he could not offer a definition. He did not elaborate on this answer, despite prompts other than to say that he was aware that teaching as a profession was a contested area. However, responses indicate that most teachers, in their interview responses, refer to teaching as 'a profession' and see themselves as belonging to that profession. The references are made though not as claims, but rather as contexts for other comments, for example,

### **Autonomy**

The term autonomy was not used by any teacher in referring to professionalism. Emma stated that she'd encountered the arguments in her PGCE course, 'the kind of sense of teachers as professionals and how much control they should have over

what they do' but seemed not to be engaged with the concepts in her own teaching career.

### ***Accountability***

The sense of accountability was certainly present in the responses of the younger teachers, but without the sense of loss associated with the older teachers' responses:

...the kind of sense of teachers as professionals and how much control they should have over what they do. I guess it's entrusting teachers with a lot of responsibility but if they're buying into what they're doing and they feel they've had a part in shaping it, then that's a really positive thing.  
(Lizzie)

What was evident too was a sense that professionalism was defined by policy ('Standards'), and that in order for teachers to be 'trusted' to 'uphold these', 'people have to believe that teachers can be professionals' (Anna), an interesting twist on ownership.

Where less positive responses were encountered in the younger teachers, it was linked to a sense of a preferred future, rather than a lost past:

But just, I think it's about the freedom and the responsibility and the kind of lack of constantly being checked up on almost.  
(Emma)

### ***Nexus of control of education***

No explicit references were made to professionalism as 'owned' by policy or by any other group. However, within the analysis of professionalism and change over time and discourse, which follow, there are specific references to standards, and to a sense of professionalism changing, eluding the grasp of teachers. Older and established teachers saw this as a frustrating experience; younger teachers seemed to be attempting to accommodate a version of professionalism which lined up with the policy descriptions, though in this sample of teachers, that was a 'sense-making' activity rather than a moral positioning.

Although analysis in terms of these four themes was not productive, and the question of access to discourse remained as problematic, what was strongly evident was a sense that professionalism was 'in transit': once a term which spoke about

teachers taking control of their working lives, it now was in the process of becoming a way of meeting others' versions of what a professional might 'look like'. Hargreaves and Barber's frames were therefore the next stage of analysis.

### ***Ages and Stages***

In Chapter One, I tabulated the constructions of professionalism over time comparing the work of A. Hargreaves and Barber. Both had roughly parallel stages in discussing professionalism and change, but each had accorded quite different purposes and reasons to those changes. Hargreaves was largely concerned with exploring professionalism as a phenomenon, Barber with the notion that professionalism was idiosyncratic ('uninformed') and in need of policy control to bring about consistency, or perhaps compliance, ('informed').

In interviewing the teachers in this sample, there was a sense, although not articulated fully, that professionalism had changed over time. However, these comments fell into two main categories: from teachers who had been teaching for a substantial amount of time and therefore had experienced changes in professionalism at a personal level; and those teachers for whom changes in professionalism were impressionistic. For example, Kerry, whose time in teaching is in the 3-10 years category, in defining professionalism (interview question one) remarked:

I think in those days [undefined] teaching was quite an isolated profession and you went into your classroom and you stayed in there, or there was always that possibility. Whereas now people are going into each other's classrooms much more, there is much more a culture of sharing.

However, when prompted to say why she thought professionalism had changed in this way, she said, 'I just get the impression things are more shared now', offering no evidence for her statement. This positioning might place Kerry in the Collegiate Professional category. Certainly Kerry's emphasis on 'sharing' suggests this version of professionalism; simultaneously, however, she offered no evidence, nor any critique of other versions of professionalism. It could be said therefore that Kerry was also within the informed prescription stage in that she seemed to have accepted a version of professionalism which was not her own, but rather reflected values developed elsewhere. 'Sharing' is not an unambiguous term: it can simply mean

exchanging ideas, or, as with 'best practice', its significance can be with bringing about conformity. The latter would certainly be the agenda of informed prescription.

The responses of teachers who had been teaching for 20 years plus drew on personal evidence. Simon, for example, responded to question two with an impassioned outburst:

God yes. And why has the profession changed so considerably? Yeah, I think there were so many opportunities once. The things that were done in for instance the 60s that we've heard and maybe we have wonderfully nostalgic recall, you know, we're really trying to push it, but God yeah, things are different.

For Simon, the sense of change over time was linked to a strong sense of loss of autonomy:

I'm sure [professionalism] will change again and again and if we get a new government or have some other initiative. I don't know. I don't feel it's to do with us, with me, any more. Actually, that's not true. I do feel it ought to be to do with me, and I do think I am a professional, but whether that counts for anything now, I don't know.

Angela had a similar sense that professionalism had changed, and had somehow been wrested away from teachers:

I think also that whole idea of professionalism was one that I had entered teaching considering myself to be a professional but it was almost then knocked out of you and you had to resist it and insist that you were a professional and, because, because we were no longer treated as being professionals. And so I think there's a big contextual sort of issue there for older, yeah, older teachers.

Angela's view - that professionalism was 'under attack' and that these attacks had to be 'resisted' - demonstrates the value placed on independence of judgement for these teachers. As such, both Simon and Angela can be said to be clearly placed in Hargreaves' 'autonomous professionalism' category, where teachers had independence of judgement as an expectation of their role. Barber's parallel 'uninformed prescription' is perhaps also evident through the responses of these teachers, neither of whom refer to centralisation as a significant factor in their descriptions of professionalism.



Yet, as Angela went on to observe, professionalism has changed. Illustrating this phenomenon, she referred to early career teachers, and the ways in which she observed they constructed professionalism:

It doesn't mean that I think people don't conduct themselves professionally, however. Because there are a number of young, you know, a lot, most young teachers in this school certainly, do. But whether they consider themselves to be professionals I don't know.

This version of professionalism is puzzling to Angela – the new teachers behave professionally but seem not to acknowledge the concept. Tellingly though she added, 'And yet actually it's [professionalism] there in black and white with the Standards isn't it?'. The bafflement expressed by Angela perhaps illustrates a further key theme: that of accountability (Ozga and Lawn, 1981). What Angela is almost instinctively recognising here is that professionalism for younger teachers is *different* - linked to accountability, and that one impact of this is to reduce professionalism to a series of standards to be met, rather than a quality to be imbued. It thus links too to Bottery and Wright's (2000) 'nexus of control of education' – the 'directed profession'. If professionalism is standards driven, because teachers are obliged to comply, they are inevitably, and perhaps unknowingly, reinforcing a version of professionalism defined by policy. Meeting external requirements *defines* professionalism. As Ellen stated:

Right from the beginning when you enter the profession, you know you're preoccupied with meeting external demands, right from the beginning. Now, what am I supposed to teach? What's on the syllabus? It's all... You're not asked, what would you like to teach, and what can you bring? You know, it's all about okay, here's the stuff, you know off you go, and you have to do this, and you have to do that, and you have to do the other. And the lists of things you have to do is enormous, you know.

Ironically what is evident here is Barber's 'informed professionalism', that is, compliance to a central version of education. The excision of teacher input is not, it might be argued, accidental. Ellen's description of the demands made are precisely those of Hargreaves' (2000:168) parallel category – 'post professionalism' where teachers are, as I wrote in Chapter One, far from being seen as shapers of, or even contributors to the new economic and social orders ... are represented instead as 'obstacles to the marketisation of education'.

Within this sample group then, the question which addressed definitions revealed a complex of responses, demonstrating changing versions of professionalism which could be tracked through the positions outlined by Hargreaves and Barber. However, what was still evident was the struggle experienced by teachers in seeking to answer the interview questions on professionalism. The notion of access to discourse was still evident.

### ***Discourse***

Interview question three: Do you think there is a shared language that teachers and policy-makers use in talking about professionalism? was designed to address the research question: To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore the concepts of professionalism, knowledge and identity? To some extent, that the teachers found difficulties in discussing professionalism, with perhaps the exception of older teachers' narratives about change over time, is indicative that access to discourse is an issue. I noted earlier that 'policy' was not the dominant discourse in professionalism. The phenomenon of 'shared' (or not shared) language I was seeking to understand was not easily accessed, since the very concept implied an awareness of discourse that most teachers did not possess. Dave, for example, replied to the question by saying, 'I don't really understand what you mean'. When I offered the prompt, 'Do you think teachers and policy-makers talk about professionalism in the same ways?' he said, 'I don't think teachers talk about professionalism'. It is worth acknowledging that this is probably accurate. Indeed, Ray took it a stage further when he said, 'And you'll remember those debates about, is teaching a profession and all of that kind of thing? And they've gone, those debates have gone.' But that teachers are not able to articulate *reasons for their beliefs* points to something more than a general 'not talking about professionalism' – it demonstrates rather a lacuna in discourse about professionalism. The majority of teachers (19) answered with responses which demonstrated either an uncertainty about the question, or a declared 'don't know'. More specific responses often referred to actual incidents where professionalism was discussed within particular contexts. For example, Tom said, 'the only time I ever hear professionalism being talked about is with trainees when we are checking their standards records. I suppose that means we are talking the same language?'

However, one teacher, Simon, clearly believed that language about professionalism – discourse – was not shared even within the teaching profession:

Maybe I've got to find a different language to talk to young staff, or newer staff who are coming into the profession now, because I don't speak their language any more. They don't get strikes, they don't get unions, they don't get anything like that, they don't get marches, they don't get you know, winning, not to die for, but you know, believing in something that you're passionate about to the point where you get really angry.

This response returns us to Hoyle's claim that professionalism has no single core definition, and that changes over time represent not simply differing emphases but a sea change in the very ownership of the notion. However, and critically, the question of articulation and discourse remains problematic: definitions of professionalism seem to be uneasy in manifestation. Older teachers attempted to define professionalism through exploring previously held beliefs which are to them no longer evident in education; younger teachers see professionalism as belonging to (and thus defined by) 'others', though there is also from some of the younger teachers a sense that 'the kind of lack of constantly being checked up on almost' would render them as professionals in a different but somehow desirable way. Notably though in these teachers the absence of a discourse to explore professionalism as autonomy or compliance, to critique accountability, to question the 'nexus of control' is palpably absent. The co-opting of the language of professionalism into the Standards is perplexing for some of the older teachers since it seems that professionalism is being promoted by policy, yet is not evident in younger teachers in ways that they recognise. It appears therefore that these interview questions have elicited a range of responses which point to the re-shaping of professionalism, but the teacher voice remains silenced on both its gestation and indeed its final form.

## **Identity**

The interview questions for this section addressed the research question: How do teachers conceptualise their identity in a professional setting and how does this map against our current understanding? The interview questions can be found in Appendix 14.

The literature review identified three key areas: definitions of teacher identity and agency of definition (Sachs, 1999; Day *et al.*, 2006a; Clarke, 2009), including relationships with professionalism and knowledge; models of teacher identity (Wenger, 1998; Bernstein, 2000); and notions of discourse about identity (Bourne, 2008).

These were probably the interview questions which yielded the most restricted responses. Asking teachers about their teaching identity drew responses which indicated this seemed to be a concept rarely considered by teachers, and almost one which held little interest for the teachers in this group. It is perhaps linked with Beijaard *et al.*'s (2000:750/762) claim that teacher identity is 'a poorly defined concept', and thus the topic is not one of common concern to teachers. It may be that, as I wrote in Chapter One, the personal and the professional are so closely intertwined for teachers that separating out a teaching identity is an impossible task. As Sachs (1999) states, professional identity is 'rarely taken as problematic'. It may be that the teachers themselves shared this view, since exploring this area seemed not to produce the level of engagement that knowledge and professionalism had, even with the issues of articulation and discourse. There was not the same sense of frustration that knowledge had evidenced (for example, Frances' 'I thought I knew this'), but rather a feeling that these questions about teacher identity could be answered by describing *themselves*, rather than analysing the construction of a professional identity open to impact by a range of external agencies. The lack of differentiation by teachers of self and professional identity rendered questions two and three almost impossible for teachers to answer. Responses to question one were more forthcoming but again demonstrated the degree to which teachers' personal self and professional identity overlapped.

### ***How would you describe your own identity as a teacher?***

The responses to this question were varied. The notion of a teacher identity was not seen as unsurprising by any of the teachers in this group, though the idea of describing their own identity was not straightforward. James for example said:

Depends who was listening I suppose. Yeah, I mean it depends, because you tend to as a teacher go, 'Oh I'm a teacher, let's talk about our sons,' you know, it tends to be that sort of conversation really, because of the kind of

people I, I'm quite wary of, I'm quite wary of talking about what I do anyway, purely because I keep wanting to stick my oar in, that's part of the problem I think.

Identity for James resides within the term 'teacher', undifferentiated from 'self' and indeed integral to personal identity ('let's talk about our sons'). However, there is also a curious reticence about admitting to being a teacher, echoed by Ellen:

I don't tell everybody, I don't, when I meet people I don't tell them. It's just if people question further.

Other than James' assumed intrusive behaviour ('stick my oar in'), no reasons were given for the reluctance to reveal themselves as teachers. Whilst it is possible to extrapolate (projection of unattractive teacher image through the media) these teachers gave no clear idea about why the reticence. Nevertheless, 'teacher as self' identity is a theme for the teachers in this group.

For others, identity was linked to subject, and interestingly here there was also an overlap with the notion of professionalism:

It's hard because I had to give up my Head of Biology when I went part-time and so for a long time the Head of Biology had been part of my description of myself as a professional. It was part of the way that I described myself to people and I wasn't comfortable with just being a teacher. I don't, there's nothing wrong with just being a teacher, it's just that I'd been Head of Biology for so long that you almost feel like you've got some kind of, I suppose respect within society because you add that on the end of your description of who you are.  
(Becky)

The echo of 'just being a teacher' may resonate with the comments by James and Ellen, but what is important here is that Becky wanted to demonstrate a degree of status in being a Head of Biology. Identity here is linked with career success, and an assumption that simply being a teacher does not earn that respect within society. For Rachel, identity is tied up with her own academic skills:

You know, but I do ask myself sometimes, I'm a member of the Institute of Linguists, which really, whilst they like to pretend that they're all-embracing, it's nothing to do with being a language teacher. They have a Teaching Division, but I'm never involved with that. I pay a membership fee really because that's part of my identity as a linguist.

However, the significance of being a linguist is something that sets her apart from being 'only a teacher':

You know, I've done all the exams, I deserve to belong to this professional body. They do nothing for me. It's not like, you know, the Association for Language Learning which is a teaching professional body. I do a lot with them, I work with them, they're kind of part of my life in a way. Whereas this just comes through once a year and I think, hmm, what have you done except send me a magazine each year, and really nothing? But I still continue to pay and I have laughed at myself a lot but it is, again, that's just an identity thing, that's another strand and that's not what I want to let go of.

There is a claim here for academic status, perhaps closer to Giroux's 'Teacher as Intellectual'. Rachel's identity is linguist ('part of my life') rather than *teacher* of modern foreign languages.

Jesse also linked his subject with his teaching identity. However, he made the distinction between how he would identify himself in a social situation, 'as a History teacher', with other history teachers, 'as a specialist in my area, that is political history' and with friends, 'just as a teacher, though they know that'. This notion of identity recalls Wenger's (1998) model, point one:

- identity as *negotiated experiences* where teachers define who they are by the ways they experience themselves through participation with, and perceptions of, others;

So it seems that for these teachers there is a stable identity but its representation depends on social context.

### ***What factors do you think have contributed to your own teacher identity?***

The second question, factors which have contributed to teacher identity, proved largely unproductive in terms of identification by teachers of discrete influences. No teacher made reference to ways in which the context of their work impinged on their professional identity and in fact this question met with limited responses.

Certainly the sense of self and professional identity emerged strongly again. Simon suggested that this was a question which required a wide ranging answer, but he conflates the personal with the professional immediately:

What influences me [sic]? Everything really. Colleagues, students, friends, family. Where do I stop?

Where teachers were able to point to factors, they were often early career teachers (teaching 0-3 years) whose teacher identity might be said to be in development, and not yet perhaps at the stage of conflation of self and professional identity. For these

teachers, initial teacher training seemed to have been significant in developing a professional identity. Anna, for example, said, 'Well, my PGCE was hugely influential. I sort of learned who I am as a teacher in that time, and that's developed ever since'. James, who was completing the PGCEM route second year of his Masters course, added, 'The Masters has been really challenging in making me think about what I believe in in terms of both Mathematics education and really education more widely. That's probably contributed a critical edge'. Jesse also referred to his MEd:

Well my MEd has changed the way I think about myself. Now I am a teacher but I'm also studying at Cambridge. Erm yes it's just the vanity I'm afraid.

However, most teachers in this group did not single out influences that impacted on their teaching identity. This can be said to be entirely consistent with the notion that self and professional identity converge, since to identify such influences would involve a life narrative, much as Simon indicates, rather than a response to an interview question.

***Do you think identity is a stable concept, or do you think it might change over time? If so, what changes might you expect to see?***

The third question, focusing on change as a means to map across to the models of identity discussed in Chapters One and Two, was positioned in teacher response much as question two – that is, contextualised within a teacher identity of self and professional as one. Stability/change were concepts which were addressed within the notion of self. David, for example, said:

I think I'm immune now to being influenced by others. I know who I am as a teacher, for right or wrong. I certainly reflect on new challenges, but I wouldn't say that they change who I am or what I believe in.

Ray echoed this stance:

I think I've been able to distance myself from much of that [external factors].

The early career teachers in this group were most aware of the possibility of change. James' response to this question showed an expectation indeed that his professional identity would develop:

I think it [professional identity] is bound to change, maybe when I am a Head of Department and have management responsibilities.

Anna too expected change, but was less certain about how that might happen. She replied, 'Yes, I think my identity will change but I don't know how'.

Jesse was certain of change, 'Bound to, bound to' but in him the beginning of the conflation of professional and self were evident when he added, 'though a lot of teaching is about exaggerating bits of who you are anyway'.

Teacher identity then seemed in this group to be evident only in the early stages of teaching. After that point, the conflation of personal and professional identity was sufficiently strong that questions about teacher identity drew answers relating to 'self'.

The question of discourse remains relevant in this section. Although, as indicated, there was not a sense of frustration evident on the part of the teachers when discussing identity, there was nevertheless, as with professionalism, a lacuna in the discussion. I have thus far considered it in terms of conflation of personal and professional. However, I quoted Bourne in Chapter One with reference to identity and discourse, and it may well be therefore that what I was encountering were precisely these 'specialised consciousnesses' where official pedagogic discourse served not simply, as Bourne says, to construct different identities, but as Beck says, to create *particular* identities:

the ... State is seen as employing its new repertoire of controls and incentives to project particular kinds of *prospective pedagogical identities*.  
(Beck, 2002:623)

This would resonate with Bernstein's claims discussed in Chapters One and Two, that the ideological State construction of identities employs particular discourses to bring about compliance. If Bourne, Beck and Bernstein are brought together, the curious teacher silence on identity might be explicable through the question of not only restricted access to discourse, so that areas such as knowledge and professionalism are explored only in prescribed ways, but rather the excision of the notion of professional identity altogether. Teacher identity suggests awareness and choice, criticality and judgement, and indeed, voice, elements which run counter to a required compliant workforce. Discourse here suppresses consciousness. It may be



that the teachers in this group, far from being uninterested in professional identity formation, are given no choice but silence.

## **Research**

The final set of interview questions addressed the two research questions relating to teacher research. Interview questions can be found in Appendix 15.

### ***Research Question 1: What claims, if any, do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives?***

In order to address the first Research Question, I wanted to use the first interview question to understand how teachers understood research in their own contexts, and the ways in which research had influenced or changed their professional thinking and practices. Key themes here were definitions, purpose and impact (on classrooms and self).

### ***Interview Question One: How do you understand teacher research, and what is its significance, if any, to you?***

I was interested with this question in not only establishing teachers' own beliefs about the importance of teacher research, but also the discourse used to describe that understanding. I was looking particularly for evidence of policy or professional discourse, or an awareness on the part of the teachers of differing types of discourse used to explore these areas of definition and purpose.

Defining research certainly drew strong responses, but what was equally clear was that there was no agreement from teachers on what it might constitute. Some teachers drew lines of demarcation between teacher research and research formalised through awards:

Well if we pull it all back, do we agree on what research is? Once we've agreed on what research is, does the research satisfy our expectations of that research, and whether that's at a low level, you know, what happens in my classroom, or whether that's a, you know, sort of huge level, what happens in government. But if you didn't do it, what would happen if you didn't do it? Because presumably, even if I'm not writing anything down, or even I'm not collecting some data, I'm still doing it. So when I take in books and mark books and things, that's not working, that was a failure, or I need to teach it this way, or whatever, then presumably that's still happening, but just not at a

level that we would call research, PhD kind of thing.  
(Nick)

Several issues emerge from Nick's response. Firstly, that teacher research is seen as 'low level', and secondly that its impact is negligible – 'what would happen if you didn't do it?'. Certainly status of teacher research has been open to attack. The very word 'research' has been replaced by policy with 'enquiry'. However, as Becky observed:

It was a few years ago he [David Hargreaves] ... talked about the use of the word 'research' in schools and he said a few things that wound me up actually. He said he didn't feel that people should use the word 'research' in schools because it sort of almost frightens teachers off. Well I think, I almost think it's the opposite. If you use a proper term, which we're all capable of using big words here, it's not, you know, it almost downgrades if you're just calling it 'enquiry' or whatever, because then what does that actually mean? If you're going to just call things by different names so that people, then you're just lying to people. And I think at our school everyone is happy with the term 'research' so to suddenly start changing it and calling it 'enquiry' would be ridiculous.

By retaining the term 'research' teachers establish a claim on notions of intellectual engagement, including criticality, which the policy term 'enquiry' negates. Certainly Giroux's call for teachers to be transformative intellectuals could not be met by a culture of enquiry.

However, Nick also goes on to state that research is synonymous with day to day teacher activity in the classroom, 'Because presumably, even if I'm not writing anything down, or even I'm not collecting some data, I'm still doing it [research]'. This is a key question. What does research constitute for teachers? Is it distinct from the day to day activity of being a teacher? Certainly the interview question responses incorporated elements of those practices, often referred to as 'reflective teaching'.

John, for example said, 'Research gives I think momentum and impetus to the notion of the reflective practitioner'. Mary expressed similar views, 'When I think about where the culture of research has blossomed most, some of it's been through the whole business of encouraging the teachers to be forced to become a reflective teacher'. Sara saw research as a frame of mind which was reflective in nature, '...research isn't a body of knowledge, it's just an approach. It's a thoughtful,

reflective thinking approach to what you're doing'. Penny was also clear that teacher research was the act of reflection:

It could be one lesson, or trying one small idea with one class and evaluating it. And it's the evaluation, and the thinking about it, and reflecting, that's the important bit, not necessarily having to write it up formally.

However, other teachers were clear that reflective teaching was not the same as research:

Is research about allowing people to look into their own practice? I wouldn't say that it's, I'd call it research necessarily beyond the fact that they're reflecting on what they're doing.

(Simon)

I mean yes, I mean in the sense that you need to be able to stand back from what you do and have a look at what you do and be able to reflect so that you can make decisions. And that's, with anything, that, every walk, you know, I think of things I did last night, which actually when I reflect on them were wrong, you know, but whether that's to do, I don't know, whether that's research I'm not sure.

(Nick)

In this, as with other areas, there was no homogeneity in response. Teacher voice, although certainly more loquacious, has not necessarily been engaged in debate which has led to agreement about the nature of teacher research. We are left again with disparity..

### ***Discourse and research***

Defining research also gave access to discourse use. In discussing purpose of teacher research, discourse analysis was revealing when considering the presence or absence of research as critique.

The discourse of compliance for example offered research as a way of achieving what was required by policy:

Well research is just all about what we do in order to improve. It's all... That is research, isn't it? Finding out how to do it, getting some of the... the latest thinking on how... on good teaching and learning, and so on, good practice.

(Kathy)

Similarly John saw research as a mechanism for improving standards:

I think research could be part of a range of improvement strategies that you might deploy in a subject area or a department that was actually under-performing to some extent.

The language of policy is evident in both of these statements – ‘good practice’ ‘under-performing’. Research functions to realise the policy position. But this was not the view of all of the teachers in the group, and in fact was the opposite position dominated in responses from this group of teachers. Sara, for example, saw research as, ‘wonderfully and subtly subversive, and encourages exploration beyond what’s in a box’, a position perhaps able to be categorised as research as defiance. The contrasting discourses reveal opposed positions by teachers and again there is no agreement evident.

Nevertheless what was evident was a rejection by a number of teachers in this group of research being used to promote a policy position.

And it’s very, very frustrating when you know governments just ignore, ignore research evidence. You know, when you think about the amount of money that went into the Cambridge Primary Review and just entirely ignored and you know, you think about what the Conservatives are, you know, going back to rote learning and desks in rows. And you know, it would be ignoring the whole wealth of evidence to suggest that maybe not the right way. Well I mean they’re talking to the public and the public won’t be aware of this, of the research. And so they can quite frankly get away with it.  
(Simon)

Being a teacher researcher was seen as a powerful position in being able to understand the ways in which research has been used in education policy:

Because [I am a teacher researcher] I know how easily research can be skewed and data skewed to fit purposes. I often question the way that government sets these sort of what we should be teaching, how we should be teaching, and comes up with these new goals and stuff. And I know there’s some kind of panel that people that they’ve got and what have you. ... You know, you don’t seem to know the credentials of those people making these massive decisions for the country and coming from a research background, it makes you question that more.  
(Becky)

Criticality in terms of policy and research was perhaps most clearly summed up by Elaine:

But then they’re [policy] using it [research] as a weapon rather than a tool which is not, it’s not what it’s all about is it?

Such strongly held and expressed views were not evident from the other interview areas. The clearly articulated discourses evident here, and the political acuity evident suggests that the act of teacher research in and of itself generates a discourse which allows for realisation of teacher views through Giroux's 'discourse of possibility' – that is, a space where teachers are given voice. As such, it is possible to argue that research is emancipatory (Research Question 3: *Can the claims for emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?*) through the production of a shared discourse, and thus the strengthening of teacher voice:

If enough people in enough schools are looking into a similar thing, they might reach similar conclusions, and that's going to be a very powerful voice.  
(Penny)

The reclaiming of a professional discourse also has, as was argued in Chapter One, profound implications for teacher professionalism, knowledge and identity. The following section explores these areas within the teacher responses to interview question two.

### ***Interview Question Two: Should research be part of teaching? Why?***

The second interview question was looking to establish whether teaching could, or indeed should, incorporate teacher research as part of teacher education. Whilst I was interested in teachers' responses to the place that teacher research could occupy, what was unexpected was that this question would allow teachers to make active and strong links between research and professionalism, knowledge and identity.

Teachers in this group were clear that research should be integral to teaching:

Because I've been involved in research for quite a few years I think you can't be a teacher without being a researcher.  
(Penny)

It's about being a proper teacher, research is about being a proper teacher.  
(Susie)

But you know, it should be in there as part of being a good practitioner, it should be that you have an enquiry-based and evidence-based sort of stem to the way that you teach.  
(Becky)

Where teachers had previously described themselves as 'research cynics' or 'not active in research', these responses were more muted. Dave, for example, said,

'Well, it can't do any harm I suppose'. However, enthusiasm for research as part of teaching was the overwhelming response from this group of teachers, and not least because it offered a sense of insight into classroom practice:

It's a sort of mind-set, a research mind-set, although you might not be permanently analysing every classroom incident you almost, you start to think in a different way and that will change the way that you teach just because you've switched your thinking.  
(Rachel)

### ***Professionalism***

Reference to the research 'mind-set', echoed elsewhere in these interviews, also referenced teacher autonomy in judgement, and thus addressed a key construct of professionalism:

And if a teacher really feels that something is important and should be focused on, and does research, and can prove through that that it does make a difference... I think if enough people do that, and if there's the right forum for that to be listened to, then you are saying this is in my classroom with students, this is what's worked. I think everyone should be listening to this.  
(Penny)

That teachers should be exercising autonomous judgement, and that research was a mechanism for this, came through strongly. Mary's response illustrates the potential power of research for professionalism:

I think that research and a research orientation of mind is something that's very necessary in modern... in the modern era. Because you... you know, you need to keep questioning what you're doing and why you're doing it, because you're in a changing situation. And if you don't, then you're at the mercy of other people doing it for you and some of the time they're doing it in a half-baked way, and a half-informed way.

The reclaiming here of expertise is significant. With research, there is a confidence in challenging those looking to define teaching whilst excluding teachers from that debate. It returns to the notion of mind-set:

Because it's not just the research that's significant it's the path that doing research takes you on that makes you keep questioning what you're doing. Not in a kind of restless, agitated way, but in a kind of genuinely professional way.  
(Elaine)

One teacher, Sara, was explicit about linking research and professionalism, 'I often wonder why I enjoyed research. I think it gives you your own professionalism back'.

Research and professionalism were thus clearly linked within the responses of this group of teachers. However, analysis of these responses also revealed a link between research and professional (rather than policy) knowledge.

### **Knowledge**

For Ellen, the claim made was to knowledge being shaped by research, and that the knowledge thus produced would be more enduring in nature:

I think that change in the school on a whole school basis would involve taking into account educational knowledge and research knowledge to date, and seeking to link it with other schools to make it meaningful rather than just a quick fix answer.

Emma pointed out too that research also incorporated finding out about the knowledge generated by others, 'So even if you did, you didn't do a lot of actual research but you read research that had been done, you're gaining knowledge that way' (Emma). Rachel echoed this point, though whilst discussing a lack of access to teacher research, 'I actually do feel this real lack of not being able to engage with the research that other people are doing, even just hearing about it on a one-to-one level in that discussion. I feel robbed actually'.

For some teachers the area of knowledge gained through research was almost irrelevant, since its potency was to be found in the personal impact made:

The thing is, I think it [research] contributes to knowledge, period. I now have that knowledge from my research. I don't know if it contributes to me as a teacher. I think it contributes to me as an empathetic human being.  
(Susie)

What is interesting here is the lack of distinction Susie makes between research as a contributor to her as a teacher, and as a 'human being'. This echoes the claim I made in Chapter One, concerning 'The fine line, indeed the invisible boundary, that many teachers draw between their personal identity and that of the classroom practitioner'. For Susie, the notion of the 'empathetic human being' is synonymous with being a teacher. In this way, Susie's comment segues into the notion of research and identity.

## ***Identity***

Although in previous sections, identity has been discussed as a discrete concept, for the teachers in this group, this question revealed identity and research to be intertwined. Research seemed to offer a sense of self which served to shore up the fragmented identity created by the tensions between policy and professionalism.

Ellen, for example, cited research as instrumental in reinforcing her identity in and out of school:

I don't like to brag or things, so for me having a role within research in the school sort of maintains that, the sort of my, I suppose my identity outside the school.

Tom C also claimed research as having an impact on identity, though with reference to colleagues:

You know I think that they would, without the research element, they'd probably feel much less like proper teachers, it's become a sort of established part of what they do, a part of, of their identity I think really.

The idea of research and the 'proper teacher' is threaded through a number of responses. Although not fully articulated, the notion of the 'proper teacher' seems to be linked with an independence of judgement, identities which resist external shaping of self, but rather seek to enact control over their own professional lives.

In thus shaping teacher identity, professionalism and knowledge, research makes a very strong claim on its significance in teachers' lives. It returns to the original Research Question 2: *What claims, if any, do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives?* Within this group, research potentially plays a fundamental and powerful role in enabling teachers to generate a discourse which opens up the possibility of reclaiming professionalism, knowledge and identity. However, there is still to be negotiated the co-option of research by policy, and its effect on teachers' understanding of the possibility of research as emancipatory. The final question was designed to explore how research had been enacted in the classroom, and to thus develop an understanding of the ways in which research had either reinforced policy, or enable professionalism.



***Interview Question Three: In your experience, and if you have undertaken research, has that research impacted on your own professional practices, and if so, how?***

The third question focused on the realisation of research on classrooms and schools more widely.

The impact of research is an elusive concept to capture, even with teacher voice. For example, Angela said:

You know, my German classes are not going to be suddenly informed by my research, and certainly I don't think the kids would notice, but maybe I'll just appreciate more what I've got around me - and be a bit more angry at a couple of things.

This dual situation of knowing research has made a difference, but unsure how to identify that difference was also reported by Emma:

I believe that I have a better understanding from my research, but I don't know that I'm suddenly going to teach Film and English and Media and Politics and Languages in a radically different way, having done it.

Nick expressed doubt about the idea of transferability of research data, citing this approach as 'hard line':

Being able to say that you have looked at something as thoroughly as you could have looked at that thing, and then come to a conclusion which is as strong as you can make it ... the way you've handled your data is actually rigorous and intellectually challenging and that your conclusions are as complete as it can be. That's probably, I don't know, in the everyday world of the school that may be a bit hard line.

Other teachers had a zeal about the idea of research without having the evidence of impact available:

Surely the purpose of research is to improve the experience of the students, surely. It has to come down to that. And if the students are more engaged, more motivated, achieving more, in whatever guise that might be, it doesn't have to be, I don't think, in exams all the time. Surely if they are doing that then the satisfaction of the staff will go up, hugely. And I think it's quite easy in education to become quite stagnant, and to just do the same old thing over and over again, and so I think research has a real value in enlivening the classroom perhaps.

(Josie)

And one teacher felt that research did not impact on the classroom at all. Dave, a previously self-described 'research cynic' stated, 'Research is something that seems to be esoteric, it's separate from what we do, and that's not really what we want'.

Where teachers in this group did describe research as impacting on their own classroom practice, it was done so in ways which could not easily be calibrated against a set of 'standards'. In one instance, the teacher used the 'discovery' principles of research as a pedagogic approach:

Well, being a research practitioner is incredibly important and that sounds like a phrase but I completely believe in it. From, as soon as I first started teaching a big part of my training was looking at being a reflective practitioner, and as a Drama teacher as well, it's one of the main sort of tenets of how I sort of teach my students, or encourage them to be learning from their own mistakes and you know, there are no mistakes as such, it's just sort of learning from experience. And I think that that's really important as a teacher and as a researcher. You learn from experience and get the bigger picture. (Sheila)

Similarly, Emma translated her experience of interviewing teachers into a pedagogical approach which valued student voice:

And I guess it's like this. I mean if you interview teachers, you know, sometimes they will just start letting rip because they don't have the opportunity to talk and you know, some of it can become quite cathartic. It's been like that with the students and I think, I like to think they appreciate just having a half hour, being listened to, talking about their own experience.

For Sarah, it was about having confidence in choices made in the classroom and to translate that into ensuring students had confidence in her as a practitioner:

The confidence to inspire confidence ... any degree from [sic] confidence, that's all come from research and engagement with research.

Becky also saw impact as associated with confidence, but this time, confidence from colleagues in bringing about change in the classroom:

You're also more aware that if you have a good idea it's quite good to share that idea, but why should anyone listen to you? And that is the difference between research and someone just having a good idea. Because you know, if you have a good idea, I think this will work in my classroom. OK, that worked. You go to break and you say, 'Oh I've just done this,' and everyone goes, 'Oh that's nice,' but no one, it doesn't often get any further. Whereas if you have a good idea and then you do a bit of research and you show it works people just take you more seriously, and it's the only way people are going to start changing is if there's some of kind of evidence.

For James, impact was linked with systematic and regular evaluation lessons and doing so by seeking out information beyond his own teaching experiences:

I think it just, just putting it, well putting me into a mind-set of you know, always looking at, you know, the way I've taught something and actually trying to decide was it effective, was it not effective, how could I do this differently? What do other people know out there? So yeah, I think, you know, trying to make a decision as to whether I did teach a topic effectively or not, that's probably the main one for me.

Only two teachers in this group were able to point to specific 'indicators' and interestingly, these were both heavily involved in TLAs, and had the notion of indicators firmly in mind through that training.

For Kathy it was the use of questioning:

And it's how you... you use... you use the word research, I think, and say well let's do some research on questioning. Okay, this is what I've read. This is what I've seen, this is... This is how it makes a difference, and then roll it out. And then it really has an impact.

Mark also had indicators, though his claim to 'quantify' impact is perhaps questionable:

Well the impact will be in the evaluations from the Subject Improvement Plans in Year 2 in terms of something that we can quantify. But that's really hard to quantify the different cohorts etc. But that's the impact measures.

It could be argued that in policy terms, research has only been successful if impact can be observed and measured. In this way, only Kathy and Mark's research would be legitimated by policy. But the undoubted impact of research on practice described by the other teachers in this group cannot be dismissed. It may not be measureable, but it is certainly real. It may be that this experience of research impact is categorisable as belonging to the professional dimension of teacher education, the language of the sacred knowledge rather than the profane, of the professional rather than the policy driven teacher, of the self as autonomous rather than, in Bottery and Wright's (2000) words 'driven'.

### ***Interviews and Findings***

These stages of data analysis were both rewarding and frustrating. The interviews had addressed the research questions, but the responses to the interview questions had frequently been hampered by lack of articulation on the part of the teachers

being interviewed. In piloting the interview questions for Research Question 1 (*In the 'contested' fields of professionalism, knowledge and identity, what can teachers' conceptualisations of those areas tell us about the impact on practice and policy, if any?*), for example, I had found teachers frequently unable to offer answers to the questions. For the major study, I had used quotations from key scholars as prompts in an attempt to support teachers in making a response. This had worked in a limited fashion, but I was still left with silences. The data gathered was extensive enough to allow analysis against models explored in Chapters One and Two, but there were still substantial areas remaining unarticulated. My search for teacher voice was not answered simply by offering space to talk.

Research Question 4 (*To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore the concepts of professionalism, knowledge and identity?*) became increasingly important. Access to powerful discourses became a key component in trying to understand the difficulties that teachers encountered in answering questions on professionalism, knowledge, identity and research. One lead emerged in the section on research, where teachers actively involved in teacher research were found to have access to a discourse which allowed them to be expansive and assertive in their responses.

In turn, this led to a claim for emancipation through research (*Can the claims for emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?*) in that research developed a discourse which allowed exploration of the place of both policy and professionalism in the construction of knowledge, professionalism and identity. That research was emerging as potentially significant for teachers in terms of professionalism, knowledge and identity was centrally important for this thesis.

Research Question 3 (*What claims, if any, do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives?*) was itself located within the complex area of impact, which itself is a focus of on-going research (Campbell and Levin, 2012). What was significant here was that the discourse used by teachers to try and access the notion of impact was, apart from two teachers, not that of policy. Instead there was reference to a wide range of impact events, not measurable, but real to those teachers. This may reflect a move towards a discourse of professionalism, or it may be that this is an area which itself is developing a discourse.

The interviews had therefore been valuable in pointing up areas where teachers were able to articulate views, and where silences remained. In the analysis thus far, the interviews had certainly demonstrated professionalism, knowledge, identity and research to be key areas. Their interrelationship was increasingly evident, a dimension I had explored extensively in Chapter Two, and it was equally clear that teacher voice did have a significant contribution to make in developing understanding in the fields. However, to reiterate, the silences remained. The task was to access those teacher voices in ways which did not rely on teacher access to an existing set of discourses, but rather gave teachers access to discourses in ways which required reaction rather than construction. The solution I developed was that of using card sorts.

Chapter Five now deals with the analysis of the card sort data, and offers a discussion of the ways in which my research questions were both answered and challenged by the findings.

## **Chapter Five: Teacher voice and card sorts: ‘the most useful conversation [sic] I’ve had about education in a long, long time.’**

Throughout this research, I have sought to understand if, and how, teacher voice, and in particular the notion of the silencing of that voice and thus the conscious limiting of access to professional discourse, has impacted on teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity. In turn, and following Giroux (1988) and Kincheloe (2003), I was interested to explore the place of teacher research in any possible restoration of that voice to teachers.

As the previous findings and discussion chapters have demonstrated, accessing teacher voice was indeed problematic. Despite drawing on a range of approaches to interviewing, including offering quotes as prompts, teachers found that answering these questions proved almost impossible; yet the impossibility was not located in a lack of interest or even a lack of ideas, but rather in access to the professional language – the discourse - needed to express those ideas. As I indicate in Chapter Three, my response was to use a card sort.

Briefly, the card sort consisted of four sets of statements on knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research; each set had five cards which expressed a range of views taken from scholars in the field, whose work I had used for both literature review chapters and in interview two. The difference with the card sort was that instead of asking teachers to respond to a question, as I had in the interviews, I asked them to order the cards, within the four categories, in ways which they felt offered a ‘best fit’ with their own views, and to talk me through their decisions, commentaries which I recorded. Nine teachers participated in this activity, ranging from a head teacher to an NQT, across four schools. The four schools had all previously been involved in my research, and five of the nine teachers had taken part in previous interviews.

My intention in using a card sort approach was not to generate, necessarily, a teacher discourse to be developed at a later time, as my intention had been when using this as a teaching strategy; nor was it, as MacBeath had used it, to draw out differing scenarios in situations (though MacBeath’s version was actually a linear

ordering of statements, which is entirely opposite to my own intention to allow total flexibility in the ordering of the cards). Rather, I wanted to know whether the 'silences' I had encountered in interviews did indeed reflect Giroux's predicted diminution of teacher voice in ways which reflected an intellectual withdrawal or rejection of such discourse, or whether the silences were, at least in part, a result of the excision of teacher voice from the debates on knowledge, professionalism, identity and research as the state took over control of these areas, a move which had led to a 'professional' silencing.

It was a crucial result, therefore, to find that teacher engagement with these areas through the card sorts generated substantial and sustained accounts of the teachers' understandings of the areas. Recorded accounts averaged 30-40 minutes of such discussion from teachers, with almost no comment from me except for the occasional, deliberately neutral response. This contrasted significantly with the interview data where questions relating to these areas rarely generated responses longer than 20 seconds, and where I had found myself increasingly having to use further interview probes to elicit any response at all - which even then resulted only in expressions of uncertainty: 'I don't know' or 'This is difficult - I need time to think about this'. As I will show, far from teachers being dis- or uninterested in these areas, teachers were and are vitally and centrally engaged with the constructs. What was notable for me as researcher was to experience the expressions of energy which informed the sorting decisions - the teachers were without exception animated and lively in their accounts. One teacher said she had found 'the whole experience inspirational'; another called it 'a brilliant bit of research'; yet another said that he had found it the 'most useful conversation [sic] I've had about education in a long, long time'. From this I took the card sort to have been successful as a mechanism for releasing teacher voice, which in some ways, at least for this group of teachers, had served to free them from the oppression of silence.

### **Analysing the data**

In analysing the data against the card sort statements, I have organised this section into two levels of analysis, the first dealing with the ordering of the cards, the second with the teacher commentaries during the card sort activity.

### ***Level One analysis – the card sort***

I wanted to see firstly whether the ordering of the cards by the teachers offered insights into similarities or differences of views. Acknowledging the issues of interpretation, discussed later, I was nevertheless interested in identifying areas of agreement, and in diversity of views. From this first-level analysis, I wanted to see whether some key areas of either disagreement or contradiction were emerging, which a second-level analysis – that is, using the teacher commentaries – would serve to illuminate. I tabulated the teacher responses, showing individual ordering but also indicating most and least popular responses.

### ***Level Two analysis - teacher commentaries***

The commentaries consist of the ongoing spoken observations made by teachers as they engaged with the ordering of cards, and post the event when they reflected on both their choices and any further implications those statements might have for them. These commentaries were recorded and transcribed in full. In this section of the analysis, I use the teacher commentaries to address and illuminate key questions resulting from the card sort analysis – for example, exploring apparent contradictions in the ordering of the cards. A reflexive discussion on the teachers' choices refers back to the constructs set up in the literature review chapters and maps against these the results that my own data have raised.

It is important to acknowledge the issue of interpretation present in any engagement with written text, and the card sorts provide an example of this: inevitably the statements were read differently, and with different emphases, by the teachers. It should be noted, for example, that it was unavoidable that the statements would be open to interpretation, and indeed, as will be seen, some teachers agreed with parts of one statement on a card but rejected other parts of the same card; others engaged in lengthy commentaries exploring and explaining why they had or had not chosen to include particular cards in their 'sort'; others wanted to explore the relationship between the sets as they went along. Given the extent, depth and richness of the data, attempting to organise and categorise teacher commentary into themes meant that these themes could only be representative, rather than comprehensive. But again in using my research questions to order these responses,



I have attempted to bring a logic to that selection, which in turn will allow me to illuminate and reflect on the research findings in a coherent and consistent way.

In addressing the question of teachers' commentaries and the deepening of understanding that exploring these might yield, I have used the first-level analysis to identify key questions and then turn to a second-level analysis, using teacher commentaries, in order to explore these questions in more depth.

I want to re-state here that the data used in this section involved a sample of nine teachers and I am therefore not making any claims to generalisation. Instead, I want to use these data in ways that enable relatability (Bassey, 1999) to be a key concept.

### ***Tabulating responses***

The following tables represent the ordering of the cards by all nine teachers. (Appendix 16 tabulates teacher participants).

The first table shows the results for knowledge, the second, professionalism, the third, identity and the final, fourth chart, research.

A brief 'key' to the statements is provided within each of the following sections [NB: Card 1 was the title card and so does not appear in the teachers' card sort orders].

### **Teacher knowledge**

The first literature review chapter explored knowledge in terms of three organisational principles: definitions, or the 'naming of parts' - the claim that teacher knowledge has identifiable components; constructs – how these have been organised; and politicisation – how knowledge has become part of a wider debate on policy and control.

I used Elbaz (1991), Shulman (1992) and Schon (1983) in particular to emphasise the significance for this type of knowledge analysis of both the practical and teacher inarticulacy in discussing such knowledge. The second section, 'constructs', used Brown and McIntyre's (1993) notion of craft knowledge, which again reflects a belief that the focus for teachers on knowledge is concerned with the practical, and which echoed the previous section by saying again that teachers were in the main unable to articulate their views about teacher knowledge. In this section I then explored

Pollard *et al.*'s (2002) forms to show how components might be brought together to inform key conceptual scaffolds, particularly noting the 'elitist' category which linked the notions of knowledge and dominant power structures. Finally I looked at the politicisation of knowledge, which explored claims relating to legitimisation of types of knowledge for ideological purposes with specific reference to Bernstein's (2000) 'sacred and profane' and Hargreaves' (1998) *Creative Professionalism The Role of Teachers in a Knowledge Society*. In Chapter Two I explored the relationship of knowledge and professionalism, and the ways in which the definition of one impacted on the definition of the other. Using Bernstein's (2000) notions of 'sacred and profane knowledge', Giroux's (1988) claims relating to the teacher as intellectual, and Freire's (1985) exploration of the relationship between knowledge and power, I revisited the politicisation of teacher knowledge and related this particularly to Hargreaves' (1998) claims citing Gibbons' mode 1 and mode 2 knowledge, with mode 2 knowledge (the 'practical'/profane) suggested as the only useful knowledge for teachers. Within this chapter, I noted claims from Giroux (1988) that teacher knowledge will cease to be part of teachers' discourse as teacher knowledge is progressively claimed by the state.

In this section, I am seeking to map the views of the teachers in my sample group against the claims explored in the two literature chapters.

**Knowledge cards**

- 2 Socially constructed, not owned by policy-makers but through professional discourse.
- 3 Need to deal with the NC but teacher knowledge is not subject to fashion. A sense of right and wrong is evident.
- 4 Have to meet NC and exam requirements but also teacher knowledge should not be driven by centralised version of education.
- 5 Schools define what teacher knowledge is currently needed and must respond to current policy demands.
- 6 Must focus on the practical, and keep the best of the past. Theoretical knowledge only useful if it contributes to this.

Figure 5:1

<b>Knowledge Card ordering</b>									
Choice	Alison	Rachel	Cecilia	Tom	Ray	David	Simon	Jesse	Ruth
First	6	6	5	4	6	2	2	2	6
Second	2	4	6	6	2	6	3	3	4
Third	5	5	3	3	3+4 =	4	4	5	5
Fourth	4	2	4	2		5	5	4	3
Fifth	3	3	2	5	5	3	6	6	2

Table 5:1

## ***Discussion***

This is an interesting distribution. No single statement stands out either as favoured or rejected, although statement six (practical knowledge) claims four of the nine first responses, and three of the second. However, it also features twice in the fifth choice. It seems to be the position on teacher knowledge which divided the sample group with whom I worked. Statement two (knowledge is not owned by policy-makers) also features strongly in first and second choices, with five teachers having selected that, although four also chose this statement as either fourth or fifth choice. Statement four (meeting exam needs but also having a teacher driven component) features three times in choices one and two, and not at all as fifth choice, though three teachers selected this as a fourth choice. Statement five (schools define knowledge needed) features most notably in the lower part of the chart, as third, fourth or fifth choices, though one teacher selected this as first choice.

It could be said, on the basis of this first level of analysis, that for many teachers in my sample group there seems to be a preference for a view of teacher knowledge that reflects a practical dimension, though this was not true for all. Similarly, there seems to be a strong feeling that knowledge should be teacher- and not policy-driven. Yet the apparent contradiction in this pairing was not reflected by any ordering response, as with one teacher for whom statements three and four were of equal significance. Statement five, that schools define the knowledge that teachers need, received a largely dismissive response. From this first-level analysis therefore we might claim, albeit tentatively, that teachers feel a strong sense of ownership over knowledge, but that the type of knowledge they own is that which relates to a practical need, that is, the needs of the classroom. Insofar as this first level of analysis with the sample group might be able to make such a claim, it seems that the models proposed by Elbaz, Shulman and Schon (1983) and indeed the notion of craft knowledge as focused on the practical can be said to be reflected in these findings. However, in this card sort analysis, exploring the claims about inarticulacy are not straightforward: certainly these claims would have been validated by my finding in the previous chapters in which I analyse teacher interviews precisely with this issue at the fore: but in this chapter, inarticulacy is mediated by the card sort, and so it could be claimed that 'inarticulacy' is ameliorated by the use of the card sort activity, and that it is access to the language of discourse which constituted the

problem, not an inability to either engage with or explore these ideas. This refers back to Research Question 2: 'To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore these concepts?' and begins to suggest that teachers' abilities to explore the discourses of power are contained only by an inability to *express*, not an inability to *engage* with, these ideas, and that tentatively at this stage we might cautiously agree with the notion that access to the discourses of power is indeed a critical dimension. As such, we move into the political as Bernstein's 'sacred and profane knowledge' offers a useful division: it appears that teachers are most able to articulate views when the type of knowledge under discussion is the profane – Bernstein's 'dislocation between professional knowledge and the knowledge of the market place'. Perhaps then the discourse of the profane – mode 2 knowledge – is still a legitimised discourse, albeit it bounded by policy, and it is mode 1 knowledge which has been almost entirely excised from teacher knowledge discourse by policy. Giroux's call to teachers as intellectuals has no language foundation on which to build:

... a transformative intellectual, charged with the responsibility of 'interrogat[ing] the political nature of ... schooling' (2000:xxix)

It could certainly be inferred from these findings that the political claims on knowledge go largely unacknowledged by teachers, so focused are they on the policy-defined classroom needs of their students. This is a significant position in that it does suggest that Giroux's claims, that is, that teacher exclusion from policy and power discourses, results in a version of teacher knowledge which is denied access to these concepts. It echoes too Foucault, quoted in Chapter One, 'Discourse may seem of little account, but the prohibitions to which it is subject reveal soon enough its links with desire and power' (1971:11-12).

Teachers are working in a highly politicised environment, with 'school' professional knowledge both defined and enshrined in the form of the national curriculum, but it would appear that the 'prohibitions of discourse' do indeed create a version of reality with regard to teacher knowledge which is at best partial: teachers' claims to knowledge from this first analysis exist within a limited sphere relating to practical needs. The power discourses are *excluding* of the teachers and evidenced as being *exclusive* to policy-makers.

As I move into the next level of analysis, where I examine the commentaries I recorded as the teachers undertook this activity, I will be able to explore further the reasons and explanations of the ways in which the ordering of teacher knowledge was undertaken by teachers.

### ***Teacher knowledge – teacher commentary***

First-level analysis suggested that there were two major areas where examination of teacher commentary was essential in order to understand the card sort results.

The first was the evident tension between prioritising teacher knowledge as first and foremost related to classroom concerns which was given a label of ‘practicality’ and which encompassed a prioritising of the needs of students to be successful in their school careers and the claim that teachers felt in terms of ownership of knowledge.

The second area was the question of whether teachers acknowledged a political claim on knowledge: that is, whether policy-defined knowledge constituted – or should constitute – the whole of teacher knowledge.

### ***Practicality – ‘Owners of knowledge’***

*Statement 2* Socially constructed, not owned by policy-makers but through professional discourse.

*Statement 6* Must focus on the practical, and keep the best of the past. Theoretical knowledge only useful if it contributes to this.

The contradiction I indicated earlier between the declared need by teachers for practicality – that is, responding to policy demands with regard to knowledge - and a simultaneous desire to be seen as an ‘owner’ of professional knowledge (represented by the two statements above chosen by an almost equal number of teachers as their ‘top’ statement) raises some interesting questions about teacher priorities and the reasoning behind the choices made.

For those teachers in the sample group who selected ‘focus[ing] on the practical’, one key component evident in responses was classroom applicability, ‘It must be practical because if you can’t put it into practice then you might as well not have it ... you need to apply it’ (Ruth). Ray echoed this, ‘It’s got to be practical, hasn’t it? Not to

lose development but in my subject, and I think in others like Science and History, it's got to be practical, down to earth'. Alison agreed, 'As a teacher it's the practical application of knowledge that's important'.

Accompanying this was a sense of compliance and with meeting externally set expectations. Ruth, for example, stated that, 'You have to make [knowledge] applicable (sic) in line with the national legal requirements because that's what we're expected and trusted to follow'. The use of the term 'trust' is significant. It implies that the role Ruth holds in relation to teacher knowledge is one which is not simply concerned with observing standards. Rather, a measure of her own identity has been invested with an expectation which she must meet, or be seen as destroying that trust. This is a powerful moral hold on any individual and makes a claim which goes beyond compliance to internalisation of that compliance. It was not clear whether that trust was invested by students, parents or policy-makers, or all three, but clearly Ruth felt a deep obligation to meet those externally set expectations. There was no obvious awareness that these standards might reflect a politicisation of teacher knowledge, which Ruth would be legitimately placed to critique and perhaps challenge. Rather, as a 'good' teacher, in all senses, she had to meet these 'national legal requirements'.

Another teacher, Rachel, linked her choice more specifically to the national curriculum and with assessment, saying she chose statement 6 because 'it really struck home with me':

We need [practical knowledge] because we are so content driven, there's so much demand on us that we have to use our knowledge in a very specific way now ... my expertise is so governed by the curriculum I teach, the content in which I teach, that we are slaves to the syllabus demands, I think.

There is evident a certain sense of being driven down this 'practical knowledge' route but also an associated inevitability that teachers *have* to meet externally set demands in order to meet student needs, a second key component emerging from the responses of the practical knowledge teachers. One teacher, Cecilia, was clear that her role was to ensure student success, but also constructed success as meeting others' demands, 'So I think with knowledge, with my understanding of it, it's about ... getting the kids to jump through all the hoops'. She acknowledged 'all this social learning stuff' but observed that she had never seen anyone use social

constructivism to 'build a bridge'. For Cecilia, the priority was assessed work, 'We have a lot of things to do in the day ... I'm not sure how realistic it [social learning] is ... [they] have exams to pass ... it's not like a primary school. ... Exams are the measure of subject seriousness'.

Indeed, many teachers whose response was in the realm of the 'practical' cited assessment demands. Alison stated bluntly that, 'I'm paid to get these students through exams, simple as'. Cecilia was equally clear, '... the more time I've spent teaching and getting kids to pass exams, the more my focus is on how can I better get these kids to pass those exams'.

Although these responses indicate a clear commitment to 'practical knowledge', the commentaries do give insight into a deeper set of questions. Rachel, for example, after a fairly extensive discussion on national curriculum and assessment objectives, suddenly paused and added, '... whether I believe that that's ['getting students through exams'] all our knowledge should be used for, I don't necessarily agree with ... Our knowledge is underutilised because of that'. So even within this grouping, there is a suggestion that 'practical' knowledge is not the whole story.

Similarly the teachers in the sample group who prioritised statement 2 were not necessarily rejecting the 'practical' *per se*, but as Simon explained, 'There's something nagging at me that there's too much emphasis on the national curriculum as 'teacher knowledge' ... I like the idea that we're not driven by a centralised being, education'. Jesse rejected outright the influence of the national curriculum on knowledge, other than to meet inspection demands, 'I am not sure how important it is to meet current national curriculum syllabus demands, unless Ofsted are coming round'. But he too acknowledged the impact of assessment and meeting student needs: 'Obviously it's important to meet current syllabus demands in terms of jumping through hoops of examinations – you have to do that. But important in the bigger sense of the word? I don't know'. It is interesting to note that both Jesse and Cecilia, despite prioritising opposing statements, also saw exams as 'jumping through hoops'. It might be inferred that Jesse perhaps had more of a sense of ownership over teacher knowledge – indeed, at one stage he stated explicitly that he could not 'even remember' the last time he looked at the national curriculum, but that his schemes of work reflected 'a wider sense of my subject [history] ... the job of a



teacher is to *challenge* accepted knowledge'. David brought the same sense of confidence to the ownership of teacher knowledge, 'I've always been a little nervous about statements that are overly reliant on, in a sense, the practical ... any approach that over-prioritises the world of work ... it is overly utilitarian and instrumentalist'. He went on to say, 'I very much like the words 'creation' and recreation ... I was looking for statements which fitted with my strong sense that teachers with their students help to create knowledge that is rooted in the past but has developed over time...'. Interestingly, David put statement six as his second choice. He went on to say that whilst the 'practical' was 'temporary knowledge', the statements referring to integrating past and future knowledge were about 'seeing the value of education' and so his choice of statement six in second place reflected that.

The second question raised, that of teacher awareness of the political construction of professional knowledge, is less easy to answer in that the commentaries were woven through with comments which referred implicitly, rather than explicitly, to the politicisation of knowledge. Thus David remarked, 'Teachers should be there to help students question current policy movements and the current ... instrumentalist or utilitarian way of seeing education'. Similarly Ray referred to government policy on curriculum as 'coming full circle' and '... representing the latest whim'. However, that these teachers were acknowledging external agencies perhaps demonstrates that policy at least is seen as driving knowledge decisions. There were, though, some quite clear statements which demonstrated teacher awareness of politicised knowledge. Simon, for example, was dismissive of suggestions that knowledge is anything other than politically driven:

Schools define what teacher knowledge is currently needed is laughable. School ... the last people who define what knowledge – what teaching – is. It's government. I mean, it's depressing, you know, the idea that all knowledge is defined by government in response to whatever needs somebody in the DfES or wherever suggests.

Simon's trenchant view was not wholly subscribed to, though, by other teachers in this sample. Tom rejected any notion of a division, '... I don't think we can or should separate this idea of public from industry-led knowledge ... there is a legitimate need to have people with the right skills to make the economy function. The idea that it's separate – I just don't think that's viable'. Alison agreed, 'Teacher knowledge has to respond to whatever the kids need to be a success. Democracy is nice and all that

but it's not my job to bring that about – and I don't have that kind of influence anyway'.

The construction of teacher knowledge, at least within this sample group, although split in terms of prioritising practical or 'owned knowledge' appears to be far more nuanced than any of the 'classic' teacher knowledge component models would suggest. There were hierarchies of knowledge emerging, which were clearly tied to positioning of the 'compliance-defiance' spectrum. Teachers recognised the demands that curriculum policy, and particularly assessment demands, brought, and the need to respond to those for student success; but for those who saw ownership of the curriculum as a part of professional knowledge, these policy demands could only be handled by incorporating them into a larger teacher knowledge framework which located policy as 'temporary/of its time knowledge'.

Any model of teacher knowledge would, I contend, have to be prepared to acknowledge that the 'components' approach tells only a partial story, and does not recognise the complexity of the drivers that are directing teachers, nor that they themselves may well reject on a principled basis the validity of some teacher knowledge components which they are compelled to action. There is a more complicated and complex story to be told about teacher knowledge than a disaggregation allows. Instead, what we might work towards is an understanding that teachers respond differently to policy demands, responses which are frequently based on meeting student needs, but that there also exists for many teachers a parallel, if usually unvoiced, belief that teacher knowledge is more than policy. The notion of agency needs to be built into a model of teacher knowledge so that it becomes possible to discern knowledge which might be classified as 'compliance knowledge', which all teachers agree must be recognised as part of teacher knowledge, but which for many *does not comprise the whole of teacher knowledge*. Articulating that is difficult for teachers because they are asked to function within a context where compliance knowledge dominates the discourse. What I found with my sample group was that statements which expressed – or indeed legitimised – this viewpoint allowed teachers to voice a claim for such 'sacred' knowledge in ways which my interview questions had not, and could not have done, in a context where the legitimated discourse refers to 'profane' knowledge. Teacher knowledge is not an homogenous concept, but subject to differing constructions. As such, teachers'

engagement with those constructions are differently complexed and dependent on their views on the place both education, and indeed they, hold about the rights of teachers to own knowledge.

I now want to repeat the same form of analysis with regard to professionalism.

### **Teacher professionalism**

In Chapter One, I organised the literature review on professionalism using the same sub-groupings as those for teacher knowledge: definitions, constructs and politicisation.

Drawing on Parsons (1954) and a range of more recent scholars (Goodlad, 1990; Furlong *et al.*, 2000; Hoyle and John, 1995; Kincheloe, 2003; Bottery and Wright, 2000; Quicke, 1998), I showed that definitions of professionalism had been a preoccupation over some time, though largely unproductive in bringing about agreement. Parsons' 'list of components' had been developed to some extent to have instead overarching statements (for example, Furlong *et al.*, 2000, 'knowledge, autonomy and responsibility', interestingly leaving out 'power') and A. Hargreaves (2000) suggesting that a teacher view would be concerned with 'the quality of what they do'. Indeed it might be argued that the contested versions of professionalism which I discussed in the literature review could be linked directly to the ongoing and unresolved 'lists' - attempts to capture and categorise the features of teacher professionalism, inevitably, but without acknowledgement, presenting as both ideological and political claims made on teachers.

Constructs of professionalism – that is, the gathering together of component views and ideas into a more comprehensive scaffold - was not a recent event. I quoted Tawney from 1921:

... the meaning of their profession, both for themselves and for the public, is not that they make money but that they make health, ... or knowledge, or good government...  
(Tawney, 1921/1961:89-90)

The 'making of knowledge' is sharply contrasted with the market-driven language of the policy document 'Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners' (DfES, 2004b) where teachers are referred to as a 'workforce' who are tasked to put the 'consumer

first'. A similar tension was described by contrasting the positions of A. Hargreaves (2000) and Barber (2001) where professionalism became defined by historical changes over time in terms of teaching demands, though with quite different interpretations of those changes offered.

The differing claims segued directly into the notion of politicisation of professionalism. This positioning is not simply a set of contrasting claims about components or categories, but rather the wholesale claiming of the very concept of professionalism to further policy ends. New professionalism located teacher professionalism firmly in a version which was 'modernised' and recognised professionalism as the ability to react to the needs of the market place. The response from scholars, such as Quicke (1998), was to reveal that the end-point was the construction of a compliant 'workforce', critiqued by, for example, Dainton (2005) and Sachs (1999). The term 'de-professionalisation' came to describe this act of policy-makers in removing autonomy from teachers and led Bottery and Wright (2000) to describe teaching as 'the directed profession'.

In the following first-level analysis, I was interested in establishing how far the sample group's views could be said to coincide with, or diverge from, these positionings.

Again as an *aide memoire*, I reproduce below a shortened version of the card statements:

**Professionalism cards**

- 2 Bringing about the best learning environment so that students do well in exams. Take best out of the past and integrate it into the future.
- 3 Should seek coherence and stability as a profession through collaboration.
- 4 Resist the whims and fancies of policy-makers. Teachers should ensure values and beliefs are not lost.
- 5 Education is about creating a democratic society, and should not be industry-driven.
- 6 Professionalism is not static but has to respond to the market demands of education.

Figure 5:2

<b>Professionalism card ordering</b>									
Choice	Alison	Rachel	Cecilia	Tom	Ray	David	Simon	Jesse	Ruth
First	3	3	2	4	2	5	5	6	6
Second	2	2	5	2	6+3 =	2	3	5	2
Third	5	5	6	5		3	4	2	3
Fourth	4	4	3	3	5	6	6	3	5 face down
Fifth	6	6	4	6	4	4 set aside – no comment offered.	2	4	4 face down

Table 5:2

In the sample teacher group, the spread across first choice is remarkable with virtually all statements having equal numbers of choices being made. No single model of professionalism is evident in this first-level analysis: indeed, it could be claimed that only in the second choice where statement two (creating a learning environment where students do well in exams) was chosen by five teachers can the emergence of anything approaching an agreed version of professionalism be discerned.

Interestingly, this version of professionalism in which the classroom focus dominates is entirely consistent with the version of teacher knowledge which gives practical knowledge as the major concern. It appears that any list of professionalism 'components' would need to recognise that, at one level at least, professionalism seems to be driven by a commitment of teachers to ensure success for students within any given educational environment; as such, professional behaviour inevitably has to respond to policy demands. As the policy demands are aligned with an ideology which prioritises response to the 'world of work' (see, for example, D. Hargreaves' (1998) 'creative professional') this ordering may indeed suggest that teachers are participating in this construction of professionalism. Teachers in this study within this category again seemed to focus their own attention on classroom and student needs.

However, it is also revealing to note that five teachers put statement four (resisting the whims of policy-makers with teachers as guardians of beliefs and values) in fifth place, and so strongly did at least two of the sample group feel that they physically rejected this statement by either setting the card aside, or laying it face down. Almost as strongly reacted against was statement six, that the professional had to respond to market forces. Teachers in this sample group therefore seem to reject the principles of new professionalism, whilst also observing them, though this is contextualised through student needs.

Yet, set against this is an equally robust rejection of teachers as guardians of values and beliefs. This may represent a sensitivity to the cultural plurality of the school populations within their own institutions, or it may, once again, be representative of a plague of contradictions, which teachers experience as competing forces attempting to claim professionalism as their own.

So there are contradictions present in this first-level analysis: teachers both identified policy as driving professionalism, at least in their commitment to student success, but simultaneously rejected the notion that policy, or market forces, should shape professionalism. There was a belief that education is about creating a democratic society, but an apparent lack of engagement with ideas surrounding de-professionalisation or becoming a 'directed profession'. Teachers in this group seem to be able to position professionalism through negative capability - they were both meeting policy as a professional act and seeing professionalism as enacting autonomy, separate from market forces. These juxtapositions may explain the lack of first choice agreement as teachers were driven to hold contradictory beliefs. But the pattern emerging, of holding a particular set of beliefs whilst simultaneously acting in contradiction to them, was a curious positioning and again the analysis of the commentaries will be illuminating here to reveal whether this was a conscious event.

### ***Teacher professionalism – teacher commentary***

The lack of any single version of professionalism almost perfectly mirrors the highly contested nature encountered in the literature review chapters. Simon perhaps best summed up this result, 'I could have piled them in a great heap ... I really didn't feel that any one of these shouted at me and said 'That's me as a professional'. But having said that, neither did he go on to say what was him as a professional. Instead, he both agreed with and questioned almost every card:

Provide stability in an apparently ever changing world. So, you know, whose stability are we talking about? Whose values and beliefs, you know... Values and beliefs, well yes, we do have to ... Stability, I'm not quite understanding. Shared values. Whose shared values? I mean I don't share the values of an Islamist school or a Catholic school. And they probably don't share mine. So. I didn't understand quite what 'public' meant there or industry. I mean I understand industry but... But then again, whilst I disagree with it probably intellectually, one does feel that if you don't prepare a workforce for the future, we're going to be pretty stupid. 'You respond to market demands' right. I see the word 'market' and rage comes into my head ... what market are you talking about anyway? Are we sort of preparing city bankers? People who can ruin the world? Accountability – well, fair enough, yeah – but again to whom? To the market? To the local boss of a company who thinks we don't teach them to read and write?

In fact, the only card he did not question was that which referred to 'bringing about the best learning environment possible in order to ensure students do well in

examinations': his response was, '... couldn't disagree. In order to ensure students do well. Yeah, couldn't disagree'. In this, Simon was consistent with the other teachers in the sample group. This single agreement over a version of professionalism was linked to student success in examinations, and in this, there was complete consistency with teacher knowledge demands.

Simon's reaction was shared by other teachers. Ray did not reject any cards but rather took the route of putting two or three together. He saw the statements as 'a series of views I can't really disagree with ... probably mostly true ... I don't disagree'. This ambivalence once again highlights the conflicting views of professionalism with which teachers deal. Ray's 'bringing together' of the cards was, I would argue, a physical representation of the ways in which teachers seek to both answer the external demands whilst, it appears, not losing their own sense of the professional self.

Jesse, who put P5 (creating and sustaining a democratic society) in second place, encountered the same conflicts, 'Should we be creating and sustaining a democratic society? No. We should be teaching about democracy, fair enough. But also the flaws. So yeah, I don't know why I put that [card] so high with hindsight'. David agreed with many of the statements but always with caveats, 'Coherence and stability as a profession – probably a worthy aim but difficult to achieve. ... Accountability, yes there's a place for it, but it's over stressed in current political educational discourse'. In raising directly the notion of politicisation, David asserted clearly that, in his view, professionalism was subject to political pressures. He was clear that his version of professionalism remained outside that pressure, 'I am not about realising the ideological and very temporary aims of any given government at any given time'. This strong, almost moral, position of David's was, however, very individualistic. The context in which he, and indeed virtually all teachers work, is one of measurement, of league tables, of control and accountability. For many teachers this dominates their working lives, and the conflict in values was evident. Rachel, for example, identified a schism in professionalism, which she believed was due to a culture of managerialism:

Professionalism – it's interesting actually because I really like the statement 'Teachers should seek to establish coherence and stability as a professional though collaboration and shared values'. I feel that, particularly in the current



climate ... how we're being squeezed, the performance management structure that we're under, there's, I believe, as teachers we're challenged more about our professionalism ... I think that we have a huge lesson to learn about how management interact and work with the classroom teacher... there has to be trust... they have to rely on the fact that we are professionals.

In this, professionalism as a politicised concept emerges clearly. Rachel's comments almost exactly align themselves to the position of the Bottery and Wright's (2000) 'directed profession': that professionalism is a version of compliance, enacted by and through a managerialist culture. The reference to the 'performance management structure', to 'being squeezed' and to the need for 'trust' all point to a conflict between versions of professionalism; the version which held sway in Rachel's account, that of the managerialist, was linked for her to a grim threat, '... with redundancies looming we have to ... I worked for a head who was a leader and now I work for a head who is a manager and the message about what makes a good teacher is different'. The message about the need for compliance was unspoken but quite clear.

Simon's explanation for the lack of agreement in the card sort carried the same message about politicisation, 'So again, it's this whole question of fragmentation of education and that professionalism can't be rooted in one shared value any more I would suggest'. Although he did not elaborate on what values were now present in his view, the notion of fragmentation was destructive: coherence and stability were not present.

So perhaps here we have an explanation for why the teachers in the sample group selected so widely from across the options: it was not that they could not agree, but that rather they were in a situation that required them to see professionalism as both a claimed concept with which they had to comply literally in order to remain in teaching, and where they simultaneously retained a version of professionalism which related to 'trust', and to 'coherence and stability'. It seems that this group of teachers believed these to be qualities increasingly being lost, or deliberately sidelined, by the culture of managerialism. This version of professionalism is precise not just in terms of the promotion of the values of D. Hargreaves' 'creative professional' but also the methods for achieving that. De-professionalisation, as discussed by Sachs, characterises the position teachers are *required* to hold; but for this group at least, it was not yet the only way that professionalism was understood.

Such a contradictory position cannot help but impact on teacher identity. Indeed Rachel made that exact link, 'I feel that our professionalism is driven by our identity, which is why I think the two are linked and I think we need to increase our professional identity'. Increasing professional identity, perhaps meaning reclaiming the idea of teachers as autonomous and not subject to political claims on education, takes us into the next section, where teacher identity maps across the professional and the de-professionalised.

## **Teacher Identity**

In the literature review chapters, and particularly Chapter One, following Beijaard *et al.* (2000) I noted that the notion of identity is both complex and shifting, and that teacher identity is also fragmented in that it seeks to cohere both the personal and professional when the demands made on both of these areas are in fact on occasions irreconcilable. For example, the discussions in this chapter on professionalism demonstrated that teachers were simultaneously required to follow a curriculum and assessment policy position which frequently conflicted with their own strongly held views. The teacher as both compliant and resistant is evident too in the discussions on knowledge. Such conflict made this card sort difficult for teachers. Indeed, one teacher admitted that he found the identity card sort 'the most difficult of all'. So identifying 'characteristics' is less clear cut in this section than perhaps in any of my other areas. Instead, the analysis of identity in this section turns on both constructs of identity and the politicisation of identity.

The claims of Beijaard *et al.* (2000:113) that:

Professional identity is not a stable entity; it cannot be interpreted as fixed or unitary (Coldron and Smith, 1999). It is a complex and dynamic equilibrium where professional self-image is balanced with a variety of roles teachers feel that they have to play.

also become particularly interesting in the light of the professionalism findings on the 'fragmentation' of education. If Beijaard *et al.*'s prediction is sound, my findings on identity should echo the findings on professionalism in that teacher identity should emerge as dependent on professional roles. However, I would also want to bring into play here Bernstein's four constructs of teacher identity, since Beijaard *et al.* effectively locate teacher identity within the Differentiated De-Centred Market (DCM)

model, that is defined by market forces. Bernstein, it will be remembered, states that identity is highly contextualised, shaped by either the state or by a decentred accountability and control regime, thus reflecting the political dimension of the construction of teacher identity. Briefly, Retrospective Identities (RIs) are distinguished by use of the grand narratives of the past, both fundamentalist and elitist. Prospective Identities (PIs) use the same grand narratives but project the identity into the future – prospective identities – which allows past characteristics seen as desirable to be shaped into an identity which will answer future needs. The Differentiated De-Centred Market (DCM) identity takes its cue from market forces:

The DCM oriented identities towards satisfying external competitive demands, whereas the segmented, serial ordering of the subjects of the curriculum oriented the identities towards the intrinsic value of discourse. This tension ... is not, of course, new. What is new is the official institutionalising of the DCM and the legitimising of the identity it produces. We have a new pathological position at work in education: the pedagogic schizoid position. (Bernstein, 2000:71)

This is a position of fragmentation with which my own findings on professionalism resonate.

The final segment, De-Centred Therapeutic (DCT), is dismissed by Bernstein (2000:70):

I shall spend little time because it is not a strong player in any arena... The transmission prefers weak boundaries ... talk [is of] regions of knowledge, areas of experience. The management style is soft, hierarchies are veiled, power is disguised by communication networks and interpersonal relations. The DCT position ideally reflects stable, integrated identities with adaptable co-operative practices.

I suggested that the relatively recent development of teacher research might play a critical part for both the DCM and DCT models in bringing about stabilisation through a construct of teacher research which creates agreed knowledge and professional co-operation. That will be an area to explore in the following section on teacher research.

Within these models, if the same destabilised situation emerges in terms of identity as it did with professionalism, it should be possible to predict that Bernstein's Retrospective Identity ('unambiguous, stable, intellectually impervious, collective' (2000:75)) is unlikely to be seen. However, the PI may be present, if some teachers

particularly value elements relating to past values ('Thus prospective identities are formed by recontextualising selected features of the past to stabilise the future by *engaging with contemporary change*' (Bernstein, 2000:68)). For teacher identity the significance of market forces will be found in identities which accord to the DCM model, 'satisfying external competitive demands'. It will also be interesting to see whether the DCT identity emerges in any of the sample group, and indeed whether the identity boundaries described by Bernstein are as distinct as his model suggests.

A further key component for this analysis is Giroux's use of the notion of 'teacher as intellectual'. This is a powerful construct, but also a politicised account, calling for teachers to re-establish control over both their own identity and working practices. Giroux (1988) places teacher collaborative research at the heart of this enterprise, thus establishing for my research the link I wished to pursue. I noted too that teacher identity in Giroux's terms was to be that of the transformative intellectual, 'charged with the responsibility of 'interrogat[ing] the political nature of ... schooling' (1988:xxix). The previous findings about professionalism begin to suggest that achieving Giroux's 'transformative intellectual status' is complex, and not necessarily because of the reasons given by Kanpol (1998) but rather that answering Giroux's challenge would place teachers in an unsustainable position given the politicisation of education.

I want now to turn to a first-level analysis to explore how the teachers in the sample group saw professional identity.

**Identity cards**

- 2 Realise the place education has in creating a democratic society but equally to be practical about what works in the classroom.
- 3 Teachers are intellectuals, resisting market forces and establishing education as the cornerstone of civilised society.
- 4 Teaching has not changed over time – a good teacher is an eternal truth.
- 5 Need to be effective and efficient, responding to institutional needs.
- 6 Teachers must meet policy demands, but should also critique those, whilst recognising that an expectation of any action resulting may be unrealistic.

Figure 5:3

<b>Identity card ordering</b>									
Choice	Alison	Rachel	Cecilia	Tom	Ray	David	Simon	Jesse	Ruth
First	5	5	3	3	3+2=	3	3	3	4
Second	4	3	4	6			6	2	5
Third	2	4	2	2	5+6=		2	5	6
Fourth	6		5	5			5	6	2
Fifth	3	6+2 = but with no comment made on either.	6	4	4	2,4,5,6 set aside – no comment offered.	4	4	3

Table 5:3

This first-level analysis reveals a fascinating and, given the previous finding on professionalism, perhaps unexpected claim relating to teachers as intellectuals: six

of the nine teachers selected statement three as their first choice, with one teacher, David, who had previously made a strong moral claim on professionalism, refusing to countenance any other form of identity. Within statement three there is clear support for teachers being thinkers and intellectuals, alongside opposition to being driven by market demands. Placed alongside earlier statements about the need to meet the demands of policy-makers for students to achieve success, there can perhaps be seen the source of Beijaard *et al.*'s claims to the 'friction' in teachers' attempts to reconcile opposing versions of beliefs: the notion of the professional takes teachers down the route of 'practicality', itself already revealed to be an ideological term, whilst simultaneously the idea of personal establishes a claim to intellectual autonomy. In that teachers are relentlessly subject to national curriculum legislation, that is, legally bound by policy demands, that they can retain at all a version of professional identity which stands against those claims is significant for understanding what is of importance to teachers. What we do not yet know is whether the status of intellectual and rejecter of market forces is claimed, or aspirational; the teacher commentaries will be useful here in exploring this further. We also do not yet know whether the claims within this statement that teachers are the guardians of 'justice and equality' within society are equally significant.

Nevertheless, practicality appears again for four teachers in relation to identity as third choice, which is consistent with the previously seen need to answer the externally driven requirements made of teachers. There is a clear statement being made throughout these analyses that teachers were intent on, even if they were expressing reluctance on some occasions, addressing any policy demands which impact on student achievement. Evidently teachers were reluctant to put their students at any disadvantage, even when this position was detrimental to their own professional self. As a moral claim, which Sockett (1987) believed to be integral to any description of teacher purpose, this finding is in itself important, even if teachers themselves did not use the same terminology to express their views.

In this first-level analysis I also found an equally strong rejection of statement four (teaching has not changed over time) by five teachers. This is an interesting statement to analyse, since the reasoning for this rejection was not evident simply from the way it was ordered. It may be that, as with an earlier statement, teachers were aware of a changing student population and different needs; or it may refer

explicitly to the demands of policy. Certainly teachers in this sample group seem to believe that teaching has involved significant change over time, and that teachers no longer 'know what is best for students in the long run'. Whether this reveals a diminution of confidence, or an implicit reference to the increasing complexity of policy demands, or a recognition that the world of work no longer has predictable routes to be taken as it once did, is unclear from this first-level analysis stage.

Statement six, meeting policy demands, critiqued those demands whilst simultaneously acknowledging that action was not a realistic outcome, required teachers to see the political in identity: it had an uncertain placing, with two teachers placing it second, two, third, two, fourth, and three, fifth. It may be that the statement carries within it a number of dependent clauses, and this level of analysis cannot offer that level of interpretation.

I want now to turn to the second-level analysis, the teacher commentaries, to investigate whether and how these can offer further insights into the choices made.

### ***Teacher identity – teacher commentary***

It is perhaps in this section that how teachers see the purposes of education and their place within it becomes most evident. This position also serves to highlight the tensions between this and dealing with policy demands.

Certainly statement three - 'creators and owners of education, resistant to market forces, teachers should recognise themselves as thinkers and intellectuals' - merited unequivocal approval from six of the nine respondents in this group, though interestingly, two teachers (Alison and Ruth) also put this statement last. This construct of teacher identity was designed to appeal strongly to those who saw themselves as definers of education, rather than as responders to external demands.

For the six who selected it as first choice, the statement held a strong declaration of self. Jesse stated, 'I like the idea of teachers thinking of themselves as thinkers and intellectuals ... I think we should, one, encourage bright people to come into teaching and secondly, value then the contribution they could make'. Tom noted, 'I like this one – the identity of people seeing themselves as intellectuals ... for me, this statement is the whole point of teaching, being creators and owners of ... I think teachers don't sort of feel strongly enough about that but they are the owners'. David

not only agreed with this statement but saw it as demonstrating that teachers have 'an obligation to be enriching their own minds through reading and conversations and research', adumbrating perhaps where the significance of research might be located for some teachers. Simon too saw this statement as attractive, 'I liked this first one (13) because ... it's like a mission statement'. For Simon the idea of education being the cornerstone of society and teachers being guardians was something that he would expect to be a common value, 'Well, which teacher wouldn't agree with that?' adding, '...it makes us sound like a really glamorous profession. And we're resistant to market forces. Fantastic!'. Although not voiced as such, this rejection of market forces is an implicit rejection of policy, and a rejection too of an attempt to politicise teacher identity. In resisting such demands, teacher identity is allowed to reside within a version of professionalism, and of knowledge, which is a-political in that it does not respond to 'temporary and ideologically driven' educational policy. In Bernstein's terms, this identity construction is a clear rejection of the DCM model. However, what is not as clear is whether this identity model can be said to belong to the PI model. Certainly there are elements ('creators and owners of knowledge'; 'guardians of justice and equality') which could be said to belong to past grand narratives; but there is insufficient evidence to say whether such elements could be said to form a coherent grand narrative positioned to the future.

In fact, not all teachers did subscribe to this position, though neither did they acknowledge their position to be shaped by any politicised version of education. Nevertheless, it is clear that these teachers placed their professional identity within the context of the 'realistic'. Ruth, for example, was much less swayed by the idea of resisting market forces than Simon had been, saying, 'Society is ruled by the market, whether we like it or not. I don't think we can resist market demands. I think education serves society. The market changes, society changes, education has to change to adjust to the market and there's no way round it'. In this, Ruth's professional identity can be clearly said to align with Bernstein's DCM quadrant - defined as having institutional autonomy and flexibility in order to be maximally responsive to market-driven competition. Ruth's school is one which has committed to a market-driven approach, which it translates in its school mission statement as 'Responsive to the needs of the modern age' and she has positioned her identity to respond to the school's identity:



Teaching is an institution. You need to buy into the institution you're in and different schools have different things... If you don't share ... you need to buy into the basic ethos of the school. And I teach in this school and I came back to teach in this school because I do believe in the underlying ethos. I can translate that ethos practically.

For some teachers, statement three raised issues relating to the notion of 'practicality', which, as discussed earlier, can be seen as a marker of the politicisation of the construct in that it introduces the need to respond to immediate and external demands. Ray, for example, linked statements three and two, saying that, 'teachers as intellectuals, well, that's idealistic and so I put it with two because teachers need to be thinking about classrooms, so they go together this way'. Alison was wary of placing herself in any role outside of the classroom, 'That's my job. I'm paid to teach, and it's unrealistic to think otherwise. I can't change society'. Rachel thought that the focus on teachers as intellectuals was not 'the whole story really. I just think that, yes, we are thinkers ... and we're intellectuals, but I see the word as being quite a narrow view of what an intellectual is [sic] ... if we're being intellectuals, then that's what we should be recognised for. I don't agree with that at all. I think we're practitioners first and foremost. So we take the intellect and we use it and that's the difference between an intellectual and a teacher'.

The tension between teacher as intellectual and teacher as practical is not at all the emphasis that Giroux has given to the term; indeed, in Chapter Two I cite Kincheloe as refuting Kanpol's claims about the lack of practical application of his theories claiming that lack of 'practicality' implies a concomitant lack of 'real use', that is, the ability to bring about change. The criticism that could be made of Giroux and, therefore, the notion of the transformative intellectual is the question of the actioning of change. If the transformative intellectual remains an abstract concept, with no classroom reality, in Kanpol's terms (and indeed, in the terms of many others) the third charge, of vision without action, stands unchallenged. Giroux does have a response, however. Teacher-generated knowledge is seen as rooted in a classroom reality. Kincheloe observes:

*Change* is a fundamental goal of the teacher as a critical researcher. ... Giroux develops this idea with the conception of what he calls the transformative intellectual... Such teachers hold a vision and act through their research to achieve that vision...  
(Kincheloe, 2003:47)

There is, however, a third response to statement three, and that was given by Cecilia, 'Teachers should think about themselves as thinkers and intellectuals. I wrote that on my post-it note. That would be lovely. Lovely. I think it would be great. I don't think it's true. I think it's very aspirational but I don't think it's how the profession is marketed...', thus returning to the impact of market forces raised by Ruth, albeit it in a different context. In terms of Bernstein, this seems an almost reluctant acknowledgement of an identity simultaneously formed by market forces (DCM) but rejected as a self, since we also see an almost wistful acknowledgement from Cecilia that teachers as thinkers and intellectuals is a desirable state, accompanied by a regretful but resolute rejection of possibility. In this sense, Beijgaard *et al.*'s 'instability', and indeed, Bernstein's 'schizoid' state both pertain, albeit it with different drivers.

Again, in the section on research it will be interesting to see whether Giroux's claims for teacher as transformative intellectual remained for Cecilia, and indeed Rachel and Ray, an unrealistic position for teachers. What we see with this sample group is that very strong positive reactions were heard from a number of teachers, but that some teachers at least did indeed see that teachers experience a tension, if not a contradiction, between an identity which links the intellectual and the practical. Kincheloe's and indeed Giroux's, claim – that this is to be resolved through engagement in teacher research – will be explored in the next section when I examine the card sorts relating to teacher research to try and establish teachers' views on the relationship, if any, between teacher research and the transformative intellectual.

Statement three also proposed the view that 'Education is the cornerstone of civilised societies, with justice and equality at the heart of any community; teachers are the guardians of this and need to ensure their voices are heard'. This is both a construct, in that it positions teachers as moral guardians, but also politicised through its reference to teacher voice. It positions teacher identity as drawing on a PI model in the building of a grand narrative for the future, rooted in the past.

Simon was quite clear that this was part of his role as a teacher, 'We are all guardians, of course we are, so our voices must be heard'. David too was clear, 'And I think, yes, justice and equality should be protected by teachers on behalf of the

community. Educators are there to be guardians of that and the voices of both the educators and their students should be heard. Education is about creation, reinterpretation and civilisation'. But the certainty of the PI model was not secure. Others were more equivocal. Rachel began with an answer that seemed positive at first, 'Yes. I think that our voices should be heard and the fact that we're guardians...'. However, her answer then trails off and she questions, 'Are we guardians? I don't know. It feels that we have to.... We're guardians meaning that we have to watch over it and keep it safe ... we have to hold on to our identity but I think, oh, I don't know, we should be sending out the message and that kind of thing'. There is a sense that there is something important about the role of guardian, but Rachel seemed to then question her right to hold such a position. Ruth was less confused by the notions of purpose and right, but instead pointed out that, as teachers, this was a problematic area to engage with because of lack of evidence of immediate impact, 'If you're trying to teach justice and equality, you can't measure that and it's also you can't pin it down to individual people. You can't give them an evaluation form in Year nine. They won't write that down. They might tell people on Facebook ten years later that 'My teacher taught me to be kind' and that's brilliant. But it's not something we can measure here and now'. The marked difference between the 'need to measure' and the belief that 'guardianship is our role' might hark back to versions of professionalism in the previous section: whether teacher identity should accord with the required or the autonomous. These competing positions may be mirror reflections of that debate.

The card placed in fifth place by five of the nine teachers was statement four, that 'teaching hasn't really changed over time'. Both Ray and Simon immediately referred back to an idea of education in Victorian times. Simon observed, 'Well, we only have to think of Dotheboys' Hall and the Victorian school to see that's not true'. Ray similarly said, 'I incredibly disagree with this one. Wow. That's a really ... Is it saying we should be like Victorian schools and say that knowledge is just there to be drummed into students? No. No.' Curiously, Ruth positioned this statement as her first choice because she so strongly disagreed with it, 'I think [teaching's] changed enormously. This is my eleventh year. The emphasis is not on knowledge any more. The emphasis is not on the teaching any more. It's all about the learning ... it's about different styles, about an independent approach ... it has changed to such an extent

where people who would have left the profession twenty years ago just wouldn't recognise it'. As such, and as predicted, the RI model did not appear to have any reality for this sample group of teachers. However, it is not a straightforward matter to claim this. Jesse initially also firmly rejected statement four, saying, 'I don't think that's true', but almost immediately questioned that rejection, saying:

... although again, a little bit as with enduring knowledge, I mean I think there is a certain ... We've always known what a good teacher looks like. Part of me has a certain sympathy with that. I mean there are, you know, certain qualities a teacher should have that probably date back thousands of years, but at the same time there are lots of other things about the profession that have changed quite a lot.

Jesse's 'second thought' reaction is helpful. He neatly demonstrated where teachers exhibit a perceived difference in identity terms between the enduring 'self' ('certain qualities ... dating back thousands of years') and the self that has to respond to changing external demands ('lots of other things about the profession that have changed quite a lot'), which could be said to be the difference between an identity construct and the politicisation of identity. Whether though he was aware of this distinction is debatable, given that he did not question (as Rachel had earlier) whether or not the construct of the 'good teacher' is open to politicisation.

Beijaard *et al.*'s prediction, that identity has a 'complex and dynamic equilibrium where professional self-image is balanced with a variety of roles teachers feel that they have to play' (2000:113) does appear to have some substance, although it has already been established that professionalism is a fragmented concept so that the dialectic is complex and itself unstable. But Bernstein's models are altogether more intriguing. Like an image shimmering beneath water, on occasions the teacher identities seemed to map perfectly against a model, only to shift and be lost as the contexts altered. It may be simply that the sample group of teachers did not provide sufficient data to make any confident or comprehensive claims relating to Bernstein's four models. It is worth noting, nevertheless, that these models may not be watertight, and that teacher identity may well cross and re-cross boundaries as professional and personal identities align - or collide. As a future area for research, this has exciting potential.

## Teacher Research

This section of the card sort analysis relates to Research Question 1: What can teachers tell us about teacher research?, Research Question 3: What, if any, claims do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives? and Research Question 4: Can the claims for emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?

In Chapter One of the literature review, I explored the recent history in the UK relating to the teacher researcher movement and considered its impact in the light of both policy and professional agendas. In particular I was interested in two areas: the tensions generated by the co-option of teacher research into a government agenda which legitimated only that research for teachers which addressed the 'raising standards' agenda; and in Kincheloe's and Giroux's calls for resistance to that agenda, as part of the reclaiming of teacher knowledge and professionalism. In this sense it could be argued that identification of the 'components' of teacher research is a somewhat opaque activity, since the context, motive and purpose all work to create the act of research itself. Instead, it might be more useful to consider the 'constructs' associated with teacher research, and then its politicisation.

In looking at the literature review chapters, it was evident that teacher research has frequently produced models based on a dichotomy: research producing 'sacred', mode 1 type knowledge, and that producing 'profane' mode 2 type knowledge. Within these, literatures position teachers as either compliant or subversive and the emerging research as 'critical' or 'standards-raising'. However, the question will be whether, for teachers, these are mutually exclusive types of research, or whether teachers see a role for both.

I considered too the policy position generated by the claims that university-based research was 'irrelevant' and the subsequent drive to place, at least notionally, teachers as definers of the research agenda within a policy framework, with an assumption that the focus would be entirely on research which addressed meeting policy demands. The claims by Kincheloe and Giroux suggest that teachers would not be confined by this but rather that research would, and indeed should, take on a critical dimension with respect to policy:

Thus teachers ... must participate in the research act in education. They must help determine what is designated educational knowledge (Lasch, 1979; Carson and Sumara, 1997; Kincheloe, 2001). (2003:24)

In Chapter Two, as well as the relationship between research and knowledge, professionalism and identity, I explored relationships between teacher research and other dimensions, including power and emancipation. Here politicisation is most evident, as research becomes clearly a means whereby teachers either take responsibility for driving an agenda which is designed to engage critically with any policy demands, which Giroux (1988:xxix) characterises as ‘a transformative intellectual, charged with the responsibility of ‘interrogat[ing] the political nature of ... schooling’; or a means whereby research shores up policy through a focus on standards (D. Hargreaves, 1998).

It is perhaps through exploring teacher research that the politicisation of education is most clearly visible.

#### *Politicisation of education*

Politicisation of education, it might be claimed, is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, that schooling, its structures, curriculum and assessment have been subject to centralised control over time is indicative of an ongoing struggle for ownership. To take an example, the subject English emerged only after the first world war when the government was seeking means to create shared values and beliefs in order to bring together a society fragmented by war. The values implicit in certain literary works were seen as having that role and thus English became part of the school curriculum (see for example, Sampson, 1922). However, where education became subject to what Ball (1990a:26) refers to as ‘political suspicion’, and indeed where Ball locates the politicisation of education is from 1976:

There are a number of symbolic, practical and pragmatic reasons why ... analysis of education policy begins from the year 1976. The main symbolic reason is ... Callaghan’s Ruskin speech ... From 1976 only certain policies were possible, only certain policies were sane or rational. ... new voices were being listened to ... industry ... and the now increasingly well-organised New Right. ... The role of expert knowledge and research is regarded as less dependable than political intuition and commonsense accounts of what people want ... by the 1980s ... education is no longer separated off from other areas

of social and economic policy ... It is now in the mainstream of the political ideology and policies of Thatcherism.  
(Ball, 1990a: 34-35,43)

The 1980s also saw the Education Reform Act (ERA) which enshrined in law a centralised curriculum for England and Wales, associated assessments designed to test the teaching and learning of that curriculum, and which paved the way for the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the implementation of the Office for Standards in Education, Ofsted, an inspection system designed to report on and grade schools' performances against centrally devised criteria. For this thesis, therefore, notions of politicisation of education are located from 1976 through to the present day.

As I showed in both chapters of the literature review, the claiming of research reveals concomitant claims to teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity. Research which focuses only on answering policy knowledge demands thereby defines professionalism and thus teacher identity within this frame. A question which emerges is whether teachers are themselves aware of the politicisation of teacher research, or whether teacher research is seen as an a-politicised, practical activity relating to classroom needs only. The ways in which the sample group's responses demonstrate this will be critical in revealing whether there is a consistency with the claims for teachers as intellectuals, and indeed whether Giroux's and Kincheloe's positioning of teacher research as emancipatory can be said to be realistic.

I also discussed in Chapter Two the role of teacher research and how that might factor into both DCM and DCT models of teacher identity. Within this analysis, I will also want to see, given the caveats in the previous section relating to sample size, whether it is possible to discern any such role for teacher research.

Again a brief reminder of the content of the cards is tabled below:

**Research cards**

- 2 An emphasis on practicality and relevance.
- 3 Teachers should drive the research agenda.
- 4 Research should be focused on classroom needs. More ‘academic’ research only belongs within higher degree courses.
- 5 Should not be concerned with ‘raising standards’ but with empowerment and collaborative knowledge building.
- 6 Research is an irrelevance and does not impact on the enduring truths about teaching.

Figure 5:4

**Research card ordering**

Choice	Alison	Rachel	Cecilia	Tom	Ray	David	Simon	Jesse	Ruth
First	5	5	4	3	3	3	5	5	3
Second	2		6	4	5	5	3	4	4
Third	3	2, 3, 4 grouped but no comment	2	5	2		2+4 =	2	2
Fourth	4		3	2	4	6		3	6 face down
Fifth	6	6	5	6	6	2 and 4 set aside – no comment offered.	6	6	5 face down

Table 5:4



What is seen in this analysis is that research, in whatever form, is both relevant and important to teachers and teaching; six out of nine responses placed the statement 'Research is an irrelevance and does not impact on the enduring truths about teaching' in fifth position, unequivocally rejecting the notion that research is without significance for teachers, with a further two placing this statement in fourth place. Only one teacher, Cecilia, placed it above these categories, in second place. What is not yet evident in this first-level analysis is whether the types of research held to be valuable produce either or both sacred or profane knowledge, and whether these are mutually exclusive for teachers. What might be significant is that earlier in this section, both teacher knowledge and teacher identity seemed to have a focus on practicality, so it could be inferred that it is the 'profane' which might dominate. However, the next set of responses could cast a different light on this area.

Within the claim for relevance, there is a balance between a belief that teachers should drive the research agenda (four teachers selecting statement three) and that this research agenda should not be concerned with 'raising standards' but rather with teacher and student empowerment, and with collaborative knowledge building (four teachers selecting statement five). These are enormously powerful claims. This sample group of teachers indicated in the identity card sort that the idea of being an intellectual was centrally important to teacher identity, and that teacher research most certainly has a key role to play, with teachers as drivers of a research agenda, and an agenda which progresses knowledge not simply with a 'standards' focus, which would have been the intention of policy, but rather as a means to develop a body of knowledge through collaborative research, and a body of knowledge which is in itself empowering rather than being one which addresses any compliance agenda. In this way, the politicised agendas of Giroux and Kincheloe are vindicated as desirable in teachers' views, though it is not yet possible to say whether they are feasible for teachers, since the question of whether the demands are realistic in the light of the insistent demands of policy and the wider context of the school needs to which teachers have to respond, such as performance in league tables, has not yet been answered.

Teachers in this group appeared to be dealing with a paradox: teacher research must, at some level, engage with a form of teacher knowledge in the classroom to ensure student success; the data show that teachers saw themselves as having a

professional obligation to select appropriate pedagogies to do that (Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge - PCK). However, they retained at the same time an identity of the intellectual engaging with research and enquiry designed to at least critique, and possibly oppose, the policy agendas of compliance. Research for teachers therefore impacts on both professionalism as defined by policy, and professionalism (and therefore identity) as claimed by teachers themselves. Where teachers positioned themselves on the sacred-profane spectrum reveals awareness of, and commitment to, sets of values and beliefs embedded in the politicised agenda of education.

As far as it is possible to offer an answer at this stage of analysis to Research Question 3 which is concerned with impact, it would indeed seem that research has the potential to impact on teachers' working lives. However, there was no one predictable impact. Rather teachers selected from a range of purposes and contexts in defining research. Both the practical and the intellectual appeared legitimised, though what is not yet clear is the teacher thinking which underpins the selection of areas, or whether this was aligned to any politicised teacher agenda. Within this context, the stability I argued teacher research would bring to Bernstein's DCM/DCT models seems unlikely – if that knowledge is unpredictable, and impact similarly unpredictable, then to claim stability is not feasible. From this analysis, therefore, it would seem that the contribution to these models of stability through teacher research is unfounded.

Further, and linked to this politicisation of research, Research Question 4: 'Can the claims for emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?' requires teachers to voice awareness of the political – that is, a recognition that research is an act of empowerment. Only then can the claims of Giroux and Kincheloe be said to be realisable. Even so, I would want to be cautious about the radical emancipation which Giroux and, to some extent, Kincheloe want to locate as a possibility within teacher research, since according to the sample group, a notion of empowerment was tempered with a sense of commitment to students which ensured that any act of emancipation was balanced by an equal act of practicality. Nevertheless, this is not to deny the teachers' own card sort selection which clearly indicated that empowerment, if not emancipation, was a sought outcome of teacher research.

At this stage it would seem appropriate to turn to the commentaries that teachers gave as they undertook the card sorts in order to see whether their own explanations and observations can deepen understanding of the results of the card sort first-level analysis results.

### ***Teacher research – teacher commentary***

Perhaps the first question to address is that of whether teacher research was seen by teachers as possessing relevance. I would argue that the positioning of statement six as last ('research as irrelevant') demonstrates clearly that research was seen as both relevant and important, although at first-level analysis stage it was not possible to establish whether this related to the production of sacred or profane knowledge. The teacher commentaries, however, clearly reinforce the card sort placement with an unequivocal rejection of teacher research as irrelevant. Alison, for example, responded, 'Obviously I don't think teacher research is an irrelevance. I don't think that at all'. Jesse also followed this line, 'I certainly don't think it's an irrelevance...' but added '... its relevance can ... be actually reinforcing things which are good as well as challenging, things that people think can be improved and updated...'. The reference to 'improvement and updating' suggests that Jesse here understood research as a construct, and referred here most particularly to mode 2 ('profane') knowledge development. Tom too took this approach to production of mode 2 knowledge, 'The idea that schools could engage parents more – well, that's useful research'. These statements are interesting since they place teacher research within the 'practical' category encountered in both knowledge and professionalism card sorts.

However, within the group, there were those too who placed teacher research within the category referring to mode 1 ('sacred') knowledge, a move which claimed that research should do more than seek to answer policy demands. David, for example, linked research to a 'vision of education' and in ways which critiqued policy demands:

I think [teacher research] is very important indeed, and has been one of the delights of my recent professional life in the last ten years ... And I think, yes, it very much is our role and mission to keep on with the research agenda, giving insights into how best to realise a vision of education. ... I do see a

place for practicality and relevance, but I do think that teacher research can act, and should sometimes act, as a means to critique policy.

David's views certainly segued into an understanding of research as a politicised act. It was Simon though stated most explicitly that the political dimension is undeniable, 'An irrelevance? What's this from – a Conservative manifesto?' It can be argued that the political awareness, seen here clearly through David's and Simon's responses, demonstrates the *potential*, at least for some teachers, to develop the 'teachers as intellectuals' agenda, in which critique and emancipation are key and where research functions, in Giroux's terms, to harness teachers in a shared activity, creating teacher knowledge and empowerment through teachers '... writ[ing], research[ing], and work[ing] with each other...' (1988:xxxiv). It has to be said though that not all of the teachers framed research in this clearly politicised way. It is useful therefore to consider the priorities teachers held in terms of research.

As with previous analyses, the answers were characterised by inconsistency. Despite mode 2 knowledge ('profane' and policy-driven) being seen as a legitimate outcome, the two statements prioritised by eight of the nine teachers, statement three, teachers should drive the research agenda and statement five, research should not be concerned with 'raising standards' but with empowerment and collaborative knowledge building, seem to suggest a quite different position for research.

In terms of teachers driving the research agenda, two teachers, Jesse and Simon, rejected the final clause on the card which spoke of education 'responding to the world of work'. Simon observed, 'I liked that card up until then', and Jesse simply put a post-it note on the card to cover that sentence, saying, '... in my opinion, teaching and the knowledge of teaching and the identity of teachers is not necessarily to prepare people for the world of work, so research shouldn't be either'. From Ruth's perspective, there was an imperative for teachers to drive the research agenda because, in her view, research must benefit students and, 'they [the teachers] are more likely to make direct impact with the students'. However, she went on to add, 'but it's got to go beyond their own remit because it will benefit ... I think research would benefit the teacher professionally, but it would also benefit the teacher personally. So we need other people, university people like you, to give us a wider view'. Without being quite so precise, Jesse articulated the same view, '... teachers

should drive forward research to develop professional knowledge, but it might not only be teachers who define what research should be undertaken’.

These complex responses both place teachers in control of research at some level, but also offer a view that research should have an agenda, at least in part, set by those outside schools – a ‘wider view’. Teachers thus do not relinquish ‘driving the research agenda’ but do actively seek out appropriate partners to extend that agenda.

Alongside statement three, driving the research agenda, there was a strong commitment to statement five, research as empowering and as building collaborative knowledge. Of all the research statements devised, this was perhaps the one which was most overtly political in intent. Simon found this an attractive statement, placing it in the first rank of his choices, ‘It resonates with me. I will use that word. It’s a very powerful sort of statement. It’s about change, better and richer lives for human beings. Quite right, it’s not about raising somebody else’s artificially imposed standards’. Jesse also found this statement to be powerful, and located it immediately in the political, ‘... ideologically, that’s what I really agree with. I mean I know the bit about making richer lives for human beings sounds a bit cheesy, but it’s why you come into the profession, isn’t it?’

In the selection of these two statements, there is clearly a sense that teachers see the driving of a research agenda as an attractive idea, and yet, it is also evident that that they are resistant to the idea that research is policy-driven. This is particularly interesting given the apparent previous agreement by some teachers in this sample group that research responding to policy needs is not simply acceptable, but *desirable*. A contradiction emerges, and once again the responses are characterised by inconsistency. If the teachers’ responses had been consistent, I would have expected to see statement four prioritised as first choice: that is, ‘Research should be focused on classroom needs. More ‘academic’ research only belongs within higher degree courses’. In fact, only one person, Cecilia, selected this as a first priority and, as her comments show, this was not altogether without ambiguity, in that she claimed this choice was influenced by her own cultural background:

I think this is my Asian immigrant parents coming through here, but I think by doing well in your education, by passing those exams, you are setting yourself

up for working in the economy, but you're setting yourself up for getting the most out of that economy as well. So we need both sorts of research to succeed. You do not want to set yourself or your students up for a life of unnecessary economic hardship.

Associated with this was her placing of statement five (collaborative knowledge and empowerment), which was a particularly popular choice for this sample group, as a last-ranking statement. For Cecilia, empowerment was not the point of research: she said, 'I thought this sounded a little bit socialist'. Instead, research and practicality belong together to produce economic success – not to critique, but to meet existing societal demands, an approach to successful integration with host countries which is evident in many immigrant communities (see, for example, the PISA Report, 2003).

A complex and compelling pattern of contradiction and inconsistency is emerging. Teachers in this sample group believed that both knowledge and professionalism belong in the realm of the practical and constructed responses in the card sorts which belong to that set of values. However, in terms of identity and research, teachers made claims to the status of 'intellectual' and that research should not be 'concerned with 'raising standards' but with empowerment and collaborative knowledge building'. Simultaneously, both mode 1 and mode 2 knowledge was seen as a legitimate outcome of teacher research. So practicality remained an interest (in this group, three teachers selected this as second rank, and two, as third) but it was outranked by a concern (eight out of nine responses) with teacher control of a research agenda which seeks to build collaborative knowledge and to empower. This is a striking collocation, full of contradiction and counter-claim. Yet the political is represented within these. It could therefore be argued that Giroux's and Kincheloe's calls for teacher emancipation could be said to be *potentially* both realistic and realisable. The impact on teachers' lives could be profound *if* research were to become a means of emancipation. But, whilst inconsistency was evident, these statements remained conditional in nature, as teachers continue to be both caught by the need to respond to policy and by their own desires to be autonomous.

Nevertheless, research was indeed seen to impact on teachers' lives, even if not in ways which might be called emancipatory. Ruth, for example, said that she, 'found that [research] enriches me as a person because I seem to gain an understanding on how the world works because you are searching for one thing and happen to find

another that you would never have [otherwise] found'. For Tom, the appeal of research was in enhanced professional authority, 'So that's where research comes in. There are ideas out there. There are things that work. You are not making it up yourself...'. This concern with being 'up to date' was echoed by Jesse, '... being up to date with research in terms of how students respond in different ways and, you know, the latest research into questioning techniques or whatever it is and you're staying on the cutting edge of your subject knowledge research'.

Such perceptions of impact echoed the card sort results for teacher knowledge, so research can be said to have a role in developing this; but, as was seen, teacher knowledge for this sample group was clearly linked to policy demands and the types of research Ruth, Tom and Jesse cited were all within this same realm. Further, research itself was cited by one teacher (Ruth) as supporting policy – in this case the standards agenda, '... in terms of standards ... I think they have been agreed through research, they have been agreed through consensus'. The political naivety evident in this statement perhaps demonstrates that there is some way to go before Giroux's belief that teacher research can 'create teacher ... empowerment' can be realised. In fact, only Simon and David offered a sense of research as having a place for teachers beyond meeting policy demands, and it is no coincidence that both of these are teachers who expressed a sense of teacher research as a politicised construct.

Research then, as with other areas in the card sorts, was defined by the complexity of competing demands, of teachers needing (and indeed wanting) to ensure all policy demands were met, but also retaining a sense of ownership of knowledge, professionalism and research. The teacher commentaries draw attention to the significance of the framing of these areas, and the significance of understanding these as politicised constructs is clear in the differing responses to the place of research. I would argue that until this framing is understood by all teachers, research, like knowledge and professionalism (and therefore identity) will continue to be contradictory in claims and in impact. Certainly Giroux's call for research as emancipatory cannot yet be said to be central to the research agenda for most of the teachers in this group.

## Teachers' voices

However, where research can be said to be at least raising teachers' awareness that knowledge and professionalism are open to different constructions according to power relations is in the realisation of the possibility of research as teacher voice. This is particularly significant for this research in that my declared perspective on data collection was that it should be through the neglected area of teacher voice. I quoted Thomas (1995) in claiming that teacher voice had moved from being a 'strong' component of teacher authority to a 'chang[ing] of status'. I set this against Elbaz's claim (1990:1):

'Voice' is a term used increasingly by researchers concerned with teacher empowerment; the term expresses an implicit critique of a prevailing tendency in earlier studies of teaching to reduce the complexity of teachers' work, and to privilege theoretical formulations over the concerns of teachers themselves.

For this research, teacher voice links therefore with Giroux's and Kincheloe's claims on emancipation, and whilst it cannot be claimed that this research has brought about *emancipation* through strengthening teacher voice, I would want to argue that the idea of *empowerment* through teacher voice has been seeded through teacher research. David observed, 'Teachers' voices should be powerful again. Collaboration and research as knowledge building has to be our platform'. Rachel echoed this, 'Our voices need to be heard by people outside, as well as inside, the profession'. Ray saw policy and specifically Ofsted as an obstacle to teacher voice, 'We know what to say to Ofsted inspectors – that's one voice, but not 'ours'. What we need to do is find our own voices again. Maybe research is the way to do that, I don't know, I don't know'.

The card sort activity was startling in its efficacy in enabling teachers' voices to emerge. Unlike the interviews, teachers were energetic and confident, clear about choices and ranking, and about reasons for selecting or rejecting cards. This in itself was a valuable and important outcome. But in the teacher commentaries, what was revealed was unexpected and highly significant: teachers were held in a state of contradiction, compelled to comply with policy demands and yet to hold, on occasions, completely opposing views on knowledge and professionalism; to have a teacher identity which had not only to co-operate with these demands but to do so to the best of their abilities, which again meant holding opposing and irreconcilable,



views. Research had a similar profile. It was both a means to meet the demands made by policy (but not necessarily shared by teachers) and a place where policy could be critiqued and the 'self' reasserted. Earlier I referred to teachers having 'negative capability', Keats' term, '....when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reach after fact and reason.....' (Keats,1817). For Keats, however, negative capability carried with it a sense of being open to creative possibility. But in fact, the positions the teachers in this sample group described had little creativity, but are subject to substantial mechanisms of control. The contradictory positions held by teachers, which have then informed an identity, not just professional, as we have seen, but personal too, have brought about precisely Bernstein's 'pedagogic schizoid position':

The DCM oriented identities towards satisfying external competitive demands, whereas the segmented, serial ordering of the subjects of the curriculum oriented the identities towards the intrinsic value of discourse. This tension ... is not, of course, new. What is new is the official institutionalising of the DCM and the legitimising of the identity it produces. We have a new pathological position at work in education: the pedagogic schizoid position. (Bernstein, 2000:71)

Rendered silent by contradiction, by moral paradox and by the impossibility of realising both the needs of students and their own needs, teachers are subject to a version of Zeroth's Law (Asimov, 1950) whereby the only way to ensure student success defined by policy is to deny self; and to teach in ways which accord to their own values and beliefs denies student success according to policy-driven criteria. Research, the means by which both Giroux and Kincheloe advocate a reclamation by teachers of the morality of education, has the potential, according to this sample group, to bring about change but only if teachers are prepared to engage with the politicisation of education: and not all were, as Ruth showed in her commentary on statement five, '... linking education and democracy. I don't like mixing politics with teaching'.

The next chapter, discussion on findings, will draw together data and explore the phenomenon of inconsistency that emerged from both the interviews and the card sorts.

## **Chapter Six: 'the answers were characterised by inconsistency': finding a lens**

The previous chapter sought to analyse the responses of the teachers to the four research questions through the use of card sorts, exploring patterns of reactions to the quotations selected across the fields of knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research. A major finding was that the analysis revealed considerable inconsistencies in the answers teachers gave. These inconsistencies were unexpected. I had thought, originally through use of practitioner 'voice', to hear a coherent account of teachers' versions of professionalism, knowledge and identity, and the place that teacher research might hold for practitioners in developing these areas.

What actually emerged was a far more complex, and from my perspective, a more interesting but challenging set of narratives, characterised by contradiction and paradox. Teacher voice was often hampered by inarticulacy, was contradictory, or was simply absent. The data in Stages 1 and 2 had revealed tensions between the demands of policy and professionalism, fragmentation of teacher views and little evidence of any access to discourses of power.

Indeed, the responses forthcoming from teachers themselves were conflicting in their views about knowledge, professionalism and identity, insofar as they were able to articulate those positions. Stage 3 data analysis began to allow the clearer emergence of teachers' voices through use of a card sort, and the previously un- or partially-articulated beliefs and values of teachers were able to be heard more clearly. It was, though, still the case that no dominant narrative was discernible. Instead, competing views were evident across all areas, on policy and professionalism as key drivers, on the power relationships present there, on the place of autonomy as a reality in the present educational system, on the right to define knowledge, on whether compliance or opposition constituted professionalism, on how teacher identity could deal with the competing demands. Teacher research seemed to occupy a more secure place in that it was seen as both potentially powerful and able to offer a shared discourse. Here too though competing purposes for undertaking research and the use of findings were evident: for example, was research conducted to ensure that Teachers' Standards were met more efficiently, or

to reclaim teacher voice in shaping the education system? Both views were present in the responses of this sample group, and sometimes from the same person.

Surrounding these competing and contradictory viewpoints was the question of discourse. Throughout the research, access to and generation of a discourse which allowed teacher voice to be heard in the areas of professionalism, knowledge and identity became increasingly significant. Certainly it seemed that the issue of prescribed policy discourse impeded the articulation of views which might be in opposition to policy; but the card sort had revealed that opposition did indeed exist, and in ways which demonstrated that teacher dissonance, and at times disaffection, with current policy were present and active, if not articulated. The card sort also revealed that access to a developing professional/power discourse *through teacher research* was a significant component in developing challenges to policy hegemony. Without access to such discourses, teacher voice was marginalised, or silenced, and opportunity to move beyond compliance through criticality almost an impossibility. The notion of emancipation through teacher research took on a different complexion when the generation of discourse was only made possible through research – the development of the *discourse itself* became the act of emancipation. But even here, no single, cogent discourse was evident.

Each of these dimensions spoke of struggle: between generation and ownership of knowledge, models of professionalism, the professional identities of teachers, the purposes of research, the very language to explore these areas - all were contested. Power became an overarching theme but its location and sources were seemingly legion: whose version(s) of knowledge would prevail; whose version(s) of professionalism define teachers' behaviours; whose values and beliefs would teacher identities reflect; whose rationale for research would dominate; and whose language could be used to express these views? Fragmentation appeared, in this scenario, inevitable, and no lens of analysis seemed adequate in dealing with these splintered stories.

Thus I was presented with a multiplicity of narratives, both meta- and micro- with a compelling corollary that meta-narrative seemed to be policy-owned and micro-narratives teacher-owned; that the meta-narrative was operational in bringing about compliance but that that the micro-narrative, although poorly articulated in the main,

was nevertheless sufficiently personally powerful for teachers to disrupt the dominance of the meta-narrative; and that the meta-narrative itself was *observed* by teachers, but not necessarily *agreed with* by all those in this sample group, although some teachers were in agreement with some elements of policy.

It was a complex situation. The challenge to find a single theoretical lens to understand – to bring these competing narratives and positions together in ways which cohered into a theoretical position, and which would provide insight into the data collected and analysed - appeared an insuperable position. Indeed, the very dispersion of themes seemed to prohibit finding such a lens. In many ways, this final thesis chapter thus seemed destined to be an account which had diaspora as its theme, and paradox as its motif.

### *New understandings?*

However, earlier in the thesis, a means whereby I might bring together the data was in fact already being signalled. The literature review in Chapters One and Two had demonstrated that a lens for understanding the fragmented stories the data was telling was available, although at the time of writing, the significance of the framework for this later interpretation was not evident.

In terms of professionalism, for example, I had quoted A. Hargreaves (2000) in describing a stage of professionalism as ‘post-professional or post-modern’, and characterised by the centrality of market forces:

The notion of expert has been downgraded, and instead the arena is driven by market forces. ... teachers ... are represented ... as ‘obstacles to the marketisation of education’ ...  
(Hargreaves, 2000:168)

Similarly, in investigating identity, I had quoted Clarke’s question, ‘How [are] teachers ... to give an account of themselves?’. This too was framed by post-modernism/post-structuralism:

*... we can think of identity in terms of teachers ... giving an account of themselves. Yet in the wake of post-structuralism's radical de-centering of the subject ... we might well ask how teachers are to give an account of themselves?*  
(Clarke, 2009:185: italics mine)

Habermas' work was particularly significant in signalling the conflicts created when science and positivism acted as definers of knowledge, and his exposition of the role of language in ideology was equally significant for the emancipatory element of this research:

If humans are to unleash their rational capacities, a special form of knowledge is necessary to abolish these hidden impediments. The emancipatory interest promotes a relationship between knowledge and interest, [concern] [that] connects the act of knowing with the immediate utilization of knowledge. The act of knowing is a form of self-reflection that allows an individual to gain an awareness of the connection between knowledge and interest.  
(Habermas, 2003:94)

The critical relationships of power, knowledge and discourse had also been signalled through the work of Foucault, cited as post-modernist in his use of reversal:

When tradition gives us a particular interpretation of an event or a historical development, Foucault's strategy is to work out the implications of the reverse or opposite interpretation. The strategy of reversal tells Foucault what to look for by pointing to the simple existence of the other side of things.  
(Shumway, 1989:15)

Through a post-modernist lens, what was emerging was a way of demonstrating that the data of apparent fragmentation were in fact signifying the opportunity to access meaning in knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research in ways which revealed deeper and more revealing constructs of these concepts. Interpretation of the contradictory, of the diverse, of the inconsistent, indeed of the very complexity of the data, seemed to be possible with a post-modernist lens:

In post--modernity, it is complexity, a myriad of meanings, rather than ... the one deep meaning, which is the norm.  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:10)

Post-modernism was not however an alternative way to establish a new 'truth'. Instead, it was concerned with meaning *within* complexity, resisting any search for singularity of interpretation. Indeed, it might be argued that post-modernism, far from being concerned with stabilising meaning, is rather positioned, through acts of subversion, as destabilising. For example, Usher and Edwards (1994:1) refer to post-modernism as, 'the need to problematise systems of thought and organisation and to question the very notion of systematic explanation'. Problematizing requires a reading *against* the 'text', that is, seeking meaning which resides outside of an apparent dominant narrative, itself a subversive act in overturning the intended for

the unknown. Since post-modernism arose as a movement *against* (modernism), bounded constructs have little application. It is not systematic.

Nor is post-modernism seeking to construct alternative fixed positions. Rather, 'sense made here is limited, local, provisional and critical. Self-critical. That is sense within the postmodern moment. That is the postmodern'. (Marshall, 1992:2). In other words, whatever is posited is open to alternative interpretation. Much like an approach to analysing poetry, post-modernism does not seek 'an answer', so much as explore levels of meaning. Discerning those levels of meaning is both process and product, equally significant, equally ephemeral. What is being claimed and demonstrated is that meaning and interpretation are moments in time rather than fixed solutions. Both 'up-set' the standing order of things. Its act of being is in the response, and as such, post-modernism cannot be said to be *about*.

However, what post-modernism does is to allow complex, competing and contradictory narratives to come together and to produce kaleidoscopes of meaning. The same elements are present but the fluidity of relationship, each to each, in changing, determine interpretation at that point:

Characteristic of post-modern[ism], familiar issues are addressed in unfamiliar ways and unfamiliar issues are brought to the fore for discussion and resolution.

(Usher and Edwards, 1994:156)

The familiar and unfamiliar are of particular interest for this thesis. Post-modernism, whilst diverse in realisation, nevertheless has three recurring themes: narrative, discourse and power (see for example, Lyotard, 1986; Derrida, 1978; Lacan, 1979; Foucault, 1979). Since these are themes which have developed throughout this thesis, rather than existing from the beginning of the project, bringing the 'unfamiliar' lens of a post-modernist interpretation of narrative, discourse and power allows an exploration the 'familiar' issues of knowledge, professionalism and identity and the place of teacher research, in ways which will seek to understand *differently* – to illustrate that multiple meanings are discernible through differing perspectives. The frame that post-modernism offers for understanding this research is not static, nor bounded, but rather itself acts as a contributor to the uncertainty of knowing, in the sense of liberty of intellectation.

Finally, post-modernism also speaks to the position of self that I hold as a researcher. Couzens Hoy (1988) points out that in order to be consistent with post-modernity, reference to self as post-modernist would constitute a self-referential irony. My claim therefore can only be that I am author of this text, not sole signifier, as in Derrida's terms I exist only in a network of language. I follow instead Bauman's (1992) logic, in allowing the post-modern to speak, quite literally, through the micro-narratives of the teachers.

### *Tensions and challenges*

The move to a post-modernist lens was not without tensions and challenges. The thesis had been framed with an assumed notion of coherence in teacher voice and its articulation of knowledge, professionalism and identity. Teacher research had been a mechanism which could bring about that coherence. Additionally, the social constructivist theoretical positioning drawing on Kincheloe, Bernstein and Giroux had not allowed the possibility that discontinuity of voice would be an outcome – indeed, the outcome of research was the *production* of coherence. Kincheloe, for example, saw teacher research as the means for teachers to 'regain their voice in the workplace and ... demand a role in the production of the knowledge on which the modern state and its experts ground their authority' (2003:23) – a position which had informed my own choice of teacher voice and which clearly locates the production and ownership of knowledge through teacher research.

Similarly, Bernstein's construction of sacred and profane knowledge positioned knowledge as 'legitimised' or 'delegitimised', with the status of profane as policy knowledge driving out the sacred (professional) knowledge. The reclamation of sacred knowledge was through a teacher research informed discourse. Giroux, in arguing for teachers as intellectuals, again emphasised the centrality of teacher research and the generation of a shared discourse as a means for teachers to generate and own knowledge.

The positioning had thus been one of political resistance through a shared discourse, articulated through practitioner research. Each took an analysis based on an ideal of social constructivism, and shored up by shared values and beliefs.

The post-modernist lens challenged this framing. Coherence was neither an outcome nor an ideal. Knowledge and truth were insecure, generated by a discourse relating to a meta-narrative produced by economic imperatives and epistemological drivers, which themselves shifted over time. Foucault's analysis of power as fluid, and positive, stood in opposition to the model of power residing in a dominant group. Nevertheless, this created new ways of analysing the inconsistencies in teacher voice. Similarly, Lyotard's analysis of knowledge and truth challenged the unexamined assumptions of coherence present in constructivism.

In some ways, therefore, the move to post modernism presented theoretical challenges which were in themselves destabilising. However, in mapping the frames, three notable corollaries emerged: the centrality of power, discourse as a key construct and the place of narrative permeated both theoretical frames, and the focus on knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research remained secure. The adoption of post-modernism allowed a new lens of understanding to emerge:

Power... as Foucault points out, not only produces knowledge that distorts reality but also produces a particular version of the "truth". In other words, "Power is not merely mystifying or distorting. Its most dangerous impact is its positive relation to truth, the effects of truth that it produces" (Welch:1985:63). (Freire, 2000:xxxv)

Thus the 'realities' that had informed my first theoretical lens might themselves be understood to be the product of power, and open to the charge of distortion. In examining the very principles of my earlier theoretical framing, post-modernism allowed a deeper and more penetrating understanding of the production of reality, and an understanding of the place of theoretical framing within that. As will be seen, however, the use of a post-modernist lens does not allow resolution of competing positions – indeed, within post-modernism that would be an oxymoron, and paradoxes continue to exist, not least in the area of meta-narrative. Nevertheless, acknowledging these issues, unresolved as they are and indeed as they must be within a post-modernist position, the following sections explore knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research within the post-modern context framed through narrative, discourse and power. Each of these areas is in itself significant. This thesis, however, cannot address all areas of each theme. Instead, in order to enable a perspective to be explored within this context, I have grouped



together key themes, but in so doing, I must also acknowledge that a post-modern position would argue that any such selection must be considered arbitrary, and other groupings equally valid. Nevertheless, for pragmatic purposes, I have attempted to draw together areas which emerge as significant from this research in order to explore and reveal new readings of the data presented. Inevitably, some areas will overlap, so that, for example, the issue of language and discourse permeate each area. This is consistent with post-modernism: the post-modern frame is such that a bounded separation of issues would be impossible. It is the relationship of one to another which signifies, and as such, the interpretation of data I offer here is, in post-modern terms, simply one account. Nevertheless, it is an interpretation that illuminates my findings in ways which demonstrate opportunities for different understandings. Within this framing, then, the next sections seek to explore a post-modernist account of those complex, contradictory and competing elements of knowledge, professionalism, identity and teacher research which emerge from the data as unsettled and unsettling.

### **Knowledge, Narrative and Power**

Interviewer: How would you describe teacher knowledge?

Tom: Well it's one of those sort of questions where, you know if you could write that down in a sentence it would be of... it... there are so many variables, aren't there? What is teacher knowledge? I suppose it... Ultimately, if you really ma-... refine it down, it's a very specific sort of...  
[laughs]

### ***Previous findings – selection of areas***

It was the question of knowledge which first revealed the complexity of issues underlying the original intention to use teacher voice to understand professional knowledge. Analysis of the data in Chapter Five suggested that teachers were confounded by the tensions between their own professional views on knowledge, and the versions of knowledge with which they were required to engage, that is, policy knowledge. Such tensions meant that although teachers' versions of knowledge were in existence, and were often powerful for those teachers - that is, the teachers had their own knowledge micro-narratives - these versions were overwhelmed by the meta-narrative of policy knowledge. Clearly knowledge and

narrative were one set of phenomena to bring together within a post-modern analysis.

Knowledge had also been constructed within a power dynamic – seemingly for the teachers in this research, one which set versions of knowledge at different ends of the spectrum as either legitimated profane knowledge – policy – or non-legitimated ‘sacred’ – professional. Knowledge was the subject of contestation, however perceived. Thus knowledge and power became a similar set of data to be explored through post-modernism.

I begin with knowledge and narrative.

### ***Knowledge and narrative***

Throughout the thesis, reference to the meta-narrative of policy has indicated a position whereby a construct of education, premised on conceptual frameworks and described by a language (discourse) generated by policy (so referencing accountability, performativity and so on), is presented to teachers as the sole version of knowledge relevant for schools, a deliberate claiming of the field as an act of control. But the data revealed that policy meta-narrative did not command complete control over teacher professionalism, knowledge and identity. Alongside the meta-narrative, data revealed different sets of stories, a series of complex, and sometimes contradictory, micro-narratives. The micro-narratives of teacher knowledge referenced a wide set of values and beliefs, many of which contradicted one another. My reading of these diverse data sets was that the micro-narratives were significant in showing that teachers retain alternative versions of knowledge, that is, Bernstein’s ‘sacred knowledge’, which thus stood against policy. However, there remained the issue of the contradictions within the micro-narratives I encountered. I was aware that any attempts to seek ‘continuity’ between all the micro-narratives would be counter-productive – the multiple and contradictory narratives were not an accident to be explained away, but rather represented the ‘truth’ of the situation in all its complexity. Neither did I make any claim for the power of these knowledge ‘micro-narratives’ within education. Indeed, in that they were fragmented and diverse, persuasive claims to power would have been difficult to argue. In presenting the micro-narratives thus as individual views, perhaps influenced by idiosyncratic

contexts, there remained nevertheless a sense of something unexplained. The place of the micro-narrative within the context of the macro-narrative remained intriguing.

A post-modernist interpretation allows a reading of the place of the macro- and micro-narrative forms differently.

### ***Macro-narrative and knowledge***

Within post-modernism, narrative is both a way of organising an account of a world view (a 'grand narrative') and a 'brand' of knowledge which Lyotard (1986:21) primarily characterises by reference to anthropological studies and literature (1986:19). Narrative knowledge is set against scientific knowledge which is, 'part of observable reality ...cumulative' (1986:7). Lyotard argues that knowledge as 'grand narrative' are versions of claims to 'truth'. Both types of knowledge, narrative and scientific, Lyotard argues, carry within them their own legitimisation, achieved through 'language games' (discussed later in this section).

### ***Scientific and narrative knowledge***

Scientific knowledge, i.e. objectivist and 'testable', is, Lyotard claims, the currently privileged dominant model of knowledge, and which therefore carries both authority and power. In claiming authority and power, scientific knowledge marginalises narrative knowledge, which is thereby denied legitimisation as 'truth', not because inherent faults reside within that grand narrative, but rather because it *differs* from the empirical epistemological base of science. As Usher and Edwards (1994:158-9) point out, 'In the legitimisation of modern science, its status as a discourse of truth has been privileged in a way that has been impossible with narrative knowledge'. This position is entirely consistent with that position which I explored through Habermas' work in Chapter Two. Indeed, Lyotard (1986:27) claims that the scientist characterises narrative knowledge as, 'Savage, primitive, underdeveloped, ... opinions, prejudice, ignorance. Narratives are fables, myths, legends...'

The claims of scientific knowledge to sole truth do not allow for narrative as a viable alternative. In the dominant model of knowledge – that is, scientific knowledge, versions of knowledge, if not located within the discourse of scientific knowledge, are located literally outside of power. Truth is only to be found in the scientific model of knowledge and no other version has authority. Foucault states that, 'Truth' is centred

on the form of scientific discourse'. (1980:131). Knowledge is thus constructed, and truth is subject to the same imperatives. Within this claim is laid bare the power dynamic within knowledge and truth, which will form a discussion later in this section.

### ***Policy and scientific knowledge***

Policy knowledge demonstrates allegiance to those discourse indicators which mark out this scientific model of knowledge, for example, performativity, testing, measurement and efficiency. It might be argued that the two versions of knowledge, scientific and policy, can be said to align so closely as to be understood to be, in effect, the same. In other words, policy knowledge has adopted the *mien* of scientific knowledge, the associated discourse, and thus claims the corollary of power. Its criteria for truth claims are self-referential, as is the scientific claim, and its language games as deadly as those found in the 'realm of terror', where the intention is 'to eliminate the opposing player, not ... mak[e] a 'better' move than he' (Lyotard, 1986:46).

The dominance of a model of truth which lays claim to legitimacy in this way creates a discourse of exclusion from all versions of knowledge which fail to meet the criteria of 'scientific' – that discourse which has been defined by those who have committed to the scientific version of knowledge as 'truth'. Whereas the discourse markers of scientific knowledge include, for example, measurability and performativity, narrative knowledge discourse markers stand in opposition to those of scientific knowledge, appealing to criteria of the affective, for example, 'ethical wisdom ... sensibility' (1986:18) rather than 'technical qualification' (1986:18) such as efficiency. However, if scientific knowledge is dominant, the discourse of legitimation will be that of the technical. Lyotard locates the emergence of the scientific model of knowledge within the development of technology, where the inevitable outcome is that knowledge is 'exteriorized' (1986:4):

Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold ... Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its 'use-value'. ... Knowledge in the form of an informational commodity indispensable to productive power is already, and will continue to be, a major – perhaps *the* major - stake in the worldwide competition for power.  
(1986:4-5)

### ***Legitimation and language games***

In attempting to answer the question asked of them about teacher knowledge, the inarticulacy displayed by the teachers in this sample group represented the paradox in which many teachers found themselves: legitimisation of knowledge was the province of policy; in order to meet the policy demands of knowledge, teachers must adopt this version of knowledge, but thereby deny their own versions of knowledge, thus reinforcing the policy version of knowledge as the only legitimated form:

Legitimation is the process by which a legislator is authorized to promulgate ... a law as a norm. Now take the example of a scientific statement; it is subject to the rule that a statement must fulfil a given set of conditions in order to be accepted as scientific. In this case, legitimation is the process by which a "legislator" dealing with scientific discourse is authorized to prescribe the stated conditions ... determining whether a statement is to be included in the scientific community.  
(Lyotard, 1986:8)

Scientific knowledge therefore lays claim to power through the process of legitimation, achieved through an internalised and (self) referential set of terms. It can define what is, and what is not, authentic knowledge. This 'legitimation by legislator' is achieved through a discourse which sets criteria for truth which themselves reflect the nature of, in this case, scientific knowledge. As Lyotard (1986:51) states, 'The question now asked ... is no longer 'Is it true?' but 'What use is it?'.

### ***The micro-narratives of teachers***

If narrative knowledge is denied legitimation by the dominance of the claims of the empirical epistemological base of science, and its associated discourse, other forms of knowledge which reflect the narrative are similarly delegitimated. In commenting on Foucault's position on the construction of truth through scientific knowledge, Usher and Edwards observe that:

All other forms of knowledge are ... debased e.g. ... the knowledge and truth of literature, *and practitioner-based knowledge*.  
(1994,85-86: italics mine)

The 'practitioner-based knowledge' refers, in this research, specifically to the micro-narratives of teachers, that is, teachers' versions of knowledge which stand against the dominant versions defined by policy. If a post-modernist reading of knowledge is

accepted, the non-legitimated status of practitioner knowledge is because it falls outside of the currently dominant scientific version of knowledge. Teacher knowledge thus fails to be recognised as meaningful knowledge not because of its failure to match policy, but instead because policy matches scientific knowledge which *excludes* teacher knowledge. The narrative nature of teacher knowledge identifies it as 'non-legitimated'. The discourse that is associated with teacher versions of knowledge is that of the narrative. Such narrative knowledge has no claim to 'truth' and instead languishes within 'fables, myths, legends'.

However, although dealing with delegitimised knowledge, the micro-narrative is significant in a post-modernist framing in simply existing, that is, in demonstrating the existence of narratives competing against the meta-narrative. They could thus be said to be subversive towards the meta-narrative, exhibiting 'incredulity towards meta-narratives' (Lyotard, 1986:xxiv), that is, a stance which begins from a denial of legitimation through the meta-narrative, a state of being which for Lyotard serves to define post-modernism. Usher and Edwards (1994:156) also point out that a 'crisis of narratives' is the underlying context for the post-modern condition, that is, a state where the dominant narrative is exposed as a construct rather than a truth. In asserting alternatives, the teachers' micro-narratives can be said to be 'truth-sayers' for the post-modernist. Further, in that the micro-narratives are an expression of incredulity toward the meta-narrative (challenging the meta-narrative of scientific – policy – knowledge) it might be argued that their post-modern function is precisely to point up the existence of the constructed dominant meta-narrative of scientific knowledge, and thus to reveal the falsity of its claims:

Knowledge [savoir] ... cannot be reduced to science, nor even to learning [connaissance]. Learning is the set of statements which ... denote or describe objects and may be declared true or false. Science is a subset of learning. ... composed of denotative statements. ... But what is meant by the term *knowledge* is not only a set of denotative statements, far from it. ... Knowledge, then, is a question of competence that goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion of truth, extending to the determination and application to the criteria of efficiency (technical...), of justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom), of the beauty of a sound or color (auditory and visual sensibility) etc. Understood in this way, knowledge is what makes someone capable of forming ... 'good' prescriptive and 'good' evaluative utterances.  
(Lyotard, 1986:18)

### ***Scientific as narrative knowledge***

Lyotard points out a further complexity. Science itself is dependent on narrative knowledge in that 'it [science] cannot know and make known that it is true knowledge without resorting to the other, narrative, kind of knowledge, which is from its point of view, no knowledge at all' (1986:3-4). The paradox is exposed: knowledge is legitimised as not only scientific but narrative. Without narrative knowledge there is no 'grand narrative' upon which science can base its claims, 'A crude proof of this; what do scientists do when they appear on television ... after making a 'discovery'? They recount an epic of knowledge which is in fact wholly unepic. They play by the rules of the narrative game' (1986:27-28), a game which Lyotard says is used to enable science to 'pass itself off as an epic' (1986:28) an epic upon which the State's own authority is based. By proxy, policy stands in as the State's authority. Thus the teachers' micro-narratives further serve to question the exercise of exclusive ownership of knowledge that policy – the scientific model of knowledge - claims.

The conclusions to be drawn from the teachers' 'incredulity towards meta-narratives' are significant. Knowledge is not defined by policy, but rather policy reflects the current model of science as knowledge which is then used to define education. The knowledge micro-narratives of teachers do not only reflect different mores, sets of values and beliefs, but by challenging the meta-narrative, threaten to bring into question the current rationale for education, that is, dominance in the global economy – the 'circulation of capital' (1986:5). The micro-narratives of the teachers in this sample are not simply demonstrations of 'alternative' forms of knowledge, but illuminative of the dominance of the grand (meta) narrative of science as the economic imperative. Their concomitant access to, or obstruction to, discourses reflecting both scientific (policy) and narrative (professional) versions of knowledge are central to claims to power. The dominant meta-narrative is shaped by and shapes the discourse available to teachers, and thus reality itself.

### ***Language games***

Lyotard refers to the conscious manipulation of discourse in this way as 'language games' (1986:10), a term first used by Wittgenstein, with game used not in the sense of playfulness, but rather in the sense of strategic, as with moves in a game of chess:

Each of the various categories of utterance can be defined in terms of rules specifying their properties and the uses to which they can be put... every utterance should be thought of as a 'move' in a game.  
(1986:10)

Such 'language games' are located within, and seek to confirm, power structures, and the associated discourse markers act as signposts to dominance:

Game rules are those narratives which provide science, literature and arts with their legitimacy in social formations ...  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:156)

Within the knowledge discourse, lexical markers exist which demonstrate allegiance to certain forms of knowledge. Lyotard's examples of such markers as 'performativity' and 'efficiency' clearly belong to scientific knowledge. These markers become reified within the scientific discourse to represent characteristics of legitimised knowledge. Thus only knowledge demonstrating these discourse characteristics can be identified as 'truth', and only the version of knowledge which can respond to these discourse markers – now transmuted to criteria - can be legitimised. This, Lyotard states, is how 'legitimation by power takes shape'. (1986:47). Lyotard directs our attention not only to the act of legitimisation, but to the mechanisms and discourse (language games) which underpin the enactment of such legitimisation. In part, language games, and their corollary discourses, may explain why the question 'What is teacher knowledge?' was largely answered with silence: the discourses available to teachers resided in legitimated and non-legitimated knowledge, the position irresolvable.

### **Knowledge and Power**

Although the teachers in this research did not explicitly identify the notion of power or a power dynamic in operation in the construction of knowledge, teacher interviews certainly indicated a sense of policy as dominant, and teachers a subservient group in the power dynamic of knowledge, as Simon had asserted in his comments about schools defining knowledge as 'laughable'.

In Chapter Five, I discussed this as evidence of a belief that power resides in government, and the corollary, that teachers thus are rendered powerless ('the last people who define what knowledge ... is') as a direct result of exclusion from that construction of knowledge. Knowledge is reified, and its ownership by government



creates a power dynamic which positions teachers as 'receivers of' rather than 'creators of' knowledge. The interpretation in Chapter Five was that this once again was indicative of struggle; that the teachers had to fight to assert the legitimacy of their professional – sacred – knowledge in the face of a repressive policy version. Knowledge and power were separate, and one could not be achieved without exercising the other. Truth could only be revealed in the absence of power, whose very presence corrupted access to a perceived absolute. In this research, it appeared that the fight was ongoing, with the 'truth' of teacher knowledge denied recognition, unless it reflected policy knowledge. Paradox infused the construction of knowledge and the place of teachers within that. In an interpretation where knowledge and power are separated (that is, in modernity's construction of the meta-narrative of power and knowledge) truth can only be constructed in the absence of power. Much of the teacher narrative in this research reflects that assumption, and thus knowledge becomes a site for struggle. However, once again, inconsistency was evident. Some teachers in this research did not experience knowledge as a site for struggle but rather as an area which was legitimately owned by the state. Cecilia saw knowledge as defined by examinations:

... [they] have exams to pass ... it's not like a primary school. ... Exams are the measure of subject seriousness.

And although only Cecilia was as definite about knowledge being defined in this way, a further four teachers (Alison, Rachel, Jesse and Ruth) placed the knowledge card sort mid-way in the hierarchy, suggesting that they believed knowledge was, at least in part, legitimately owned by the state, poignantly referring to trust in an era marked by a low-trust culture within government towards teachers:

You have to make [knowledge] applicable (sic) in line with the national legal requirements because that's what we're expected and trusted to follow.  
(Ruth)

Legitimation is a key issue here. These teachers, all from secondary schools, seem to see knowledge as owned by the state because it is enshrined in either examination syllabuses or in the national curriculum. As Lyotard demonstrates, however, legitimation is related to power:

Knowledge and power are simply two sides of the same question: who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided?

(Lyotard, 1986:9)

and achieved through a sophisticated discourse - 'language games'.

### ***Legitimation and Language Games***

Legitimation is achieved by policy through the production of legal requirements (the national curriculum) and assessment regimes which do not deny teacher knowledge so much as marginalise its significance. Indeed, teachers themselves, in thrall to the incessant demands of policy knowledge have, it seems from this research, largely lost a sense of the legitimacy of their own knowledge, and certainly the language to express that claim. The silence which characterised the response to the question 'What is teacher knowledge?' is not simply inarticulacy, but in post-modern terms, part of a language game, a contract:

...language games ... rules do not carry within them-selves their own legitimation, but are the object of a contract, explicit or not, between players (which is not to say the players invent the rules). ... if there are no rules, there is no game, ... every utterance should be thought of as a 'move' in the game. .. to speak is to fight...  
(Lyotard,1986:10)

Thus silence is to acquiesce, or more startlingly, fear:

Whenever efficiency (that is, obtaining the desired effect) is derived from a 'Say or do this, or else you'll never speak again', then we are in the realm of terror, and the social bond is destroyed.  
(Lyotard,1986:46)

The threat is neither subtle nor negotiable. The move to silence is disturbingly recognisable in D. Hargreaves' *Creative Professionalism*, discussed in Chapter One. There I spoke of the dangers of speaking against policy knowledge ('inviting a position of anomie'). Post-modernism in Lyotard reveals that danger, not through inarticulacy, but through teacher silence. 'Who knows what needs to be decided' – the act of legitimation - is achieved not only through the construction of policy knowledge, but through the teachers' part in the language game contract – silence. Teacher silence is not inarticulacy, but expression of a language game 'rule'. The discourse of policy knowledge is that of power, and its intent is to exclude other discourses, 'A discourse author-ises [sic] certain people to speak and correspondingly silences others' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:90). Thus in post-modernist terms, in asking the question 'What is teacher knowledge?' of the teachers

in this research, I was, unwittingly, inviting silence. The card sort was not an 'invention of articulacy' but rather a means for teachers to break that silence without taking the dangerous path of violating the, ironically, unspoken but visceral language game contract.

### ***Foucault and Power-Knowledge***

The silence broken by the card sort thus achieved access to the teachers' constructs of knowledge; also revealed, however, was the phenomenon of teacher inconsistency about knowledge and ownership. Explaining this inconsistency through notions of struggle proved insufficient. For example, some of the teachers in this project positioned themselves as either passively compliant with policy knowledge, or as with the case of Mark, in co-ordinating the representation of policy power in 'academic' terms through the ill-fated government initiative, the Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA), overtly promoting policy knowledge. For these teachers, knowledge was not located in a power struggle – indeed, for some, they had positioned themselves so that power came to them and was *passed on by them* via association with the policy position. A shift in the relationship of power and knowledge was evident. Far from being in opposition, that is truth only being accessible through knowledge where power is excised from that equation, power and knowledge seemed to have an intimate relationship. This is a position exactly described by Foucault:

Power and knowledge directly imply one another: that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.  
(Foucault, 1979:27)

No longer is the equation the discourse of Truth (T) equals knowledge (K) minus power (P) that is,  $K-P=T$ . Rather equation has  $K+P = T$ , where T is constructed through specific discourses. Neither are discourses fixed. Rather discourses:

systematically form the object of which they speak ... [they] are not about objects – they constitute them.  
(Foucault, 1974:49)

Knowledge therefore does not simply represent the truth of what is, but rather *what is taken to be true*. Power for Foucault is not simply repressive, located within one grouping, but rather is:

something which circulates, or rather something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands ... [individuals] are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising... power... individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.

(Foucault, 1980:98)

Foucault's construction of power as 'never in anybody's hands' allows the conundrum of knowledge simultaneously as truth and as subvertable, to have some resolution. The teachers in this research are, in Foucault's terms, positioned both as the vehicles of power, that is, through compliance and the observance of power through policy knowledge, and 'exercisers of power' through (potential) resistance to that version of knowledge as sole 'truth'. Thus there can co-exist apparently contradictory statements from the teachers:

You have to make [knowledge] applicable (sic) in line with the national legal requirements because that's what we're expected and trusted to follow.  
(Ruth)

and

Teachers should be there to help students question current policy movements and the current ... instrumentalist or utilitarian way of seeing education.  
(David)

but which nevertheless, in post-modernist terms, can be simultaneously true: policy knowledge is enacted *through* teachers (vehicles of power) and resisted *by* teachers (exercisers of power). Thus Mark can hold contradictory positions, and can both claim freedom for teachers to 'think about their practice', and describe such freedom as 'dangerous':

I'm heavily involved in TLA. I'm looking at impact and I'm looking at student voice and I'm looking at how staff have been affected and how it's improved their practice. But moreover has it made them stop and *think about their practice and what they might want to do* more. And I suppose it's *that self-reflection is the culture that I am trying to tease out* through the Leading Learning Teams.

(Mark: italics mine)

Interviewer: [Giroux] was challenging the notion that anybody should select knowledge for you to teach. As a teacher he would say professionally you have the right to select the knowledge that you want to teach.

Mark: Yeah [laughs] [pause]. I think as a principle it's a dangerous one.

yet, almost a single sentence later, state:

Mark: And actually I would quite like the GTC [General Teaching Council] or Cambridge or various institutions who are respected, to challenge the wisdom, yeah

I: Of?

Mark: Of, of government initiatives.

Mark exemplifies the complex exercise of power-knowledge, whereby he is both the vehicle of power, and yet resists the construction of power - 'challenge the wisdom':

Power-knowledge formations, therefore, operate through networks of discursive and materials practices which aim to produce 'docile bodies' and 'obedient souls' (Foucault 1979). ... These practices 'bring together the exercise of power and the constitution of knowledge ... so as to facilitate constant forms of surveillance and evaluation (Hoskin, 1990:31). (Usher and Edwards, 1994:92)

Thus, in Foucault's framing of power-knowledge, teachers are implicated in the construction of both knowledge and truth. But this is a complex relationship. Teachers are both subjects and *knowing* subjects. Power is exercised through and by them, not simply upon them. Teachers and power enter into a relationship characterised by interplay, rather than a straightforward, if undesirable, relationship of subjugation. Far from being merely repressive, Foucault states that power should be seen as productive:

Power should be considered as a productive network ... much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1980:119)

This positions teachers in a quite particular way. Power is not imposed but, like electricity, runs through networked channels. Within the analogy of the 'productive network', Foucault opens a door on the explanation of why teacher research as *an act of subversion* can co-exist in teachers' lives alongside apparently authoritarian policy power. Power (repression) is not a totalitarian state. Rather teachers are able to exercise power through the productive network, in this case, of knowledge.

Thus far, post-modernism has allowed a different understanding of the place of silence in the teachers' responses to the question of teacher knowledge and has offered a possibility of teacher engagement with power in ways other than through a stark policy/professionalism spectrum. I want now to explore the construct of teacher professionalism using the lens of post-modernism in order to see whether the professionalism as engineered against policy criteria has alternative interpretations available.

### **Professionalism and post modernism**

Knowledge and professionalism, as has been demonstrated in this thesis, are interrelated. If the business of education is knowledge, then professionalism is about the context of generating and transmitting that knowledge to the learner in ways which ensure understanding. The ability to make choices about these ways is embedded in the autonomy of professionalism and the right to explore these choices through access to, and participation in, discourses of power.

Professionalism as a contested notion had been a major focus of Chapters One and Two. In tracing the changes from constructs referencing teachers as possessing professional autonomy through to teachers as directed workforce, and mapping these against two major moves to claim the notion of professionalism, through D. Hargreaves' *Creative Professionalism* and the new professionalism movement, I claimed that attempts to map professionalism against policy demands resulted in 'de-professionalisation' (Bottery and Wright, 2000; Sachs, 2003), that is the relinquishing of ownership of professionalism on the part of teachers.

Subjecting teachers to competing versions, and degrees of ownership of, professionalism adumbrated the findings of Chapter Five in that no agreement was evident from teachers in this research on either definition or practices of professionalism:

So again, it's this whole question of fragmentation of education and that professionalism can't be rooted in one shared value any more I would suggest.  
(Simon)

Only one card sort statement, referring to 'the best learning environment so that students do well in exams', revealed a modicum of agreement, and that at times

non-committal (Simon: 'I couldn't disagree'). I had interpreted this outcome to reflect the situation in which teachers found themselves – trying to meet both the policy demands (for example, Teachers' Standards) and yet retain integrity with regard to their own beliefs about professionalism. In this interpretation, professionalism was a further site of struggle, with teachers attempting to wrest control of professionalism from policy whilst simultaneously meeting the policy demands, which meant student success was not compromised by teachers' own needs, a state which Bernstein, in discussing teacher identity, had called a 'pedagogic schizoid position' (2000:71). Further, if the data reflected not simply an ongoing state of tension within teacher professionalism, one seeking resolution, but rather captured a stage whereby professionalism was, and is, moving inexorably toward a redefinition based on policy demands and which excludes teacher beliefs, then Ball's (2012:162) observation becomes not a warning but a description:

The notion of being an educational 'professional' is ... redefined with notions of 'autonomy' and the 'right to be critical' replaced by 'disinterestedness' and 'accountability' ...

Ball points up the profane discourse of the versions of professionalism rooted in D. Hargreaves' creative professional and in new professionalism (disinterestedness and accountability). In this he begins to signal a shift in perspective where professionalism is subsumed by management. Perhaps more significantly, however, Ball continues, '– teachers are trapped into taking responsibility for their own 'disciplining', where 'disciplining' is a term used by Foucault to describe a mechanism of control within a post-modern construction of society. Ball thus locates professionalism within a post-modern framework.

### ***Professionalism and the post-modern position***

Ball's final sentence is echoed in Foucault's power/knowledge analysis in structuring teachers as proponents of their own redefined professionalism. Achieved through 'discipline', that is, the regulation of individuals in society through control over their activity and behaviour through mechanisms of surveillance, discipline is focused on self-regulation, 'a power that regards individuals both as objects and instruments of its exercise' (Foucault, 1979:170).

Professionalism takes on a new complexion within post-modernism, and one which might be argued as sinister, where teachers are made complicit in the construction of

compliance not just through external management, but by self-regulation, under the guise of becoming 'more professional':

... teachers are trapped into taking responsibility for their own 'disciplining' through schemes of self-appraisal, school improvement and institutional development. *Indeed, teachers are urged to believe that their commitment to such processes will make them more professional.*  
(Ball, 1990b:162: italics mine)

The conundrum of some teachers appearing to be complicit in deconstructing professionalism is explained, in post-modernist terms, as a reconstruction of professionalism which seduces teachers into a belief that they are acting autonomously by 'choosing' to self-regulate:

Here... power does not operate solely through coercion and repression, indeed such acts would be examples of the failure of power. Instead, power operates through 'knowledgeable' discourses and practices which intensify the gaze to which the subject is subjected by ordering, measuring, categorising, normalising and regulating. In disciplining the body, persons as subjects become governable, thus marginalising the need for coercion in the regulation of populations. Thus, when discipline is effective, power operates through people rather than upon them.  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:92)

Foucault's construction of power as positive is disturbingly co-opted in this scenario. Power is 'exercised' by teachers in a context – management – which renders it available to bring about compliance. 'Professionalism' is the means by which this is achieved. If, as had been claimed earlier, a model of professionalism was subject to differing constructs, with policy control and autonomy at the spectrum, the post-modern understanding of professionalism as discipline, professionalisation falls within that construct. In one sense, it could be argued that de-professionalisation has been completed through the notion of discipline – 'empowered to disempower'. So the site of struggle is no longer between the sacred and profane, but within an environment where the management of teachers requires the teachers themselves to be complicit in the degradation of professionalism as autonomy. Instead, professionalism is cast as shaped and enacted by teachers within the 'real world' of school and knowledge as commodity, in a context of the global economy. 'People are 'empowered' to disempower themselves. ... [they] deny themselves the forms of autonomy and the right to be critical which were previously the defining characteristics of the teaching profession' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:114/115).



The approaches so carefully explored by D. Hargreaves (are redundant in that no external construction of professionalism is required. Rather professionalisation is absorbed into power, in this case, as teachers enter into literally a self-denying ordinance. Professionalisation becomes redundant within the post-modern.

### ***Management as Professionalism***

I feel that, particularly in the current climate ... how we're being squeezed, the performance management structure that we're under, there's, I believe, as teachers we're challenged more about our professionalism ... I think that we have a huge lesson to learn about how management interact and work with the classroom teacher... there has to be trust... they have to rely on the fact that we are professionals.

(Rachel)

The assumption here - that the intersection between management and professionalism is characterised by a need for trust - suggests that for Rachel at least, management as essentially benign (if misguided) and that once management accept teachers as 'professionals', that trust will be brought into being. Post-modernism however points up a quite different interpretation. Far from benignity, management is purposed with control, and that through disciplinary power.

Foucault (1979) identifies three major factors in bringing about disciplinary power: observation, normalisation and examination. Drawing on the metaphor of Bentham's panopticon, Foucault demonstrates how the act of observation can be used to bring about compliant behaviour simply through the possibility of being observed.

Disciplinary power, exercised through observation, creates the individual in ways which make them more subject to control:

... instead of bending all its subjects into a single uniform mass, [disciplinary power] separates, analyses, differentiates ... to the point of necessary and sufficient single units'

(Foucault, 1979:170)

and by capturing the individual, enables surveillance:

The person becomes an individual 'case', subject to on-going examination and record – a 'case' which at one and the same time constitutes an object for a branch of knowledge and a hold for a branch of power.

(Foucault, 1979:176)

'Knowing' the individual is clothed in a sense of responsiveness, to needs and to requirements. The discourse is of liberal-humanism: the practice, in reality,

behaviourist, designed to bring about particular management features, such as efficiency:

...surveillance, defined and regulated, is inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching, not as an additional or adjacent part, but as a mechanism that is inherent to it and which increases its efficiency.  
(Foucault, 1979:176)

Surveillance practices, however constructed, are designed to bring about compliance, and Foucault's second category of examination is evident in the multiplicity of activities which form part of the management 'gaze': Teachers' Standards, discussed earlier, are such a means. Far from being simply a set of common (and by implication, agreed) criteria for bringing about 'effective' teaching, they function instead as the means by which teachers internalise and thus self-regulate behaviour and performance. Failure to conform, captured through observation practices, identify that teacher as 'unprofessional', which then becomes part of the record of that individual, 'the examination which places individuals in a field of surveillance also situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them' (Foucault, 1979:189). The objectification of a person is achieved whilst seemingly promoting individuality. In reality however, that individuality is exposed in order to be 'normalised', 'The significance of a norm is that it works by excluding; it defines a standard and criteria of judgement thus identifying all those who do not meet the standard' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:103).

Professionalism is thus constructed through management as about individuality, about shared values and criteria, and about identification of 'needs'. All of these factors speak to many of the teacher values expressed in this research. The discourse is familiar and thus unquestioned. Indeed, 'the significance and power of normalisation is precisely that it appears to be neutral' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:103). But what the post-modern lens allows is an understanding that these are acts of disciplinary power, designed to bring about not just compliance but self-regulated compliance. Professionalism is constructed through managerial tactics which use the powerful discourse of liberal humanism *to disguise* intent to control. Teachers are thus rendered vulnerable to a discourse which seems to reflect values and beliefs familiar to teachers, whilst in actuality bringing about agreement to an

agenda which is neo-liberal in intent. Professionalism is re-constructed not just as compliance, but as promotion *by the teachers* of values which in reality are contra-to those espoused. Managerialism manipulates the individual to accede to the demands of the market, 'driven by market forces ... new patterns of global economic expansion, competition and organisation' (A. Hargreaves, 2000:168). In this research, for example, Ruth stated, 'Society is ruled by the market, whether we like it or not. I don't think we can resist market demands'. However, what Ruth seems to be expressing here is a sense of resignation. Market demands have been presented as inevitable, no 'resistance' possible, the place of professionalism over-ridden by the need to conform. Although not all the teachers in this research had quite so clearly acceded to the managerial in terms of the card sort statements (Simon for example said, 'I see the word 'market' and rage comes into my head ...'), Ruth's absorption of the market-driven version of teaching means that she had adopted a version of professionalism defined by compliance, 'Teaching is an institution. You need to buy into the institution you're in'.

This position aligns with the version of knowledge that is constructed within a post-modern condition:

Knowledge ...will be produced in order to be sold ... consumed in order to be valorized in a new production ... the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its 'use-value'.  
(Lyotard, 1986:4-5)

Education as value in and of itself is replaced by a version of knowledge which is thus that of the market place. Even though the knowledge that many of the teachers in this sample valued was not that of the market place, there is little to suggest that the teachers in this research are organised in articulating resistance to the market place version of knowledge, instead expressing a vague, almost intuitive, feeling that knowledge has more than a market value:

These things are written about hundreds of years, thousands of years ago, about... in a lot of detail. But it's not in any curriculum. ... If we were able to sort of pass that knowledge onto the next generation, erm then you know, I think a lot of problems ... should get much better.  
(Tom C)

The stark contrasts in values represented here re-presents teacher autonomy within professionalism as not contested but as irrelevant. Professionalism is thus commodified and teachers seen not as shapers of, or even contributors to, the new

economic and social orders but instead as a hindrance to the 'real' function of education:

teachers ... are represented ... as obstacles to the marketisation of education ... weakened through legislated changes in the conditions of union membership, restricted [in the] scope of decision-making; prescrib[ed] central curricula; shift[s] towards temporary contracts...  
(A. Hargreaves, 2000:168)

### ***Professionalism and discourse***

It is here that the shaping of teacher professionalism is most evident through the discrediting of any sense of teachers having ownership of curriculum, of pedagogy, or indeed, of a discourse to explore these areas. Instead, a campaign of doubt about teachers' professionalism was put into place by policy-makers, characterised in Ball's famous 'discourse of derision' which:

...displace[s] not only specific words and meanings – progressivism and comprehensivism, for example – but also the speakers of those words, those 'experts' '... and 'professionals' ... These privileged speakers have been displaced, their control over meaning lost, their professional preferences replaced by abstract mechanisms and technologies of 'truth' and 'rationality' – ... the market, efficiency and management.  
(Ball, 1990a:18)

These are discourses still evident today in the pronouncements of the current Education Secretary, Michael Gove. In a recent speech (February 2014) the discourse of derision was focused on University teacher education and research:

School Direct also allows schools to shop around between universities for the best support for trainee teachers. That means universities have to shape their education departments to the practical needs of schools instead of the whims of ideologues. It also means that universities have to think hard about where they direct their research in education departments. Savvy schools are using School Direct to increasingly demand that universities conduct research which supports teachers' professional development rather than satisfying academics' pet passions.  
(Gove, 2014)

The effect of this discourse is three-fold: to dismiss the concepts which did not accord to policy, to position the speakers as marginalised, an intent highly reminiscent of Hargreaves' creative professionalism; but also and most significantly, to replace what might be considered the sacred within professionalism with the profane, that is, market, efficiency and management. Co-opting professionalism is

thus achieved, within a post-modern analysis, through the positioning of the teacher as unwitting 'host' to the values of the market place, and *as promoter* of those values through Foucault's construct of discipline, that is, control through self-regulation. The shaping of professionalism revealed through post-modernism analysis is dystopian in realisation. All the more profound then is Clarke's question about teacher identity

... in the wake of post-structuralism's radical de-centering of the subject and its highlighting of a number of impediments to agency, we might well ask how teachers are to give an account of themselves?  
(Clarke, 2009:185)

### **Identity and post modernism**

Identity was, as I acknowledged in Chapter Five, an area which gave teachers in this research considerable pause for thought. Indeed, one teacher commented that he found the identity card sort 'the most difficult of all'. This difficulty seemed to stem from the sense that teachers almost had no place for expression of their own sets of values and beliefs, but that rather, *if their students were to succeed*, these had to be set aside, under the demands of policy. Teacher 'self' identity seemed to be set in opposition to a co-opted sense of 'professional' identity, that is, an identity which complied in order to meet the self-imposed version of professionalism which saw students' needs as paramount; 'professional' identity was thus that constructed by policy. Tensions were evident with teachers positioned as needing to deny their own self-identity, and instead submit to a version prescribed by policy.

In seeking to explore teacher identity as represented through the teachers in my research, I had focused my analysis on constructs of identity, including Giroux's 'teacher as intellectual', and the politicisation of identity, drawing on Bernstein and Beijaard in particular. Although it was certainly possible to frame teacher identity in these ways, tensions existed between the desire, and in some cases belief, that the role of teacher should encompass teacher as intellectual, and the reality of the practical in meeting the policy demands, with a spectrum of responses evident. The data demonstrated teacher identity as frequently being shaped by external demands rather than internal convictions, and it was clear that overlap existed between identity and constructed notions of professionalism, in the references to market forces and resistance or acquiescence, in references to the overlap of personal and 'school'

identity, and in, most significantly, the interplay between the personal and professional, as I acknowledged in one of the final sentences of the Chapter Five section on identity: 'teacher identity may well cross and re-cross boundaries as professional and personal identities align - or collide'.

The concept of teacher identity as professional identity presents interestingly within a post-modern analysis where the notion of discipline as self-regulation within an 'approved' set of behaviours brings about a particular sense of self. The question to be asked might be 'Can any teacher 'give an account of themselves' if that account has already been given to them by others?' The question exists too of whether it is possible to stand against this account – that is, is resistance a reality?

### ***Foucault, Identity and post-modernism***

For Foucault, identity then is part of the power/knowledge relationship. The self is a product of this relationship:

Power-knowledge formations operate both through the practices which inscribe the person as a particular subject prior to entering an educational institution and those practices they are engaged in once within it; in becoming a 'subject' we learn to be a 'subject' of a particular sort. It is our assumptions about the nature of the subject which then inform our practices as teachers ... the particular positioning of the 'subjects' is effectively veiled. ...we have to be aware of the power-knowledge formations which construct the truth of the individual as a particular form of subject.

(Usher and Edwards, 1994:96)

The act of 'construct[ing] the truth of the individual' is achieved through discourse. Within post-modernism, as has been shown, discourse acts to bring realities into being, that is, discourses 'are not about objects; they constitute them' (Foucault, 1974:49). In the same way, teachers' identities are constituted through discourse, 'Statements make persons – we do not speak discourse, discourses speak us' (Ball, 2013:20). However, if teachers' identities are constituted, not described, neither the operant discourses nor the speakers are easily identified. It is 'a given' – it operates 'behind their backs', it is an 'unthought' ... One consequence of this is that discourses not only constitute objects but 'in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention' (Foucault, 1974:49). In thus constructing teacher identity, discourse can also de-construct identities which teachers believed themselves to have as a means of controlling and regulating behaviour.

## ***Regulating behaviour***

Teacher identity then is constituted in a post-modern analysis not as response to a positioning of policy or professional, nor as aligning neatly with Bernstein's four models of past and projected societies, but rather as a means of control. That control is not only however control of the teacher, *but of the system within which they work*, and this again is achieved through the operation of particular discourses. In this research, the teachers were attracted to the idea of teacher as intellectual but simultaneously rejected it as 'not practical', identifying a need to respond to market forces, even if such forces spoke against values of the teachers in question:

Teachers should think about themselves as thinkers and intellectuals. I wrote that on my post-it note. That would be lovely. Lovely. I think it would be great. I don't think it's true. I think it's very aspirational but I don't think it's how the profession is marketed...  
(Cecilia)

How the profession is marketed, ironically, seems to reflect Gove's 'pet passions', and that is to reproduce in the state sector the values and beliefs evident in the (unregulated) independent sector – a sector Gove sees as epitomising 'high standards':

For decades, the dominant consensus has been that state education in England was barely satisfactory; it was - if I may quote a distinguished former civil servant – 'bog standard'.

For many years commentators have lamented poor discipline, low standards, entrenched illiteracy, widespread innumeracy, the flight from rigour, the embrace of soft subjects, the collapse of faith in liberal learning and the erosion of excellence in science and technology.

The widespread view has been that the only way to get a really good education for your children was to escape - either into a better postcode, or into the private sector...

My ambition for our education system is simple - when you visit a school in England, standards are so high all round that you should not be able to tell whether it's in the state sector or a fee-paying independent.  
(Gove, 2014)

So the marketing message is clear: Maintained schools are dangerous left to their own devices, and must be controlled by the government in order to bring about a

transformation (in this speech 'renaissance') of practices so that they are replicas of the independent system – a system driven by market forces.

Within this marketed profession, it is critical to control how teachers 'giv[e] an account of themselves'. Identity is a cornerstone in securing compliance. If teacher identity stood against the declared values and purposes of policy, the education system would be revealed as a construct, instead of the normalised version presented. Controlling that version is achieved in ways reminiscent of D. Hargreaves' creative professionalism, that is through marginalisation of those who question it. Similarly, discourse, as the means of speaking realities into existence, must operate in order to marginalise those constructs which threaten to overturn a version of education shaped by economic drivers. Ball's (1990a:18) 'discourses of derision' are a powerful example of such a mechanism – it is not only the speakers but the concepts themselves which are derided, '...displace ... specific words and meanings – progressivism and comprehensivism, for example'. Teacher identity is thus used to shore up policy positions on education as, beleaguered by such discourses, teachers retreat into a position of quiescence; survival is a matter of disassociating from such derision, and the mechanisms for developing identity replaced by acceptance of an alternative discourse, which might be called the discourse of approval. Such a discourse would involve teachers in not just acknowledging, but endorsing the centrality of market forces, of the need for efficiency, and of acceptance of centralised standards. Identity then becomes not a site for struggle, but rather a place where teachers are positioned as agents *active in bringing about their own control*. This is entirely consistent with Foucault's 'disciplining' where the subject constructed is focused on self-regulation. Identity becomes the mechanism for self-regulation, and can be evaluated in terms of success by its outcomes, that is, the 'production of regimented, isolated and self-policing subjects' (Dews, 1987:150). Teachers become hosts to an identity which recognises policy needs. It is this version of self which does not simply comply with the panoply of policy control instruments, such as the Teachers' Standards, but which, literally, identifies with them:

Teaching is an institution. You need to buy into the institution you're in.  
(Ruth)



Within post-modernism, identity is constructed through the power-knowledge formations that inscribe the individual as a subject, both prior to entering an institution and within it, when thus engaged with the discourses and material practices of that institution, 'in becoming a 'subject' we learn to be a 'subject' of a particular sort ... the effect of power ... is effectively veiled. Thus ... we have to be aware of the power-knowledge formations which construct the truth of the individual as a particular form of subject'. (Usher and Edwards, 1994:96). The power-knowledge formations teach us who we are. Identity is thus not a personal event but a product of engagement with discourses which tell us who we are, but whose ephemeral nature ensure the resulting identity is understood as personally constructed. The identities claimed by the teachers in this research are not positions which reflect allegiance with or opposition to, but rather the product of engagement with specific discourses at historically meaningful times in these teachers' lives. The individual is simply part of a discourse, residing within a power-knowledge formation, where the self is the means of regulating behaviour (through pathologising/normalising) and where identity is a product of those discourses, whilst experienced as individual and owned, 'another example of the power which lies immanent in a set of practices where power is hidden from the awareness of those through whom it circulates' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:97). Identity is thus within a post-modern frame, the subject disciplined.

### ***Identity and resistance***

People are positioned in a variety of subject positions ... it is through this ... network of multiple determinations that discourses secure the affective and effective management of the people. However, this process is never complete or entirely successful for while discourse attempts to 'fix' human subjects, the very fact of multiple determinations undermines this attempt, thereby providing the possibility of resistance.  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:97)

What has been particularly striking in exploring a post-modern perspective is the sense of the progressive erosion of teacher agency as *conscious* of opportunity to oppose. Rather there has been a sense of teachers being manipulated into a position where compliance, which suggests at least an awareness of otherness, is replaced by complicity, where no sense of otherness exists. However, once again inconsistency is evident. In this research there were teachers who stood against the

invasion of self with policy identity. Tom, Simon and Jesse, for example, all indicated that the value of teachers as intellectuals was precisely to allow a sense of self:

I like this one – the identity of people seeing themselves as intellectuals ... for me, this statement is the whole point of teaching, being creators and owners of ... I think teachers don't sort of feel strongly enough about that but they are the owners.  
(Tom)

and if this is the case, then there is evidence of the notion of resistance.

Since power only exists in relation to – that is, in this research, knowledge, professionalism, identity – and is constructed through those discourses and material practices which are integral to those concepts, the paradoxes which exist within those states are also sites whereby power can be revealed as relational. The opportunity for destabilising power is thus always present. The paradox arises in that whilst opportunity exists, and whilst, as the previous section on power and knowledge indicated, power conceived as a network empowers teachers to destabilise, there appears to be limited evidence thus far of the reality of resistance. Although in Chapter Five I sought to explain this through teachers prioritising the needs of students, that is, compliance was necessary if students were to succeed in the current assessment-driven environment, there is still the remaining contradiction that many of the teachers in this research did not perceive the education they were obliged to offer as that which they believed to be valuable:

It's not in any curriculum. ... If we were able to sort of pass that knowledge onto the next generation ... I think a lot of problems, ... anger and depression, and lack of concentration, ... an idea of what life's for ... should get much better.  
(Tom C)

Yet, whilst that 'valuable' knowledge was not taught ('It's not in any curriculum') neither is there any evidence of opposition from teachers to the current construction of knowledge, that is, no exercise of power, no attempt to destabilise, indeed no discourse to talk into being the notion of resistance. The paradox of power unrealised seemed to stand against the work of Kincheloe and Giroux in urging teachers towards emancipatory and resistant practices, positions which ironically many of the teachers in this research themselves espoused:

Teachers' voices should be powerful again. Collaboration and research as knowledge building has to be our platform.  
(David)

Foucault, however, sees no contradiction in both the existence of complicit practices and simultaneously emancipatory and resistant practices. There is 'no transcendental Archimedean position from which we can become 'empowered', but only particular discursive positions within power-knowledge formations' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:98). Thus as discourses themselves are not fixed, neither is resistance nor emancipation:

Coercion appears to be necessary for emancipation while simultaneously subverting emancipation ... which forms of domination (coercion, constraint) are justified in furthering which forms of emancipation?  
(Cherryholmes, 1988:165)

In that this thesis began with notions of teacher research as the means to achieve emancipation, that is, it held the assumption that emancipation was a desirable state and that teacher research should be acting to bring about this state, post-modernism's questioning of emancipation as a reality is unsettling. As Usher and Edwards have it, we are 'haunted throughout by the emancipatory possibilities of education' (1994:4). Indeed the place where I began this research journey was with a belief that teacher research could bring about emancipation – that the act of research in and of itself was an emancipatory act. Is there now a place for this claim?

### **Teacher Research**

I began this thesis with a belief that teacher research acted as a means whereby teachers could reclaim knowledge, professionalism and identity in ways which accorded with their own values and beliefs. The emancipatory potential of teacher research resided for me in reclaiming the agenda of teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity, and in raising teacher status by acknowledging and promoting the intellectual dimension of teaching and teachers. In using teacher voice as the means to access teacher thinking in these areas, I had expected to reveal a seam of diamond-bright resistance which would demonstrate the ongoing ownership of knowledge, professionalism and identity, which teacher research would allow to surface, albeit over time. The work of Giroux and Kincheloe seemed to support this

thesis. However, as the research developed, it became clear that consistency of teacher view was not going to be an outcome; that for some, far from resistance being the mined outcome, compliance was more than a skin-deep position, and that, increasingly, complicity with the dominant versions of knowledge, professionalism and identity was evident. Certainly some teachers retained a sense of the 'sacred' but as the interviews showed, a language to access such thinking appeared both marginalised, and progressively a marker of one who had 'lost touch'. The card sorts went some way to addressing the language issue, but the results raised further questions in that inconsistency of response became the theme. This was unexpected and puzzling, and finding a lens to understand why became a key focus. As I read about post-modernism, it became a way of organising the diaspora of responses so that their very dispersion became the rationale for their existence. Throughout this chapter, addressing knowledge, professionalism and identity through the post-modern lens revealed quite different ways of understanding how and why the teachers had responded as they did in both the interviews and the card sorts. Increasingly, however, for this research, knowledge, professionalism and identity became almost a second order set of concerns. Instead the first order issue became the notion of discourse, drawing together each of the areas I had been investigating and, importantly, the construct of teacher voice.

It is thus perhaps ironic that discourse had not been an initial focus for this research. I had seen language as transparent, assuming a shared discourse which would support any data collection and analysis. It was not until the 'stark realisation of inarticulacy' (Chapter 4) in teacher responses that the need to explore discourse became formalised for me. In part, this is indicative of the ways in which my own understanding of this area had developed over the research period, and the research question, *To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore these concepts [of knowledge, professionalism and identity]?* reflected a recognition that, far from being transparent and shared, language – discourse – was fractured, and its role in the construction of knowledge, professionalism and identity neither straightforward nor agreed.

Adopting a post-modernist stance raised the bar even higher for the notion of discourse. No longer simply a synonym for language, discourse described the

material conditions of engagement - the means whereby realities themselves were literally talked into being:

Discourses are... about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority. Discourses embody meaning ... [they] construct certain possibilities of thought.  
(Ball, 1990a:17)

In Chapter Five, I had focused on discourse as a means of demonstrating access or obstruction to power, and teacher research was explored as one means of developing a language of articulation – the lost language of the sacred. In mapping the role of teacher research I had expected to be able to track its impact on knowledge, professionalism and identity, and in ways which demonstrated ‘progression’ – that is increasing ownership, and while I had anticipated this might be a journey of many steps back as well as forward, I was confident of the role of research.

However, two critical points emerged which disrupted this expectation; first, the data analysis of Chapter Five demonstrated that teacher research did seem to have a particular status in that it was seen as valuable by all teachers, though for quite different and sometimes opposing reasons, reflecting earlier opposing emphases on relevance and practicality, and ‘empowerment’. However, in the following section in Chapter Five, Teacher Voice, perhaps the ‘real’ role of research was revealed. I wrote there:

David observed, ‘Teachers’ voices should be powerful again. Collaboration and research as knowledge building has to be our platform.’ ... Ray saw policy and specifically Ofsted as an obstacle to teacher voice, ‘We know what to say to Ofsted inspectors – that’s one voice, but not ‘ours’. What we need to do is find our own voices again. Maybe research is the way to do that, I don’t know, I don’t know.

Ray’s ‘I don’t know’ summarises the contradictions and tensions that have been explored so far. However, using a post-modern analysis reveals more than contradictions in this statement. What is shown is power:

A discourse author-ises certain people to speak and correspondingly silences others, or at least makes their voices less authoritative. ... Discourse, therefore, ‘speaks’ but is yet silent – it is an absent presence. A discourse is therefore exclusionary.  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:90)

and Ray's 'I don't know' becomes a quite literal statement of powerlessness.

My thesis thus shifted from teacher research as a means to reclaim knowledge, professionalism and identity to understanding its relationship with the post-modern construction of discourse.

### ***Discourse and teacher research***

...the operation of discursive practices is to make it virtually impossible to think outside of them; to be outside of them is, by definition, to be mad, to be beyond comprehension and therefore reason. The discursive rules that produce and define reason are linked to the exercise of power.  
(Ball, 2013:21)

This section brings together four major areas: teacher research, teacher voice, discourse and power, and explores these aspects within a post-modernist framework. The interpretation afforded reveals new ways of understanding both the place and significance of teacher research.

Discourse is, as has been seen, implicated in the production of versions of knowledge, professionalism and identity. Post-modernism locates both truth and power within these areas in the discursive practices which construct realities. Teacher voice is thus an expression of these discursive practices which describe such 'regimes of truth'. But, as post-modernism demonstrates, *these are not single realities*. Teacher voice becomes teacher voices. Far from the teacher voices in this research being interpreted as inconsistent, they are actually demonstrative of the existence of the multiple realities of post-modernism, many of which oppose and contradict one another. Inconsistency should thus be the expected outcome, not seen as an aberration of agreement. The material conditions of the production of discourse are many and varied, and the regimes of truth created by discursive practices reflect these conditions. Foucault claims that 'a discourse ... provides the means for statements to be assessed as true, the reasoning which enables truth-claims to be made and validated' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:90). The example given – that of the concept of madness- is used to show that madness does not have a single 'out there' construct but rather exists as a 'term of concept reinvented at different periods for different ends' (Shumway, 1989), thus:

In speaking as a subject on a subject, we therefore need to be reflexively conscious of the conditions of possibility for what we say, how, where and

with what effect. ... The notion of discourse as powerful enough to simultaneously constitute and exclude certain possibilities of thought and action can also be used to examine the conditions of possibility ...  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:90/1)

The conditions of possibility – the material conditions – are created both consciously and unconsciously – that is, as deliberate acts, as with policy discourse, and as the ‘unthought’ (unarticulated) responses of teachers (Ray’s ‘I don’t know’).

Yet, as we have seen, power does not reside with one grouping: it is, in Foucault’s terms, a ‘chain’, and rather than acting as a single repressive force, power both acts on *and through* individuals. Given the relationship between power and discourse in the post-modern, discourse is thus also positioned to become the ‘thought’ rather than the ‘unthought’ (Usher and Edwards, 1994:90). The question then is what material conditions – conditions of possibility - can support this?

Within this research, teacher research has been the arena in which I have suggested opportunity to reclaim agendas relating to knowledge, professionalism and identity. The post-modernist lens claims a different opportunity for teacher research: that of the conscious construction of a discourse which is both positioned to offer ‘the ability to disrupt, challenge and change’ the authority of a discourse (‘author-ises certain people to speak’ (Usher and Edwards, 1994:90)) and to break the silence encountered in this research at least.

That research is potentially a powerful and perhaps even disruptive activity is, ironically, perhaps best demonstrated through analysis of the meanings of the acts of repression to which it has been subject. Lyotard, commenting on the control and suppression of university academic research, states that such control is essential because of the ability of research to subvert accepted norms through critical engagement:

Stripped of the responsibility of research, they limit themselves to the transmission of what is judged to be established knowledge, and through didactics they guarantee the replication of teachers rather than the production of researchers.  
(Lyotard, 1986:39)

That academic research should be positioned to privilege replication rather than criticality is entirely consistent with the post-modernist claims relating to discourse. The discourse thus created speaks only of a self-referential claim to truth, and is thus

exclusionary. Teacher research which countered this position – that is, was critical in intent – would risk a disruption of a constructed truth-reality needed to sustain a discourse of power which was simultaneously concerned to ‘conceal its own invention’ (Usher and Edwards, 1994:90). The power-lessness experienced by teachers in this research is a direct outcome of being within one power discourse but without a discourse which allows them to critique the position claimed. Thus teachers are positioned not without access to the discourses of power but without a discourse at all, since, as Foucault (1971:11-12), quoted earlier, states, ‘Discourse may seem of little account, but the prohibitions to which it is subject reveal soon enough its links with desire and power’.

If research is perceived to be dangerous in creating such an alternative discourse, then according to this logic, teacher research would be subject to the same acts of repression. And, as has been demonstrated in this thesis, teacher research has indeed been controlled. It has been controlled by a discourse that Ball had first applied to the 1988 Education Reform Act – the discourse of derision. In Chapter One, I showed that academic research in Education had indeed been subject to such a discourse:

In this country, £65 million is spent each year on educational research ...Much of this research has been widely criticised – for its poor quality, irrelevance and inapplicability to the improvement ... of schools. In the summer of 1998, this diagnosis was confirmed by an independent review of educational research ... [the Hillage Report]  
(Hargreaves, D.,1998:15)

The criticism was framed in in such severe terms that policy, via the Hillage Report, dictated teachers were the only group who should set the agenda for and even undertake research in education. I had previously interpreted this to be a slur on university research, a way of excising universities from education to facilitate a political agenda. However, with a post-modernist position the attack is shown to be far more sinister. The type of research that academics were beginning to develop *with schools* was that of criticality and the resulting discourse one with potential to bring about change. This dangerous situation for policy had to be controlled. The history of the BPRS and its sudden disappearance thus relates not to finance as was claimed, but to the urgent need to suppress a developing discourse. The excision of universities from research in education is not about political control *per se* but about



the need to destroy a discourse of potential change and subversion. The positioning of teachers who were working within the policy discourse 'as a given ... an 'unthought' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:90) as arbiters of educational research agendas, providing a mechanism for not only maintaining a policy discourse but for sustaining the reality created, thus suppressing not only an alternative discourse, but an understanding of the possibilities of other educational realities.

Thus a new interpretation can be given to the earlier argument I made about teacher research being claimed by policy. It is not competing knowledge claims, nor even versions of professionalism and self which are being controlled, but rather the very ability of teachers to think beyond the policy discourse, to talk into being alternative ways of understanding education. It is not a return to sacred knowledge, nor the rejection of the profane, but the creation of a discourse which engages with the present through the discourse of criticality, 'discourses are not about objects; they constitute them' (Foucault, 1974:49). Without such a discourse, teachers are positioned only ever to be reactive, that is to respond by using the discourse of policy, and to do so by recourse to an apparently arcane set of values which cannot articulate with the powerful discourses of policy, of industry, and of the relentlessness of the calls to prioritise the construction of individuals as *above all* participants in a global economy, a position which, for the teachers in this research, does not reflect an agreed outcome.

Similarly, professionalism and the expressed view of teachers in this research which reflect a sense of impotence are entirely consistent with a lack of alternative discourse - professionalism, and its much made claim to autonomy, cannot exist within a discourse which denies the existence of that reality. Equally, any claim to identity which stands outside of the existing discourse has no point of reference that is legitimated within current systems, so that any self thus articulated becomes, as described earlier, 'beyond comprehension ... beyond reason ... mad'. Discourse defines and is exclusionary, 'persons as subjects become governable' (Usher and Edwards, 1994:92).

Teacher voice thus also loses coherence as a construct, but segues into the wider notion of discourse. The notion of coherence is no longer of significance, but rather teacher voice becomes the varied and at times indeed incoherent articulation of the multiple realities experienced by teachers. Teacher voice may still be claimed to

exist, but as a multi-faceted and disconnected phenomenon, rather than residing in any of the three constructs which began the thesis, that is, as representative, or as access to a single discourse with an intended audience, or as a political force. Teacher research thus fuses with 'teacher voice'. It is the production of a discourse which is the outcome and the calls by teachers in this research to reinstate the teacher's voice can now be understood to refer not to a political intent but, and perhaps unconsciously, to a discourse of criticality. The positions of Kincheloe and Giroux, now re-interpreted through post-modernism, that teacher research is the means of 'emancipation' and that thus teachers can position themselves as intellectuals, take on different import. Whilst emancipation as an outcome does not resonate with post-modernism, the state of ongoing engagement through discourse as emancipatory does. Teacher research can provide the precise material conditions for development of such a discourse. There is, of course, in post-modernism no expectation of a single discourse; nevertheless, as Foucault argues, discourse can be a basis for resistance.

Examining the responses of the teachers in this research within this post-modern frame offers quite new ways of understanding. In terms of knowledge, for example, the debates about whether teacher knowledge refers to policy demands or to a wider curriculum is reconstructed so that the focus is not a 'one or the other' but an ability to evaluate the arguments and to seek a truth which resides in conditions other than policy discourse. Similarly, Bernstein's use of sacred and profane knowledge no longer have resonance. Far from knowledge residing within two opposing discourses, with dominance or resistance as the informing principles, knowledge is instead constructed through the ability to engage *critically*. Thus Lyotard can argue that knowledge in a post-modern condition is not simply, 'a tool of the authorities. ... Its principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy' (1986:xxv), that is, the ability to think against the dominant, or established, paradigms. This ability resides within the alternative critical discourse which is a marker of effective teacher research – that is, the ability to think *against*. Lyotard's language games are rooted in the strategic development of a discourse which accesses the alternative, and teacher research the material conditions to bring this about. Certainly in this research, teacher research was seen as sufficiently meaningful for teachers to describe it as 'very important indeed' (David), and significantly as an opportunity for

resistance, 'It's about change, better and richer lives for human beings' (Simon). It may even tentatively be claimed that teacher research is where the nascent development of the post-modern discourse of criticality might be discerned.

In making these arguments, it is important to point out that post-modernism is itself subject to criticisms. Lyotard, for example, raises the fundamental paradox that faces any research using post-modernism: it both stands against meta-narrative, that is, denies its place as legitimator, and simultaneously fails to acknowledge the production thereby of its own meta-narrative. It fails to deal with the contextualisation of the debates, so that, for example, the casting of this thesis as within a neo-liberal (as opposed to civil) meta-narrative is itself both present within and opposing to post-modernism. Indeed, in the past, post-modernism was rarely applied to analysis of education at all since education itself was predicated on such a meta-narrative. Without such meta-narratives, the purposes and structures of education would, it was claimed, be stripped of purpose

Post- modernism's emphasis on ... the decentred subject constructed by language, discourse, desire and the unconscious seems to contradict the very purposes of education and the basis of educational activity.  
(Usher and Edwards, 1994:2)

But paradoxes do exist. Cohesion is not a dominant model. Schools, teachers, students are all now within a system of education which no longer responds to the meta-narrative; in fact, quite the opposite as the education system now becomes predicated on the simultaneous structures of competition and collaboration - the paradoxes, for example presented by the structures of academy chains, and the initiative to have private and maintained schools work together.

A single narrative breaks down as unable to encompass the contradictions of the current education system, even as policy still attempts to produce the narrative of 'raising standards' as an attempt to maintain an illusion of cohesion.

Post-modernism, however, brings to this act of narrative a lens which serves to reveal the illusion of policy cohesion. Post-modernism, far from contradicting the 'very purposes of education', demonstrates the fragmentation of the concept. It is perhaps *only* through the use of a post-modern perspective that the modern day contradictions, tensions and paradoxes of education can be understood:

Education is perhaps the most important way we relate to the world, to the way we experience, understand and attempt to change the world, and to the ways in which we understand ourselves and our relations with others ... the post-modern ... gives us a fresh and radical way of confronting these questions.

(Usher and Edwards, 1994:4)

### **Conclusion: 'I thought I knew the answer to this'.**

It is usual for the conclusion to a thesis to return to the research questions and to reflect on the extent to which the research had been able to answer those, and indeed this conclusion will be no different in using this format. However, what may be understood to be less usual is that the post-modern perspective explored in Chapter Six means that there is also an opportunity for the questions themselves to be subject to scrutiny, and to do so using Foucault's reversal principle.

The research questions therefore become the means of interrogating my own epistemological beliefs and the changes brought about by this research. The analysis of question, answer and analysis which follows is therefore both an attempt to consider outcomes against questions and to move towards an understanding of the profound development of my own learning in this field.

#### Research Question 1

In the 'contested' fields of professionalism, knowledge and identity, what can teachers' conceptualisations of those areas tell us about the impact on practice and policy, if any?

- *How do teachers conceptualise professionalism and how does this map against current understanding?*
- *How do teachers conceptualise teacher knowledge and how does this map against our current understanding?*
- *How do teachers conceptualise their identity in a professional setting and how does this map against our current understanding?*

Reviewing the questions, it becomes clear that they represent a stage in my own thinking where I believed that the key component in understanding knowledge, professionalism and identity was to be found in teacher voice. Beneath this sits a sense that revelation would follow once teacher voice could be reinstated through the act of teacher research, and the concomitant reclaiming of knowledge, professionalism and identity. Reflecting now on these questions, they are successful in the sense that they play a major part in shaping the thesis. Research Question 1 served to drive the exploration of the constructs of knowledge, professionalism and identity, and demonstrated that for each concept, contestation and politicisation

acted to bring about competing forms of each, which could be traced chronologically and through policy positioning. The concerns of the relevant literatures similarly positioned findings in historical and concomitant political contexts, either through promotion or opposition to governmental directives. Teacher construction of knowledge, professionalism and identity were, however, far less clear. In planning for interviews as key to accessing teacher voice, what I had not expected was firstly that teacher voice was not easily accessible. Despite having confidence that both my questions and the interviewees would generate significant discussion in these areas, the responses I have already discussed (inarticulacy and silence) were unexpected, and at the time, inexplicable. Secondly, even when teacher voice could be said to be available (as through the use of card sorts) no agreement on what constituted teacher knowledge, professionalism and identity emerged. In fact, what emerged was quite the reverse, with answers demonstrating a spectrum of beliefs, all with quite different justifications and explanations attached. Attempting to map what was said by teachers against the relevant literatures, even those literatures which were the source of the card sort quotes, was a demonstration of fragmentation rather than cohesion. Accounting for such disparity became a major concern, since its very divergence questioned the premise of the thesis – that ‘teacher voice’ was the absent answer to the research questions I was asking. This fragmentation of teacher-response impelled an area of investigation – that of discourse – which developed as a major theme, as will be seen with Research Question 2, and which became one of the most significant areas for this research. Research Question 1 was thus also successful in identifying a key area for Stage 2 of the research, that of discourse, which originally had not even been a focus for investigation.

Retrospectively, in terms of my own learning, what was also revealed was the extent to which I myself had been persuaded by a version of education as held in polarities, with teacher as power-less and policy as power-full [*sic*]. Research Question One had this position as its unacknowledged, and perhaps unrealised by me at that time, founding premise.

So to some extent, Research Question 1 can be said to have been successful in that it demonstrated that teachers were not able to articulate constructs of knowledge, professionalism and identity, but were able to discuss versions of these constructs through the use of quotes on card sorts. As such, impact on both policy and practice

was unavailable to assess, since no articulation of the positions could be offered. Mapping against the literatures was not fully answered because of the same issue of articulation, although the card sorts, by virtue of using quotes from the literatures, suggested some possibilities for agreement and disagreement. However, where Research Question 1 proved most powerful was in moving attention away from the concepts of knowledge, professionalism and identity as separate events, and began to show instead that a deeper and more complex question existed: who *could* articulate what the constructs of knowledge, professionalism and identity were, and through what mechanisms was this achieved? However, and as discussed earlier, *retrospectively* Research Question One did not allow for a theoretical lens such as post-modernism to question the very construction of teacher voice as coherent. Research evolving from this thesis might well reversion any research questions to reflect this more complex construction of voice.

Research Question 2 only emerged in Stage 2 of the research, when it became clear that discourse was a major theme in the emerging literature and data. Even so, discourse took on several identities, acting both as a marker for a language of knowledge, professionalism and identity, and as a means of illustrating the power dynamics between policy and practitioners. Giroux's 'discourse of possibility' was set against the discourses of control; and developing a discourse that enabled critical thinking for teachers was central to realising Giroux's vision of teachers as transformative intellectuals. The power dimension began to emerge clearly in Chapter Two and the final shape of the question reflected this:

To what extent can it be said that access to the discourses of power impact on teachers' ability to explore these concepts [knowledge, professionalism, identity]?

It might be said that discourse emerged as the central concern of this thesis, so in that Research Question 2 illuminated the issues surrounding both access to power and the mechanisms to impact on power, Research Question 2 was successful in demonstrating the importance of discourse and power as a theme. My concern with this question at the time is revealed as seeking an explanation for teachers' voice being unheard, so that power was critical in explaining why teachers remained apparently, as I understood it, excluded from the construction of knowledge, professionalism and identity in ways which denied them a role as active agents in

their own working lives. I sought to demonstrate that the systematic exclusion of teachers from the discourses of power meant that teachers were positioned in a powerless state, literally with no means of making their voices heard. A solution, I believed at this time, was to have teachers as researchers, thereby creating a community using a discourse of possibility. This approach assumed that all teachers thus engaged would create and take part in a discourse of shared values and beliefs. The card sort showed otherwise; far from agreement, once again disparity was the defining motif. Criticality did not extend for all teachers to engagement with policy, but instead looked to produce evidential bases that spoke to policy requirements. The discourses of derision were invisible, and professionalism defined not simply by compliance but by *complicity*. The willing entry into another's version of education perhaps suggests a better question would have been 'How does discourse function to create a reality – and who owns the reality thus brought into being?'

Research Question 3 was initially the question I believed would be at the heart of the thesis: What claims, if any, do teachers make for the impact of teacher research on their working lives? I was confident that research served to demonstrate to teachers that by generating knowledge, a sense of professionalism would be engendered which in turn would lead to an identity crafted through engagement with ideas. Kincheloe's persuasive credo that, 'Awareness of the social construction of knowledge about the world moves teachers to a new level of reasoning about other people's reasoning' (2003:193) meant for me research would function to bring about critical, informed positioning by teachers which would serve to bring about independence of intellectual stance. Indeed, it reflected the basis on which I had originally set up CamStar. The data indicated that teacher research was valued, but valued differently by different teachers, some to promote policy, some to question policy. The latter group however often expressed resignation in effecting any impact on policy. Their focus on student examination success precluded using any research findings to effect change which might destabilise student examination success. Research became either a way of finding out 'what works' for examinations, or an interesting and sometimes compelling activity, but one which seemed to exist in parallel to the classroom. Research seemed to have little explicit impact on teachers' working lives, other than allowing them to meet policy expectations more readily, except perhaps to offer a place to enjoy intellectual activity. Again, my belief that



research would act as an impetus to question, to enable risk-taking and to help inform teacher knowledge and professionalism was tested. However, what Research Question 3 did was to demonstrate that teachers' experience of research was not a single narrative – a meta-narrative that could stand against the policy meta-narrative - but rather a series of micro-narratives that might serve to unsettle the claims of the policy meta-narrative in more complex and nuanced ways than I had predicted. Lyotard's demonstration of the significance of such micro-narratives could suggest that Research Question 3 might be reversioned to explore how research might allow teachers to map their own understandings against policy claims, and what other narratives might thus emerge in this activity.

Research Question 4, 'Can the claims for emancipation through teacher research be said to be realistic?' is clearly rooted in a belief that emancipation would be readily understood as freedom from policy diktat, consistent with my beliefs that the unheard teacher voice would emerge through teacher research to reclaim professionalism, knowledge and identity. The same limitations pertained with this as with the other three research questions. My own unspoken belief that emancipation was a desirable state, awarding teachers independence and ownership of their own professional identities, was swiftly revealed as unexamined. Espoused by Giroux and Kincheloe, the question was not whether emancipation through teacher research was realistic, but whether emancipation could be said to be an achievable state on any level. Paradox infused the claim. Emancipation could only be achieved by the domination of one reality over another. It could not be a state of 'freedom from' without being a state of 'control over'. If the question could be asked at all, it might be to investigate whether emancipation might not be cast more successfully as resistance, and if so, resistance by whom against what.

Yet, having questioned the questions, and indeed the questioner, I have an interesting paradox of my own. Without the original research questions, I could not have moved from a place I now see as un-nuanced and naïve in its understanding of the complex relationships between knowledge, professionalism, identity, research and discourse, to the understanding that the work of Lyotard and Foucault in particular have led me to grasp, however tentatively.

The reflective lens of post-modernism challenged my own understandings and demanded that I moved beyond the comfortable and familiar parameters of policy and practice, to think differently. The outcome of my research has been not to provide answers but to open up ways of asking questions I did not know existed when I began: to enter into a new way of seeing:

listen: there's a hell  
of a good universe next door; let's go  
(e.e. cummings)

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## Appendix 1

### Parsons' criteria for professionalism.

Hoyle (1980:45) summarised Parsons' main points thus:

- A profession is an occupation which performs a crucial social function;
- The exercise of this function requires a considerable degree of skill;
- This skill is exercised in situations which are not wholly routine, but in which new problems and situations have to be handled;
- Thus ... recipe-type knowledge is insufficient to meet professional demands;
- The acquisition of this body of knowledge and the development of specific skills requires a lengthy period of higher education;
- ...which also involves the process of socialisation into professional values;
- These values tend to centre on the pre-eminence of clients' interests, and to some degree they are made explicit in a code of ethics;
- Because knowledge-based skills are exercised in non-routine situations, it is essential for the profession to have the freedom to make his [sic] own judgements with regard to appropriate practice;
- Because professional practice is so specialised, the organised profession should have a strong voice in the shaping of relevant public policy, a large degree of control over the exercise of professional responsibilities, and a high degree of autonomy in relation to the state;
- Lengthy training, responsibility and client-centredness are necessarily rewarded by high prestige and a high level of remuneration.

## Appendix 2

### Other frames: new conceptions.

Certainly Ben-Peretz (2010) claims that the concepts, if not the components, of teacher knowledge change over time. The models discussed above, whilst remaining significant, have been joined by other formulations of teacher knowledge which claim to recognise the need for other organisational principles in exploring teacher knowledge.

The work of Brown and McIntyre (1993), for example, in developing the concept of craft knowledge, has been presented as central to understanding the ways in which teachers' knowledge and the practical are intermeshed in this construction of knowledge. Ruthven (2002:584) defines craft knowledge as:

...the professional knowledge which teachers bring to bear in their day-to-day classroom teaching. It is action-oriented knowledge which is not generally made explicit by them; knowledge which they may indeed find difficult to articulate, or which they may even be unaware of using.

And as Alexander (2004:13) notes:

Sally Brown and Donald McIntyre reveal how the work of experienced teachers is, as a matter of day-to-day reality, grounded to a considerable extent in a *craft* knowledge of ideas, routines and conditions, which they map empirically in respect of pupils, time, content, the material environment and teachers themselves (Brown and McIntyre,1993).

In the use of craft knowledge to explain teacher knowledge, the emphasis remains on the practical rather than the theoretical, and the unarticulated. These two notions, and the resultant difficulties that researchers have encountered when exploring teacher knowledge in these conceptual frameworks will, as will be seen, come to play a significant part in my own research design.

### ***From craft to forms***

Pollard *et al.* (2002), using the concept of 'forms' (Hirst, 1965; Peters, 1966), organise knowledge into four major categories: Rationalism, where:

Forms of knowledge are thought to be distinguishable, philosophically, by the different ways of thinking and the different kinds of evidence which are employed in investigating them ... such a view is often referred to as 'rationalist' (Blenkin and Kelly, 1981).

(2002:171)

Empiricism, that is knowledge achieved through:

... individuals interacting with the environment and restructuring their understanding through their experiences ... knowledge is the application of intellect to experience... evidenced in the writings of Dewey and Piaget.

(2002:171)

Interactionism, the view that knowledge is constructed by individuals interacting with one another, the 'social constructivism' of both Vygotsky and Bruner:

In such an 'interactionist' approach people are seen as developing a common view of 'reality'.

(2002:171)

and finally, the fourth category, elitism:

... knowledge can be seen in the context of macro-social structures, and historical forces, as being influenced by powerful social groups who define certain types of knowledge as being important or high status. They may attempt to control access to certain forms of knowledge, particularly those associated with power (Young, 1971; Bernstein, 1971), but they may also try to insist on the exposure ... to other forms of knowledge which are deemed to be appropriate.

(2002:171)

This latter type of knowledge will come to be seen as particularly significant in the development of this thesis and the work of Bernstein will, as I explore the two frameworks in this section, serve to illuminate the ways in which knowledge control is a central component of the ways in which teacher knowledge has come to be defined.

## Appendix 3

### Wenger's five dimensions of identity.

Wenger (1998) identifies five dimensions of identity:

- identity as *negotiated experiences* where teachers define who they are by the ways they experience themselves through participation with, and perceptions of, others;
- identity as *community membership* where teachers define who they are through belonging (or not belonging to) a particular group;
- identity as *learning trajectory* where teachers define who they are by past events and future plans;
- identity as *nexus of multi-membership* where teachers define who they are by the ways they reconcile various forms of identity into one identity;
- identity as *a relation between the local and the global* where teachers define who they are by negotiating local ways of belonging to wider communities.

## Appendix 4

### Habermas' knowledge constitutive interests

The *technical constitutive interest* is best understood as that based on the human need to predict (and therefore control) the natural world – ‘technically useful knowledge’ (Kincheloe, 2003:93) – where ‘the criterion of effective control of reality directs what is or is not appropriate action’ (MacIsaac, 1996:1). Research in this area looks for knowledge which enables duplication of conditions and replication of results. It is an empirical-analytic way of knowing and the use of hypothetical-deductive theories characterise this domain. Its dominant view of the world accedes to the positivist construction of knowledge; Habermas draws our attention to the fact that it is possible to study social phenomena in this way, but that exclusive reliance on the positivist approach will not yield understanding of the social world.

It is however a form of knowledge which, it might be contended, informs the position I have suggested is represented by D. Hargreaves and others (that is, that of competences and standards): that their impetus is one of centralisation and generation of ‘best practice’ (as defined within their epistemology) is certainly to do with duplication and reproduction of predicted results. In that it informs the concern about the capacity to control through the ability to predict, this form of knowledge, when translated into teacher knowledge, is seen to be present in policy, curriculum, assessment, and indeed inspection documentation. Evidence-based practice, as defined within this position, is also a form of control. The arguments made by those concerned with this positioning about educational research are illuminating: if the only function of educational research is the production of ‘what works’, without any acknowledgement of the social or contextual factors relating to any resulting production of knowledge, ‘what works’ can only be defined by government policy and ‘worthwhile’ educational research can only be concerned with duplication of conditions and results. In order to verify the claims of reproduction and predictability, research methodology associated with the technical has to be concerned with objectivity and empirically collected data. Thus, as Kincheloe says, ‘positivism is a child of the technical interest’ (2003:93). The attack made by D. Hargreaves and others on qualitative research methodologies is a further illustration of the form of knowledge being propounded by this group: teacher knowledge should be

quantifiable, reproducible in a range of conditions and demonstrably 'objective'. Its ultimate purpose is control of what can be said to constitute teacher knowledge. The role of the professional is to 'administer' such knowledge to students.

The *practical constitutive interest* is concerned with language and the use by humans of language (word or symbol) to bring about commonality of understanding – the production, in MacIsaac's terms, of social knowledge (1996:1). Governed by 'binding consensual norms' (1996:1), this form of knowledge seeks to define 'reciprocal expectations about behaviour between individuals' (1996:1). However, Habermas contends, language can be used to communicate in ways which seek to disguise. As such, language can serve as a means for 'legitimising power interests' (2003:94). Any construct of knowledge within this domain would, therefore, be subject to intent in language use. Language is the major vehicle for ideological conditioning; it is used as much to manipulate as to clarify; to dominate as to enable (see, for example, Fairclough, 1989, *Language and Power*). Undertaking critical discourse analysis of any text would reveal the purposes of language use in those specific circumstances and thus enable ideological intent to be revealed. Hermeneutics, the research methodology associated with the practical concern, although seeking understanding of specific social phenomena, fails, in Habermas' view, consistently to address the ideological function of language:

The attempt to expose such ideological characteristics of language ... is not a concern of the practical interest.

(Kincheloe, 2003:94)

The underlying assumption about language – that it is transparent in use and neutral in impact – is clearly misguided:

.. the hermeneutical study of language fails at times to comprehend the ways that language hides the conditions of social life...

(Kincheloe, 2003:94)

In terms of teacher knowledge, the very construction of that knowledge is ultimately dependent on language use and communication. Critical discourse analysis is not readily undertaken on any policy document and thus ideological intent goes unrevealed. Teacher knowledge thus constructed goes unchallenged intellectually in

terms of purpose or justification. Whilst this form of knowledge is not as centrally concerned with control or predictability as the technical, it nevertheless shares some of the outcomes, particularly in terms of the production of unexamined evidence-based practice. The concern of the practical – to share and construct common understandings does in fact play into any ideological positionings: once an agreed version emerges, the construction of teacher knowledge within this position is verified and bounded by continuing use: unexamined teacher knowledge is thus confirmed and reinforced through the practical, without ideological analysis being available. The professional dealing with this form of knowledge would thus unwittingly be reproducing the conditions of knowledge production associated with the deemed ideological function of teacher knowledge, and indeed constructing their own professional identity to ‘naturalise’ that position.



## Appendix 5

### Fuller discussion of Stage 1

#### Stage 1

Contextualised in the very early stages of the project, Stage 1 was originally designed to explore the ways in which teachers themselves understood the purpose and impact of practitioner research. I was not seeking to confirm any particular theoretical position but rather I was, albeit tentatively, moving towards a position where I could identify key constructs for teachers undertaking research. As external contexts changed over time, however, Stage 1 became more investigative in nature and it became clear that far from this being, as I had expected, the major data collection stage, what was happening was that these data were generating ideas which moved away from my original conception of the project. Stage 1 became characterised as a theory-seeking (rather than confirming) stage, inductive and exploratory.

I decided to undertake, through CamStar, a series of 18 interviews in six schools (those who had responded positively to a blanket invitation to all CamStar schools to be involved ) to establish how teachers understood professional knowledge and what informed that position, and then to explore whether and how teacher research might appear within this knowledge generation. I had originally thought that the Stage 1 interviews would be a major data collection activity for my research. However, as I began to explore these issues with teachers, I was startled by some of the responses I was receiving. Far from locating themselves as professionals within a system, and thus having the right to generate professional knowledge, many teachers saw policy knowledge as the commodity with which they had an obligation to engage, one teacher saying, 'I am paid to teach 'policy knowledge' and so I have a professional responsibility to do that'. 'Policy knowledge' was professional knowledge. Others presented 'third way' views, in which policy knowledge drove their professional lives, but they retained an 'interest' in other related knowledges, though that interest was not pursued in any structured way. Very few positioned themselves as locating policy knowledge on an equal par with professional knowledge generated by teacher research, and those that did, did so almost despite their schools' contextualisation of knowledge through policy.

Further, different schools reflected different understandings of the place of research, and the polarised approaches of two CamStar schools is a case in point: one school, extremely highly achieving and confident of its own success, supported staff in terms of both time and funds in researching any area of professional interest (defined as widely as could be imagined); another school, also highly achieving but focused on meeting externally set 'standards', only allowed staff to research within very narrow boundaries of school-defined 'professional knowledge' and then only if that research project was approved by the Senior Management Team as 'classroom and standards focused', and with no additional time or funds.

## Appendix 6

### Coding/Theming Example: Knowledge

Subject knowledge	<p>3: also I think very very good solid inspiring teaching comes from being comfortable with your knowledge base as well.</p> <p>4: Erm well I mean the one that springs to mind first of all is subject knowledge. I guess if you don't know your stuff then you can't teach</p> <p>8:; how would you define teacher knowledge?</p> <p>R Well it depends where you're looking doesn't it? There's obviously subject knowledge, that's very variable, you know,</p> <p>10: And as far as I can see the subject knowledge is pretty important really, and I don't know that that always gets the priority... the priority it should have. Quite often erm you find that you're given, as a teacher, almost no opportunity to deepen your subject knowledge, so as a linguist why is somebody not sending me once a year to Germany to brush up on my German?</p> <p>11. . But I think knowledge... teacher knowledge is knowledge... you know, a combination of subject knowledge whatever your territory of knowing about something is. And then how you mediate that and use that with young people, or older people. And, you know, you have kind of simple understanding when you start about teacher knowledge, or subject knowledge sort of seeming to be a finite thing that you just can acquire. You know, quantities of, but then you realise it's not like that.</p> <p>. So I think subject knowledge has got to be something that should be growing and is, I think, rather sadly a modern educational life is not... people don't necessarily even accept that, that they should be developing their subject knowledge. Because you get people coming with hybrid and half-baked study from however or where they've done their degree. And they're</p>
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not necessarily building on that and developing that as they go on, in the way that perhaps people would have thought of doing in the past.

12: Thinking from my own subject I guess it would be thinking about topics, how they're linked, where they're used, what problems pupils have with them, what misconceptions pupils bring with them.

12: Erm teacher knowledge [pause]. I mean I guess moving away from the subject, there's well just the nuts and bolts of teaching. That's not what I immediately think when I hear the phrase 'teacher knowledge'. To me, and again it's probably because I'm so subject-focused, it does jump straight to a, you know, how can I convince pupils that one quarter and another quarter doesn't make two eighths and you know, why is that wrong and how can I convince them of that? That's the thing I immediately jump into.

13: So there's obviously subject-knowledge which I suppose research is important for that because that's where you gain a lot of your knowledge from, but that's, you can get that out of a text book quite easily.

So I suppose it's, so you've got subject knowledge, craft knowledge,

Erm I think it's got a lot of facets. So there's the subject knowledge and then there's the sort of the art of teaching knowledge thing which is,

15 I mean certainly the way I was brought up one started with subject knowledge and I don't go all the way with people who talk about replacing, developing the curriculum so it's more about skills and competencies. My view here and the view of this school I think, so it's the school's policy, and I think most of the teachers who teach here believe this, that the traditional subjects still represent a very useful framework to actually structure children's knowledge because I don't buy this idea of, oh everything's

on the internet so you don't need to know anything any more

. Yes, so the subject knowledge to my mind remains immensely important and teachers need to have rich subject knowledge.

17: Oh yeah, definitely, yeah, yeah. I mean teacher knowledge, yeah. Obviously subject knowledge is subject knowledge wherever you go,

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18: Teacher knowledge, I suppose a lot of people would say is content, subject content.

18: Well I think you just get maybe a bit blasé about your subject knowledge because you, that's just kind of day-to-day, you just, and that's expected

21: What is teacher knowledge? Teacher knowledge. Well apart from the obvious which is your subject knowledge, teacher knowledge is, it's difficult isn't it.

23: Erm [pause] but I would say that if you go back to when I first entered teaching then basically you had a subject and you just had to impart that knowledge. It was the filling the jug type of way of doing things.

26: And our... and our sort of thinking at [?KEGS] is that subject knowledge is important. You know, it... it's not something you can just say, you know... There are general teacherly skills you need to have, but actually you know, knowing the subject and talking about it is important, it is [sort of under valued?].

28: teacher knowledge... there has to be some factual knowledge, doesn't there, and that's their own subject knowledge I guess

Erm Subject knowledge. Knowledge of erm the subtleties of the art... the... having those tools at your fingertips, so that you can

	<p>chop and change as you need.</p> <p>28: Well I suppose once upon a time we would have said it's all about subject knowledge, but of course it's far more subtle than that. Any... Well subject knowledge has its place, of course, that is... has to be fine before you can do the teaching bit.</p> <p>32: Well it has so many different strands, surely. Because it can be anything from your subject knowledge</p>
<p>Subject knowledge isn't everything</p>	<p>12: well let me take for example if you had a University Maths teacher who was a competent teacher and a very able mathematician, I'm not convinced that they could come straight into a school setting with materials provided by the government and do a good job of teaching pupils who don't necessarily, you know, didn't necessarily do well at Maths at primary school well. I think there's a lot more, there's a lot more knowledge out there 3: but is that it's more important that you know the students and that you have enthusiasm with the students rather than necessarily be a font of all knowledge</p> <p>28: And I suppose inter-personal skills, the knowledge of how... a sensitivity about other people, and how they're responding to you, which doesn't come at all with what... whether you've got a good degree or not,</p> <p>26: there's also... there's been far too much sort of political control around curriculum, this idea that there is a sort of a set of knowledge that people should have, and it's absolute nonsense. Because if you're empowering kids to learn, and they can go and learn whatever they want to, then it shouldn't matter what they've been taught at school, they could have been taught anythi-... any...</p>

	<p>4: So I think someone with a first class degree can be a worst teacher than someone with a third class degree because there's a lot of personality and reflectiveness and empathy and all sorts of other things that come into it</p> <p>. I think to some extent being academic and being, having good subject knowledge and a strong academic background is a positive thing, but I don't think it makes a good teacher necessarily.</p> <p>29: . You need a small... you need some subject knowledge, and confidence in that, but more importantly you need to know how to teach, so that side of it. I think you would be a far more effective teacher knowing nothing about the subject but knowing the skills to teach, than being an expert in the subject but not being able to teach it.</p>
Sources of knowledge	<p>3: And I often am questioning or thinking about how I teach, how I can improve my subject knowledge and my content knowledge but also the skills part, you know, getting that balance, how important is content, how important are all of these ideas? Because that then helps you become freer to be able to look at those other ways of teaching.</p> <p>28: . Erm... I think probably teacher knowledge is also about erm being very reflective. You can't be arrogant if you're going to be a really effective teacher, you have to be able to say to yourself, well how... how good was that?</p> <p>And teaching is a bit like that I think, you can be... you can be very good at some parts of it, but you have to learn the other parts.</p> <p>27: Maybe it's kind of combined with interest as well, and just having interest, not just in your subject, but interest in yourself as a teacher, and the ability to reflect upon what you do, and want to reflect on what you do, not for any... not for any</p>

very kind of purely impractical reasons of, 'Oh you know, my... my ability to control the class isn't good, therefore I'll do a little bit of research on what I can do', it's more than that. It's, you know how can I make myself a better teacher? And how can I change that consistently, and... and have confidence to do that as well

27: And part of that is what we learn on PGCE, obviously, and part of that is just through experience. So it does come very much through experience. Erm... And then there's... I don't know.

10: PGCE course, that's when you learn an awful lot, if you... I mean if... I do remember going on... doing my PGCE course and thinking good grief, erm... I have learnt so much I think it's untrue. So the... so there was that period when I learn an awful lot, at least I had a distinct impression that I had learnt an awful lot. However, then putting that into practice was not... needed a... needed a great deal that wasn't... that wasn't anything to do with the book after that. Erm... Does it contribute to teacher knowledge? Er... I mean it's got to, but [laughter] I ju-... Is it... I'm just trying to think of examples where it has. I guess so. I mean a lo-... erm... you know, my... yes it must.

10: And as far as I can see the subject knowledge is pretty important really, and I don't know that that always gets the priority... the priority it should have. Quite often erm you find that you're given, as a teacher, almost no opportunity to deepen your subject knowledge, so as a linguist why is somebody not sending me once a year to Germany to brush up on my German?

10: It certainly hasn't... that certainly has not come to me from a book. I mean the first day I went into a classroom I'd read an awful lot of books, I was a rubbish teacher, but now I'm a much better teacher and... than I was, and I've learnt that not by reading but by, up to a point, of [?serving] other people, but mostly... far and away mostly by trial and error, and by er... you know, just by gra-... general increase of confidence with who you are and where you are,



20: Well it's so much isn't it? I mean it's what you learn, it's what you know within your subject, it's what you learn when you're training to be a teacher, it's what you learn about the theory of Education, it's what you learn from other teachers, it's what you learn yourself in your classroom, it's what you learn from children, it's what you learn from parents, and by being in it over a period of time. It is also, in this context, about what you find out, not just what you've absorbed through your everyday practice, which I think is really really important and you know, that actually probably that accounts for the greatest, or once you're teaching, the greatest way that teachers acquire knowledge about what, you know, about what teaching is and teacher knowledge therefore.

23: born out of experience, what works and what doesn't, which you discover along the way in a myriad of different situations. So that's much more practical. and. So there's that side of it, the knowledge that you're, the realisation that you're going to be constantly learning.

27: ? Just that constant reflection that I think... I think if you're a good teacher then... and you do that, then you look to do that all the time. And yeah, you have the confidence to do that, because that can be quite difficult. You have to... you have to be quite honest with yourself. Erm... And also, you know honest about your practise, and whether things work. And it's always very easy just to keep going with the same thing, with the same practise, but it's not always the best thing to do. It's sometimes just so easy to think I don't have time to change it, but... but having... you know, going beyond in terms of knowledge, and having that, you know additional... I don't know. Yeah, interest, motivation, ability to reflect, that type of knowledge I think is that extra... that extra bit that then pushes your... pushes your teaching on. Yeah.

29: I'm a product of the system because I've always known the National Curriculum,

	<p>for example. I don't know how I would feel if I was told tomorrow it didn't exist, and I could teach "what I liked". Whether that would be a panicky moment, or whether that would be a moment of liberation, I don't know.</p>
Self knowledge	<p>28: ... If people have a little bit of arrogance, or if people are basically a bit nervous about their own abilities, then they probably are also less reflective, and less likely to change their practise. So where does that link back to teacher knowledge? So it's a self knowledge, isn't it?</p> <p>26: . And it's that sort of... You have to... you have to know yourself, you have to</p> <p>So getting to that point where you're actually making a difference to a young person in your class, that's what it's about. And that's knowing them, that's knowing yourself.</p> <p>27: Maybe it's kind of combined with interest as well, and just having interest, not just in your subject, but interest in yourself as a teacher, and the ability to reflect upon what you do, and want to reflect on what you do, not for any... not for any very kind of purely impractical reasons of, 'Oh you know, my... my ability to control the class isn't good, therefore I'll do a little bit of research on what I can do', it's more than that. It's, you know how can I make myself a better teacher? And how can I change that consistently, and... and have confidence to do that as well</p>
How to teach	<p>8: . You know, there's a need for you to manage things as well which is I suppose another sort of knowledge as well, that planning and those sorts of things. So there's formal sort of knowledge as well as content as well as, you are, you are many things.</p> <p>. There's the sort of, I suppose the pedagogic sort of knowledge, how you work a</p>

	<p>classroom, what do you need to do in a classroom.</p> <p>R Yeah, so I'd break it up into bits and you know, and just knowledge of structures and all that kind of stuff as well</p> <p>29: Erm... Being able to break down a problem into smaller chunks. Erm... Being able to keep students on task, you know to interest students and motivate them. Erm... Being able to forge links between things, providing models and analogies.</p> <p>28: So teacher knowledge isn't just about those subtle skills either, of course, teacher knowledge... there, but also some straightforward pedagogies really, things that you just do as part of the... the routine of being a teacher</p> <p>25: If you're going to teach a good Maths lesson you've got to sort of feel it, in a way, how it ties together, or why it's important, what the connections are with other things. You can't just deliver it as a kind of slab. And I suspect the same in any subject really.</p> <p>23: It's the classroom, the craft of the classroom, as it were. It sounds very simple but actually it's very very complicated and people say it's impossible to teach and it probably it is. It just needs doing it</p> <p>19: And you're trying to move a student from one place to a desired place and when they're not really getting there you use your knowledge to try to move them to the place you were trying to get them in the first place.</p> <p>I So there's a knowledge about learning?</p> <p>R Yeah, yeah</p> <p>practice builds up that experience that then helps to give you this knowledge to be able to spot before it happens</p>
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something that's going to happen. Like something's too difficult, or there's no way we can get that done in the time. I mean that might be just being, having that experience to know, but knowing is knowledge so...

4: . But knowledge of teaching styles I guess 29: . You need a small... you need some subject knowledge, and confidence in that, but more importantly you need to know how to teach, so that side of it. I think you would be a far more effective teacher knowing nothing about the subject but knowing the skills to teach, than being an expert in the subject but not being able to teach it.

15: . So the subject knowledge, but also I'm not sure, you were talking about it as well, there is the knowledge of how to teach, the process of teaching. And certainly when I started, when I was trained as a teacher in the late '70s there were very much the assumption was still there that really anybody could teach provided you were bright and academically and had the subject knowledge then you would automatically be able to teach. And sort of I think looking back over 30 years what that now, that idea has been completely rejected and wisely so I think. Because I still like that phrase in Michael Miles' book, The Craft of the Classroom, was that written in the '70s, or the '70s I think. And I think there is a craft of the classroom. And when you use the phrase 'teacher knowledge' I tend to think of the craft of the classroom rather than subject knowledge.

. But also there is this other thing, teacher knowledge, which is about the skills of teaching and, yeah that's sometimes taught outside the classroom, but the key arena for acquiring the craft of the classroom is actually in the classroom and actually doing it working alongside you know, a mentor, the sort of classic master, apprenticeship manner.

	<p>11: but then I think there's teacher knowledge about the practice of teaching, which is obviously what we are supposed to be. And that's a kind of lifetime's mission,</p> <p>13: So there's the subject knowledge and then there's the sort of the art of teaching knowledge thing which is...</p> <p>So I suppose it's, so you've got subject knowledge, craft knowledge,</p> <p>12: Appropriate strategies to teach them, when it might be useful to use something physical to teach it, when it might be useful to use a diagram to teach it, when it might be, you know, lots of kind of different approaches to teaching them. What else? [pause] Just I think imagining yourself in a room with a group of pupils and trying to, you know, almost play a lesson through in your head as to, you know, what am I going to say if I say this, what will they be thinking, what connections will they be making with what they already know, what problems will they have, can I predict what, you know, two-thirds of them will do wrong, what can we do about that? How important is this in the scheme of things? Yeah, I think those are the main ones really. Just thinking, well I'm thinking about it from a, how do I teach this, point of view.</p>
Accretion of experience	<p>22. . So I suppose it would be, for me, teacher knowledge would be the building of experience and also the building of confidence to trial different strategies in the future, I suppose.</p> <p>So I suppose for me I would say that teacher, or research knowledge, really is is experience and experimentation of just [pause] I'm having to think about this for a moment, I suppose it is experience, it's just building upon the strategies that I've used before</p> <p>23: born out of experience, what works and what doesn't, which you discover along</p>

	<p>the way in a myriad of different situations</p>
<p>Personality</p>	<p>13: and then I think a lot of it is personality as well which obviously isn't a knowledge thing, but it's knowing the children. So I know certain students and certain classes that I can have a laugh with, and I know they say you should never use sarcasm, but sometimes if you've got a certain sort of class, like a top set Year 11, it's floating around all the time and it just adds an extra sort of thing and makes the lessons a bit more enjoyable and quirky. Because sometimes the subject matter isn't the most stimulating so you need other things there.</p> <p>10: a practical, emotional, personality relationship type of thing, none of which in the end comes to you from a book.</p> <p>18: And then I suppose, yeah, and then a lot of it, I think, I think we rely on our personalities a lot.</p>
<p>Local school knowledge</p>	<p>13: So I suppose it's, so you've got subject knowledge, craft knowledge, and then knowing the students. And then knowing who you can draw on in your department or within the school for ideas or who can be a sounding board or who's done something</p> <p>So it's knowing who's done what and how to get that.</p> <p>32: oh... Knowledge of the politics of the staffroom. You know? That's a huge part of being a teacher, that I don't think anyone prepares you for.</p>
<p>Knowledge of pupils</p>	<p>3: but is that it's more important that you know the students and that you have enthusiasm with the students rather than necessarily be a font of all knowledge</p> <p>28: Erm... And I suppose inter-personal skills, the knowledge of how... a sensitivity about other people, and how they're responding to you, which doesn't come at all with what... whether you've got a good degree or not, or how old you are,</p>

or any of those things, it just is something that's in some people, but it is something they can learn as well, as long as they're sufficiently reflective and they don't mind that, you know they... they're receptive to change. Does that answer it?

32: your knowledge of young people and how they work, and how they function, and your ability to empathise, and sympathise, and interact with them, develop relationships with them.

27: knowing the students, and knowing how to communicate with them. So just on a very basic kind of human interaction almost, that's teacher knowledge as well, because not everybody can do that. Not everybody could come into a classroom and interact, communicate effectively, and motivate the students. Not everyone is in the position to do that.

you also have knowledge of students, just on an individual level, and from person to person, and Erm

26: So getting to that point where you're actually making a difference to a young person in your class, that's what it's about. And that's knowing them, that's knowing yourself.

but it's the how, it's the interaction know the students. So I think that's what it's about. It's about those things. And that... that changes from class to class, from time to time. So it's never... It is never static, it is constantly changing. And ho-

23: seeing how people respond and being aware that there are many different characters

1: I think it's maybe just an awareness of what's happening around you, how incidences are developing, about, it's about really

	<p>understanding what children, students, not really children, I mean some of these lot are 18, 19 years old, are all about. It's about understanding behaviour.</p> <p>4: Knowledge of the pupils themselves. I think you can be an excellent teacher in one setting but not be able to adapt and if you can't understand your audience as such then you're not going to do very well.</p> <p>13: : So I suppose it's, so you've got subject knowledge, craft knowledge, and then knowing the students</p> <p>17: Oh yeah, definitely, yeah, yeah. I mean teacher knowledge, yeah. Obviously subject knowledge is subject knowledge wherever you go, but it's dealing with people isn't it, and that's what children are. So in my experience I'm definitely teaching different now from Harlow as to here, and if I went to another school I'd teach differently again.</p> <p>So that's a different sort of knowledge then, because you're going to a class you don't know, so it's the pupil-teacher relationship bit isn't/</p> <p>17: That's right. Because I'm totally affected by this pupil-teacher relationship and I'll adapt my class, my, I know I do it, my demeanour to the class I'm teaching, yeah. And I know I can control a class, the same as any teacher isn't it. You can go in there and just by your posture I know that I can actually change a class. I don't have to say anything or anything like that.</p> <p>28: ... Teacher knowledge. Well, is... I think it's about the... it's about having a real understanding of... and real sensitivity about students erm... about whether they... they have taken on board new skills and new bits of knowledge. So it's whether, and how, and monitoring that, and altering your approach constantly in order to maximise it, kind of on a low</p>
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	<p>level, I think. [sigh] I think erm... Let me see.</p>
Knowledge of school	<p>4: Knowledge of the school, I guess understanding the kind of ethos of the school and what it's aiming for.</p>
Sacred knowledge	<p>32: And I suppose that's true, what he's saying then, that it has an impact on the sacred. But I don't know whether I agree about not being able to speak to people about teaching in the same way, just because they haven't shared it. Maybe you can't have the... perhaps the same depth of conversation as you could with another teacher, but I do think we can still have a conversation that's not just based on policy and grades.</p> <p>31: The only reason I was doing teaching is because of the sacred knowledge, because I do believe in education, in its own sake, as a very very valuable and important... Because where would new knowledge come from otherwise?</p> <p>27: . So when I started looking at this I started thinking well what is this sacred knowledge. I realised that actually I could... I couldn't really articulate this either.</p> <p>R It's quite difficult.</p> <p>25: You can describe it, all these kinds of things, in different ways, can't you? And everybody's got their slightly different way of looking at it, because we're all... yeah, we're all individuals, and we're all different, and we all see things in slightly different ways, describe things in slightly different ways. But yeah, I think it could be part of the sacred knowledge of a teacher, yes.</p> <p>22'. of I suppose lunch time meeting, of sharing of ideas, might just be a little bit, it is still something whereby we do keep hold of that sacred knowledge</p> <p>20: teachers are very good at taking, picking, sort of cherry-picking almost, the best bits of policy,</p>

or the bits of policy that suit them, and moulding that policy to suit their needs. And that's why schools are, although very similar, are also very different from each other, and why you can have leaders who are very different to each other. So there is still hope that those sacred conversations, or that sacred knowledge can continue. I also think that that waterfall is, there's a resistance to it, that I think you have to, people have to be aware of it, but I also think that people just think actually this is, this much I can cope with and no more

15: I don't think I agree with it, is my initial reaction to it. I think because subject knowledge doesn't just belong to teachers does it, it belongs to our society more widely doesn't it, than just teachers? And I think there's a slight danger that teachers can over-state their importance in the scheme of things really, as the custodians as this sort of sacred knowledge.

So I would distinguish between knowledge which should be delivered in schools and how you actually teach, I think that is the province of the teaching profession. We are the people who know how to teach and we should be proud of that. I'm less persuaded by the idea of us as custodians of some kind of sacred knowledge business.

12; Sacred knowledge is the, not the professional, the knowledge that teachers share.

R And is it getting marginalised? It's hard for me to say, being sat here, because I don't think we're being particularly squashed. But having been in you know, some other schools where I know they're being told what to do and how to do it, I would probably agree.

27: /erm... I suppose it's almost a blending of different things for me. So there's very much subject knowledge, and in a school like this that becomes absolutely key, you need to know your subject, you need to be confident, you need to consistently be reading extra things

	<p>about... and that's not... you know, that's not a one term thing, that's a... you know, consistently looking at new material, at different resources, whether that's kind of internet or book research, or what have you. Erm... That's the kind of subject knowledge.</p> <p>26: But... to totally relate to it, to be honest. The sacred knowledge, I'm not sure of, because that sounds a bit like another set of sort of, I don't know, dogmas.</p> <p>22. . I would say there is an awareness and there is, there is certainly a drive towards policy-making and delivering outcomes and adhering to what the government's new agenda might be, but I don't think that distracts from what he'd refer to then as sacred knowledge. I think there is a strong basis of sacred knowledge within this school.</p>
Profane knowledge	<p>13: we always do well at OFSTED and we're not in any way shape or form resting on our laurels but we're not in the position where maybe a failing school has to show that it's got better so that profane knowledge will be constantly in your face because that's what they're trying to meet, those targets.</p> <p>29: I think it's erm quite amusing in the context of a government change, and all the stuff on the news this morning, which is all about the profane knowledge. 'We don't know anything about education, but we're going to rush in there and let schools run themself-...', and that's just a classic example of it, rather than we don't trust to talk to the teachers, or know what does the education... people that work in education actually know about what's... what's going on. So I think erm that dichotomy certainly exists.</p> <p>15: I mean the profane, I mean I... you know the</p>

	<p>profane knowledge is, I mean obviously that is less important isn't because you just need to use his terminology the profane knowledge just to operate don't you? Because there's OFSTED, if you don't know about OFSTED you're going to get in a pickle when they actually, when they actually turn up. But I mean I still am a believer in the National Curriculum. I think that, I think the State to some extent should prescribe what is taught in schools. Because you know, there should be a, there should be a shared understanding in our society, in broad terms about what children ought to learn.</p> <p>16: Yeah, and that profane knowledge, just makes me, my skin crawl, I'm hopeless at it.</p> <p>6. Profane is the knowledge that you need to engage with government agencies, with parents, discussions about exams.</p> <p>R Oh God I need more of that.</p>
TK and research	<p>13: All of that comes with extra pressures that you're expected to perform in those areas and so research sometimes takes a back seat because people just don't have the physical time. And you don't get paid for it, so it's love of knowledge really isn't it, finding out more?</p> <p>Mm, it's wanting to know, it's the reason you teach is because you love learning. Well [laughs] well some, well to me it's kind of you're passing on knowledge and you enjoy gaining knowledge yourself.</p> <p>mean there's the knowledge that I can get from reading journals, which is all very interesting and is very broad and deep and well-written etc, and I think that adds immensely to my understanding of education and different ways of looking at it.</p>

Not in schools unless they take on... which is why the only research, the only knowledge which works in schools is going to be stuff which comes out of the school's own agenda which is meeting what the school wants to go into and look into and is bought into by staff.

31: To chip away at the fact that research could be for everybody, and for professionals to investigate their own professional knowledge I suppose.

And sadly you do have to think about currency, so if you had it as your performance

No. I think it's just that research is important for a thinking professional teacher to have. It's just... It's not... it's not... research isn't a body of knowledge, it's just an approach. It's a thoughtful, reflective thinking approach to what you're doing.

13: But Tim did it on dialogic and I know that that's changed the way that he teaches, full-on. If you go and watch him or if you talk to him about how to approach something it's always there, because he did it on it, so it's made like a massive difference. So that has changed his sort of teacher knowledge because he knows how to do that now, and then it becomes integral.

So even if you did, you didn't do a lot of actual research but you read research that had been done, you're gaining knowledge that way because you've, you've, you know, you know that you've got this many different kinds of ways of doing the thing that you want to do rather than just the first that pops into your head.

18:

Well I think you just get maybe a bit blasé about your subject knowledge because you,

	<p>that's just kind of day-to-day, you just, and that's expected. So I think actually to be able to, yeah, like I say, speak with some kind of authority on something does really, it's great, yeah I really enjoyed it, I really enjoyed having that kind of confidence with it</p> <p>27: ... I don't know, maybe it is kind of research, and almost perhaps interest, interest in things beyond kind of basic communication, and basic subject knowledge, and taking things further than that. And so looking at things like... like research, and new research, and more theoretical knowledge rather than practical, and bringing that in, and how to bring that in effectively. That's quite woolly isn't it? That was quite... that was quite vague./</p>
<p>Difficulty in articulating</p>	<p>18: What do you think teacher knowledge actually is?</p> <p>R It's really difficult, I know, it's really difficult.</p> <p>32: Teacher knowledge. How would you go about that?</p> <p>R That's really hard. That's really hard.</p> <p>26: [laughs] Well it's one of those sort of questions where, you know if you could write that down in a sentence it would be of... it... there are so many variables, aren't there? What is teacher knowledge? I suppose it... Ultimately, if you really ma-... refine it down, it's a very specific sort of...</p> <p>25: R Yeah. Well it's a big mixture isn't it, of er... relating to people and children, and their parents. There's all that side of it, which is huge, which you keep learning as you go through your career, all the time. And then your subject knowledge,</p>

and then how to explain your subject knowledge, which I suppose comes somewhere in the middle. And you have to have all of them on the go. And that's I think what teacher expertise is [?in 09.48 very quiet] sort of management of groups of people aspect of it as well.

And they all interrelate, and all tie together. And that's what makes it an interesting job, and quite a challeng-... It is quite a difficult job, because you've got to... you've got to sort of juggle all of those things, and you've got to be... you've got to be kind of good at all of them really, otherwise you're going to get found out.

16: R Mm [pause]. I don't know, everything, everything that we do. Everything, yeah, the academic stuff, how to build a relationship, how to deal with issues.

4: I think they're all quite conceptual so I'm struggling [laughs].

10: Teacher knowledge, you see, I mean... To me it's a... you see to me it's a very simple thing, er... teacher knowledge, there are two parts, well there are pro-... there are more than two parts, but obviously the subject knowledge part, and there's the what you do in the classroom part. And what you do in the classroom can be broken down to a lot of different things.

4: It's a big question [laughs]. Yeah, no, I just think they're kind of big, you know, what knowledges do teachers need is a big kind of fundamental question and maybe something we don't sit back and think about enough.

30: So that could encompass knowledge of teaching methods, knowledge of your subject erm... Experience you've built up. Would it... I don't know, there's so many different strands to it.

18: But yeah, then I suppose it's a lot of school-based things, teacher knowledge. So managing relationships, managing the

classroom. Yeah, I suppose asking the right questions at the right time, being empathic. Yeah, it's a hard one.

28: Erm... Teacher knowledge. Well, is... I think it's about the... it's about having a real understanding of... and real sensitivity about students erm... about whether they... they have taken on board new skills and new bits of knowledge. So it's whether, and how, and monitoring that, and altering your approach constantly in order to maximise it, kind of on a low level, I think. [sigh] I think erm... Let me see.

10: ? So... so I think er that erm... that's an element of teacher knowledge. The... and the other part of it is yeah, what you do... well I'll say what are you doing in the classroom, and to me that's such an un-theoretical, and such a... you know, At least that's my feeling.

20: : Well it's so much isn't it? I mean it's what you learn, it's what you know within your subject, it's what you learn when you're training to be a teacher, it's what you learn about the theory of Education, it's what you learn from other teachers, it's what you learn yourself in your classroom, it's what you learn from children, it's what you learn from parents, and by being in it over a period of time.

13: Erm I think it's got a lot of facets.

21: And I don't, yeah, I don't think it's a conscious knowledge that we have. I think it's something, yeah, it's an awareness. And I don't even know if you can train somebody to have that. It's a bit like training somebody to have commonsense, it's difficult isn't it? Yeah, I think that's what it is to me anyway, it's about that

What is teacher knowledge? Teacher knowledge. Well apart from the obvious which is your subject knowledge,



	<p>teacher knowledge is, it's difficult isn't it.</p> <p>22: Erm [pause] I think that teacher knowledge is [pause] I'm being really wary of my words now because of the fact that knowledge is such a funny thing</p> <p>23: No, it's a really difficult one isn't it?</p> <p>24: Well it's a knowledge that gets erm, after reflection, applied and then evaluated in classroom teaching,</p> <p>25: what effects different things are likely to have in different ways, and how to combat them.  , these things are written about hundreds of years, thousands of years ago, about... in a lot of detail. But it's not in any curriculum.</p> <p>27: And there is something that almost kind of encompasses the subject knowledge, and the basic kind of teacher student communication. There's something else there that's quite... quite difficult to grasp. But just takes you a step further erm and... I don't know.</p> <p>Teacher knowledge. I think it's those two strands that come together, you have to have knowledge of your subject area of course, but then knowledge of different methods and practises, how you can implement that, which is much more general. Which... And it starts from your very first day of teacher training, doesn't it, or the signs of it. Erm... I am not sure.</p> <p>28: Now I think that that teacher knowledge is bro-... is in that person, if they can do that, because they've got the subject knowledge, they've got the good interpersonal skills, they understand how to communicate their subject, they understand different techniques for doing it. So things like questioning techniques and assessment, and differentiating in a very sensitive and subtle way. Erm... All of those things are</p>
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at their fingertips, and they're able to use them almost instinctively, like you use any other tool. Is that what I mean by teacher knowledge?

25: ... If we were able to sort of pass that knowledge onto the next generation, erm then you know, I think a lot of problems, the sort of anger and depression, and lack of concentration, or these sorts of things... or sort of an idea of what life's for, those sorts of things should be... should get much better.

21: Teacher knowledge I think in the whole scale of things teacher knowledge is quite an innate thing, is that the right word? I think it's a bit like commonsense in some ways. I think it's kind of a natural thing that you have as well.

26: There's also a knowledge of a sort of the... the meta-processes around that: so, how do I get to know the student? How do I get to know myself? How do I get to know my subject better? And why... And also having a sense of purpose about all of that, and why. Not just how, but why. What's my motivation for helping that student? Teaching them, you know,  $E=MC^2$ , or whatever, what's the point of them knowing that. You have to have a sort of moral purpose, sort of really. So there is a... under... there's a core of principles around that, it's very... at a deeper level.

31: ... Well although the government might argue that it's knowledge that you impart to the students I think it's more to do with knowledge of how the dynamic of the classroom works, and that's changing constantly, and it's changed in the twenty years I've been teaching. But I think it's that capacity, that knowledge that leads to capacity to facilitate learning whatever it may be.

32: Oh. Well it has so many different strands, surely. Because it can be anything from your subject knowledge to your knowledge of young people and how they work, and how they function, and your ability to empathise, and sympathise, and interact with them,

develop relationships with them. To oh... Knowledge of the politics of the staffroom. You know? That's a huge part of being a teacher, that I don't think anyone prepares you for. Erm... I am not sure I could say anymore really without sitting with a mind map.  
[laughs]

5: Yeah, well this is the knowledge base, I mean it depends which knowledge we're talking about. I

8: . You know, there's a need for you to manage things as well which is I suppose another sort of knowledge as well, that planning and those sorts of things. So there's formal sort of knowledge as well as content as well as, you are, you are many things.

6. . I don't have the experience of being without a National Curriculum but yeah I don't think we are engaging with the knowledge and I don't know, maybe it's a lack of willing on our part. . But I, I would struggle to think of a high, any kind of high order issue. We're not presented with that, we're not asked that. I mean my union might ask me, do you want to ballot this, but I don't know that I'm ever asked to make choices on a day-to-day basis that are anywhere near that scale. Oh God, that's fundamentally depressing isn't it?

11. Alright, teacher knowledge. I think, so teacher knowledge is it the individual practitioner's knowledge? Is it the knowledge in school, as in Hargreave's knowledge creation, creating school? I think, yes, it does. I think if you think of knowledge in life, people will readily accept that experience in life, if you pay attention to it, gives you some knowledge about life as you go on. And you've got some judgements you can make that are informed, because of experience and so on. And someone like Newton would say at the end of his life, he realised he knew nothing and obviously most people who... that we

	admire, that's normally what they say at the end, that they know nothing relatively So there's that
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#### Interview 11

When I'm currently now present at meetings where people are talking about teaching MTL modules, and they haven't actually done a masters themselves. They don't see the issue with that, because where you find there's an issue they start talking about the substance of the modules, and the substance of the thinking and the outcomes. And you realise that's not actually masters work, that's A-level competency work or, you know, it's something that's just looking at something and describing and being narrative. Rather than researching something against a territory of existing knowledge that you want to go and find out about. So, first of all, I did the masters myself, then I got involved obviously in teacher training, I got university relationships. Then quite a big thing for me in terms of my own personal training, was being on the National Teacher Research Panel for ten years. Because when I was on that panel I went to London three times a year for residential meetings, sometimes more to go to various... looking at projects that the government might be doing, and you were allowed to be like a voice. And in there I just spent a lot of time looking at the kinds of projects that either people in school got involved in, so teacher... ordinary teacher practice. Or that the government were getting involved in connected with teacher education and teacher practice. And I got used to the whole way of life of how you start with a problem and look at it, and that there's a way of looking at it in a sort of research methods way. So a bit like people might be trained in testing whether a new medicine is affected, you get used to what are the protocols, what are the expected things that you need to pay attention to if you want to examine that piece of practice.

. But there's a lot of confidence talked about that we do know what the government agendas are and so on. And it's sort of "Emperor's new clothes"-ishness about it, which is a bit sad really, because how can people...

#### Interview 14

Ran out of time so no comment

### Interview 13

So even if you did, you didn't do a lot of actual research but you read research that had been done, you're gaining knowledge that way because you've, you've, you know, you know that you've got this many different kinds of ways of doing the thing that you want to do rather than just the first that pops into your head.

And I like to do lots of different pieces of research because I feel I could get more strings to my bow almost. So I've done group work, I did dialogic, I'm doing music now, and every day a little bit of that goes into my lessons just because I've kind of had it in the background. Oh, and learning styles, I did that as well. And so it's always there, so it definitely adds to knowledge because you've got it there and I refer to it every day really.

What is teacher knowledge do you think? Because you've given me lovely examples.

Erm I think it's got a lot of facets. So there's the subject knowledge and then there's the sort

So I suppose it's, so you've got subject knowledge, craft knowledge, and then knowing the students.

Does research lead you into that sacred knowledge area?

Probably, because you feel more comfortable. Everything that you find out in research and everything that you do changes the way that you teach and makes you a better teacher, so you can be more comfortable in doing what you do because you know it's right, you know it's working and you know you do the best that you can for your students.

Some of them it's just passing on knowledge and you're hoping they'll pass their GCSEs and whatever. But for the others you're trying to spark an interest in knowledge, and that's what being an intellectual isn't it? Well, to me it's an enjoyment of knowledge and you know, sort of just from the basic, how does my TV work, or things to the more, why does this happen in this way, the proper what they would call intellectuals. But that's what we're aiming for our students to be, and you can't, you can't show, or you can't aim for children to gain that kind of intellectual aspect and mindset if it's not being modelled constantly.

## Interview 12

and the only place I've seen it is in the form of, you know, formal research, in papers and you know, edited books rather than any of the schemes provided by commercial companies.

I think knowledge is the, from my point of view, just because I mean the, decidedly one of the enjoyable bits about this project has been the literature review/

I [laughs]

/which I never imagined in the first place that I would, you know, as I say, I wasted most of my Christmas but I actually enjoyed most of my Christmas sitting reading you know, lots of very very interesting articles. And, because with my research one of the big things is about, you know, Maths can be taught in different ways and it's idea of a transmission of universes, I guess it's a slightly more constructivist view on teaching. So having actually, it's something I've scratched the surface on before, but this is the first time I've actually been able to look at it in any depth. And it's certainly questioned a lot of my assumptions I think.

I Are there any other dimensions to teacher knowledge?

## Interview 8

I Well it's that kind of argument about does research contribute to teacher knowledge, and teacher knowledge is really hard to define, and I think there's more than one. I mean

let's put them where they're best. There's human knowledge, knowledge of how human, you know, boys, you know, we choose boys, how do little boys work, what works best for little boys, what works best for big boys, that kind of thing

## Interview 7

I think that being able to re-sit modules now at GCSE then at AS and AT and some degrees going modular, and we're now seeing teachers who have come through a modular system, [21:54] the exam is disregarded and we haven't got that knowledge and learning for its own sake.

## Interview 6

And frankly I thought the TLA got organisations sounds like, well something about, you know, do a Masters and we'll give you credits or something. It all sounds terribly involved and I'm dubious of the benefits let's say, certainly as far as that's concerned. But I did a TLA project in my first year and to my knowledge it was pretty much for me just, it was us NQTs, there was two people, one English, one History, doing the Great Expectations project, the EL one, and I think there was somebody else who did one on homework. And to my knowledge I'd say of those TLAs there were a couple of people that had already done Masters or had done some kind of research and were able to be high enough on the ladder to authenticate the projects that myself and the others did. But beyond that I didn't see much evidence of research at all.

Do you think research contributes to teacher knowledge in any way?

R Yes, but I think it contributes to knowledge, period. I now have that knowledge about my students from my research. I don't know if it contributes to me as a teacher. I think it contributes to me as an empathetic human being.

. But I don't know... I mean if you take the Great Expectations project, I shouldn't take this too loudly but I hadn't read that book before so it's improved my subject knowledge in that I feel more secure teaching Dickens, that's great.

You know, if somebody's gone away and done the research and they have this sacred knowledge, shouldn't it be shared? Yes, but what for and are you going to do that? And I think that's maybe the problem. We've gone, it seems like we've done a very quick manoeuvre in the space of a year and I don't think that has helped many people's disposition towards research.

## Interview 5

. So I'm doing student voice, it's been done before. What I find will be interesting. What will my knowledge base be there, you know, the reading I do, what will I be able to get out of other staff, depends on my dissemination and where I get opportunities. I don't always get opportunities. And then we move on to the next thing that catches people's attention, including mine probably, because I'm just as dilettante as the rest of them.

## Interview 3

. And what I find really exciting, which I try to do as much as possible and I think we're going back to the Gifted and Talented kind of idea, is that when students are choosing or are being guided and embracing the knowledge, or embracing the topic that they are doing, that's when real exciting learning happens

I Do you think teachers should be doing that? Should they be looking outside the given knowledge base?

R Yeah. Oooh, yes, idealistically, but you know,

in the English system as it were, but I do feel that students are less autonomous and independent. But they seem to have more, in general certainly, and it depends on what school you've been in and all that sort of stuff, but they seem to have more knowledge perhaps, but maybe they can't use that knowledge and express that knowledge as well as other students that I've taught in the past. I don't know. That worries me a lot. I would hate to think that I would ever get into a place where I, you know, you've got the cup and you're pouring all the knowledge into that. I mean that, just in itself, horrifies me. You know, we should be there to encourage young people to find that knowledge and develop that. Almost like, oh it's so sad,



Interview 32

. At A Level there's so little of making music now, it's erm... There's so much that they have to learn for the exams that that, again, limits perhaps their... their eventual knowledge of the subject. And you know, I'm the generation of ASs and A2s, I was the first cohort to go through that system, and I can honestly say that I revised for my exams, did very well, and then conveniently forgot everything that I had been... I had been taught.

Interview 31

... I think that change in the school on a whole school basis would involve taking into account educational knowledge and research knowledge to date, and seeking to link it with other schools to make it meaningful rather than just a quick fix answer. Because I then think you have colleagues engaging and excited about change, rather than finding it frightening. management target you certainly would be focusing on it,

Interview 30

Oh, teacher knowledge./

I /Teacher knowledge.

R

I It is only what does... For you, what do you think teacher knowledge is?

R

Interview 29

I And what sort of skills? Could you identify any of those skills?

R

Interview 28

... What is teacher knowledge?

R

Interview 27

But then there's other things that... that go with that. I suppose if I'm looking at this from a PSHE side of things ... And then there's the kind of... another part that perhaps doesn't come under those two bits, where

I No no.

R /But there seems to be different levels.

Interview 26 Tom

What is teacher knowledge?

I Yeah. What are you actually trying to...

R It's sort of like in the moment, teaching that student in my lesson, what do I need to do in order to allow that person to develop in some way, which is relevant to them. And that's a very sort of simple thing, that's what we're trying to do, but there's so much baggage around that. That's knowing the thing which they need, so in... you know, whether it's subject knowledge or whatever, however that's defined, it's all of those things, ... To be a really good teacher you've got to have a... a good reason for what you're

. Fundamentally teachers aren't trusted enough, erm... as a g-... as a whole, to do that. And

#### Interview 25

What counts as teacher professional knowledge? Have you got any views on that?

And... and if we had thatAnd so... And you could approach it from a kind of psychological point of view, but actually you know

... So for me teaching is... is more than the intellectual life. The intellectual life is a very important part of it, because you know, that is a good education, it should give you good intellectual foundation, erm... and so of course, you know don't seem to denigrate that at all, and become sort of anti-intellectual or something like that, because that's got sort of great value, and there's a great kind of beauty in the intellectual achievements of the past. And it should lead to truth, a good intellectual endeavour should be concerned with the truth. And academics, you know generally have a pretty good reputation for being concerned with the truth. But the education of children, I think it would be good if it was sort of wider than just that, and if teachers have that awareness more they would be good teachers. Erm... But it's er... In what ways that can happen is difficult to know, because when it becomes a kind of a... a government agenda, that you know, these things have... these things have got to be covered, Citizenship or... or whatever else it is, erm... then I think it's... it doesn't always have the desired effect, because everybody's got to... got to sort of live it to be able to explain it, to be able to talk about it, for it to be meaningful. Erm... And actually intellectual life, of course you have to live it for it to be meaningful, to explain it

#### Interview 24

so that you... you will hear a theory called, say, Knowledge Creating Departments, or Knowledge Creating Schools, and then you think... you think in theory how that can be put into practise.

Erm... And then with the use of good pedagogical stimuli, little bits of reading, in my case, interchanged with people we've mentioned, you then get that going within a department, or a group of people and you find that pedagogical knowledge and application is just increased in ways that you didn't think might quite be possible.

... you're just continually challenged by erm... by a practical classroom related knowledge, but... that is pedagogically and theory based.

I needed to read for myself then, and... you know, in a sort of semi scholarly way, before trying something practical.

Interview 23

[? 22:45]

Interview 22

in History for us. But erm [pause] I suppose for me it's, it's a growth and development of experience upon which you build.

, the research methods and tools that I've used before and how I could apply it to a different scenario each time

Interview 21

It's understanding and realising and having a feeling for situations, it's having a feeling for people. I think as I say, take away that I'm a Maths teacher or you're a Geography teacher, take away that specialist area. But it is, I think it's, and it's an awareness, I think it's an awareness of what's going on. So I don't even know if it's a knowledge, if it's a conscious knowledge.

Whereas these other lads, I say lads, they're not necessarily always lads, are going to want the knowledge to be going out and working as car mechanics and engineers, plumbers, and electricians that sort of stuff, chippies, etc, etc. I kind of feel that, you know, yeah I do separate them somewhere along the line.

Interview 20

No responses

#### Interview 19

Well what I was just saying about, there's things you say, 'well I know that because...' And whether that's driven directly from research or if I've said research is in everyday practice,

#### Interview 18

I Yeah, I mean that's one dimension, yeah.

R

I think in terms of policy-driven stuff, people can get very fed up with it and I think it can affect, you know, you're so busy trying to tick all these boxes that you know, it's quite difficult to maintain the sacred knowledge and doing things that you think are the best for the students. But I don't know, I kind of don't see it like that really. I think some of the policy-driven stuff you do need to engage with and look at and kind of think about and not kind of think, oh it's just another initiative or another thing. Because I think some people do think, oh it's just another initiative, and actually no it's not, it might just be formalising something that we're doing anyway, or it might be ideas for doing something better. But to take it in a kind of, well what can we get out of it? OK, we may not need to do everything, but what can we get out of it? So I don't really perhaps see it in the same way.

#### Interview 17

whereas I would prepare a lesson for Harlow which would easily sort the class out for an hour, here they would do it in half an hour, because you're not having to deal with little problems. Yes, so I think that here, I'm sure in some respects it would help Harlow but I can't see at the moment how you could apply it as easily as you could here.

I Yes. You know what you're making me think is, there's almost different types of teacher knowledge.

R

Interview 10 how do you understand teacher knowledge?

R

I Yes yes.

R You know, why am I always having to go to inset courses on how to manage the less able, instead of actually being reminded of what German actually sounds likeby... through the support of colleagues, all those things erm... have really contributed. And... No, but going back a bit as well, I suppose you'd have to say that the **My colleagues who do research must be learning from that, and they must therefore be putting certain things into practice in their classrooms which they weren't putting in before, and therefore they will be... they will be gaining, and it will be contributing to fu-... to teacher knowledge, yes it probably is.**

Interview 4

**For someone like me who's doing research I guess you have to understand the kind of the literature behind what you're doing and the research skills themselves, or the possible research methods.**

I Why do you think we don't sit back and think about it?

R **Because we don't have any time, we're always doing everything that we need to do for the next day. I don't think I reflect anywhere near as much as I'd like to.**

Hmm, I think it depends what you define as intellectuals.

I What would you define?

R It's got very negative connotations in many ways I think. There's been all the debate in the Press hasn't there about whether or not people should be able to teach with a third class degree. So, and I think the word 'intellectual' has quite negative connotations of being about isolated and being in a library and, I don't know, it's probably my culture and understanding of it, but whilst being academic can help, I don't think it's everything.

And would you expect people to be using that knowledge you were producing?

R I guess it depends what you do with it. You know, if you put an article in a journal, teachers realistically, there's not going to be that many of them sit down and read it and I guess it depends how applicable it is to teachers. You know, a lot of conceptual stuff is interesting but unless they can see how it relates to them, can they be expected to use it?

## Appendix 7

### Stage 2 Teachers

#### Teachers interviewed Stage 2

The table below shows the distribution of heads, research co-ordinators and teachers.

All names and schools are anonymised.

School/Name	Time teaching	Responsibility
<b>School A</b> <b>Maintained 11-18</b> <b>11-18</b>		
Head teacher Tom	20+ years	Teaching Head Physics/RE
Research co-ordinator Tom C	18 years	Assistant Head Maths/RE
Teacher Emma	5 years	English
Teacher David	18 years	Head of English Department
Teacher Ray	20+ years	Head of ICT Department
Teacher Cecilia	10 years	Science
<b>School B</b> <b>Maintained 11-18</b>		
Head teacher Kathy	19 years	Head
Research co-ordinator Sara	15 years	Head of English Department



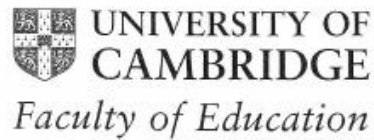
Teacher Susie	2 years	Music
Teacher Ellen	8 years	Science
Teacher Penny	7 years	Maths
<b>School C</b> <b>Maintained 11-18</b>		
Head teacher John	20+ years	Head
Research co-ordinator Christina	10 years	Deputy Head Maths
Teacher Angela	20+ years	MFL
Teacher Kerry	6 years	DandT
Teacher Dave	8 years	Voc Ed/ICT
Teacher Ruth	11 years	Maths
<b>School D</b> <b>Maintained 11-16</b>		
Head Stephen (unavailable for interview)	15 years (newly appointed to this school).	Teaching Head Science
Research co-ordinator Carmel	20+ years	Head of English Department

(unavailable for interview)		
Rachel	16 years	Head of MFL Department
Teacher James	3 years	Maths
Teacher Jesse	3 years	History
<b>School E</b> <b>Maintained 11-18</b>		
Head (declined to be interviewed)	18 years	Head
Research co-ordinator Simon	20+ years	English
Teacher Mark	10 years	Science
Teacher Nick	18 years	Head of English Department
Teacher Elaine	13 years	Art
Teacher Frances	20+ years	Classics
<b>School F</b> <b>Maintained 11-16</b>		
Head Mary	20+ years	Head
Research co-ordinator Becky	12 years	Science (p/t)
Teacher Josie	4 years	RE

Teacher Anna	NQT	Geography
Teacher Sheila	14 years	Drama

## Appendix 8

### Permissions letter



20.2. 2010

Dear

As part of my PhD, I am undertaking research on teachers' views on professionalism, knowledge and identity, and the ways in which these views might reflect on practitioner research.

I would like to invite you to help me explore some of the ways in which these three areas are described by teachers, and to do so by taking part in an interview which will last about 1 hour. The interview will be recorded, with your permission, so that I can transcribe your answers accurately. I will return to you that transcript so that you can check it for factual accuracy, and to ensure that the questions I have asked have given you the opportunity to accurately represent your views. All names, both your and that of the school, will be anonymised in any writing up that I do.

I will travel to your school for the interviews and these will take place at a time agreed between the CamStar research co-ordinator and yourself.

I will report back on my findings to you and to other interested members of staff on completion of my research.

I would be immensely grateful to you for your help, but of course would also understand if this is not possible for you at such a busy time of term.

With all good wishes

## Appendix 9

### Full card sort statements

The statements used on the card sorts are tabulated below:

	New Professionals	Traditionalists	Realists	Compromisers	Emancipatory
Knowledge	Schools define what teacher knowledge is currently needed. Teacher knowledge is not a 'given' that remains unchanged, but responds to the current policy (e.g. national curriculum and examination syllabuses) and industry needs; pedagogical choices simply reflect the best ways of teaching these. [Bernstein: profane knowledge]	Teachers certainly need to be able to deal with national curriculum and examinations, but teacher knowledge also recognises that teaching and learning might be subject to fashions but real education is rooted in a society which reflects an enduring sense of right and wrong, and seeks to ensure that right prevails over wrong. [Bernstein's sacred knowledge]	Teacher knowledge must focus on the practical and on developing the future knowledge needs without losing the best of the past: theoretical knowledge is of limited use to teachers in the classroom unless it helps in this. [Bernstein/ profane/ limited sacred]	It is important both to meet current national curricular and syllabus demands and to engage with a knowledge which allows teachers to express a vision of education which is less driven by a centralised version of education. [Bernstein's sacred and profane]	Professional knowledge is socially constructed and, as such, open to creation and re-creation within professional spheres. Knowledge is not owned by policy-makers but rather is the product of professional discourse. [Bernstein/ sacred]
Professionalism	Good teachers understand the importance of flexibility within the profession. Teacher professionalism should not be static, but rather respond to the market demands made of education. Accountability should be a given in teaching, as in every other profession. [Bernstein: DCM]	Teaching should not be subject to the whims and fancies of policy-makers: being a teacher isn't about sow's ears and silk purses, but about ensuring sets of values and beliefs, established and developed over time, are not lost. The job of a teacher is to provide stability in an apparently ever	Teacher professionalism is about bringing about the best learning environment possible in order to ensure students do well in their examinations. Teachers need to take the best out of the past and integrate it with the demands of the present, and indeed the future. [Bernstein/PI]	Teachers should seek to establish coherence and stability as a profession, through collaboration and the development of shared values [Bernstein DCT/ [IDCM]	Education should be about creating and sustaining a democratic society, not about realising the ideological and political aims of policy-makers. The nature of education should be a public- and not an industry-driven concern. [Giroux/Kincheloe]

		changing world. [Bernstein/ RI]			
Identity	Teachers should seek to be both effective and efficient, and responsive to institutional needs. [D. Hargreaves/ Barber/ A. Hargreaves' Post Professional] [in opposition: Bottery and Wright/ Dainton]	Teaching hasn't really changed over time; we have always known what a good teacher looks like, and it is about knowing your students, and, as the teacher, knowing too what is best for them in the long run. [A. Hargreaves Pre-professional]	It is important to acknowledge the place education holds in realising a democratic society but equally important to be practical about what works in classrooms – and what doesn't. [Kanpol]	Teachers should meet policy demands but should also retain the ability to critique those demands, although enacting these critiques may be unrealistic. [Kanpol]	Creators and owners of education, resistant to market demands, teachers should recognise themselves as thinkers and intellectuals. Education is the corner stone of civilised societies, with justice and equality at the heart of any community; teachers are the guardians of this and need to ensure their voices are heard. [Giroux/ Kincheloe]
Teacher research	It is the job of teachers to drive the research agenda in order to create appropriate professional knowledge which gives insights into how best to realise a vision of education that responds to the real world of work. [D. Hargreaves/ Gibbons]	Teacher research is probably a bit of an irrelevance; it may be of interest to some, but basically it does not impact on the enduring truths about teaching. [Habermas]	Teacher research needs to be even-handed in identification of areas to address; the claims that teacher research should act as a means to critique policy should not be allowed to cloud the realisation that no position is 'ideology-free'. The emphasis needs to be on practicality and relevance. [Kanpol]	Teacher research should largely be focused on classroom needs, but this is not to say that there shouldn't be room for researching on wider issues; it is likely though that this research would be undertaken through accredited courses, such as MEds. [Gibbons]	Teacher research should not be concerned with 'raising' artificially imposed 'standards' but rather with finding ways of liberating students and teachers alike from repressive regimes in education where the purpose of education is reduced to producing suitable workers for the economy. Education is about change, about making better and richer lives for human beings. Powerful teachers' voices and informed professional

					discourses emerge through the act of collaboration in research and knowledge building. [Habermas/ Giroux/ Kincheloe]
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## Appendix 10

### Photographs of card sorts

**Selection from all card sort activities, showing changes made by teachers across all categories, both in terms of obscuring statements and adding to statements.**

Photo 13 Original order of card sorts. This card sort order began each card sort interview.

Photo 23 showing teacher emendations using post-it notes to supplement and obscure card sort statements. Partly covered statement from the Teacher Research card reads 'that responds to the real world of work'. Professionalism addition reads 'Professionalism is about creating an environment/culture that enables students to explore the limits of their talents, it requires us to challenge, provoke and energise.'

Photo 34 showing teacher research card with the statement 'must respond to the real world of work' covered with post-it note. This set taken from different interview than Photo 23.

Photo 36 shows rejection of one professionalism card and two identity cards by teacher setting aside and turning cards on their face. See Chapter Five for discussion of this response.

Photo 37 shows emendations of professionalism card 'Teacher professionalism is about bringing about the best learning environment possible in order to ensure students do well in their examinations' leaving 'Teachers need to take the best out of the past and integrate it with the demands of the present, and indeed the future'.

Photo 41 shows Teacher Knowledge statement with the sentence 'teachers certainly need to be able to deal with the national curriculum and examinations, but' covered over by the teacher being interviewed.





Photo 13.

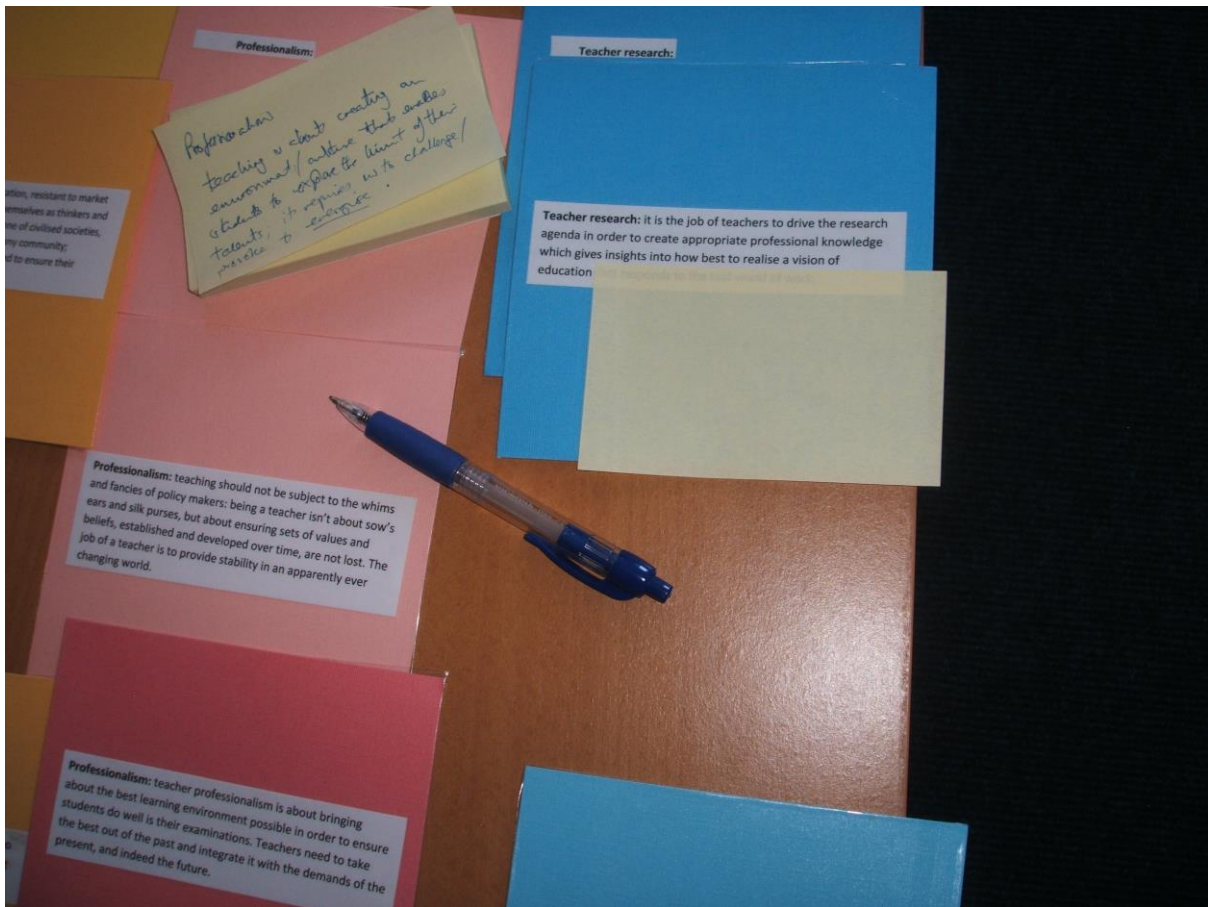


Photo 23.

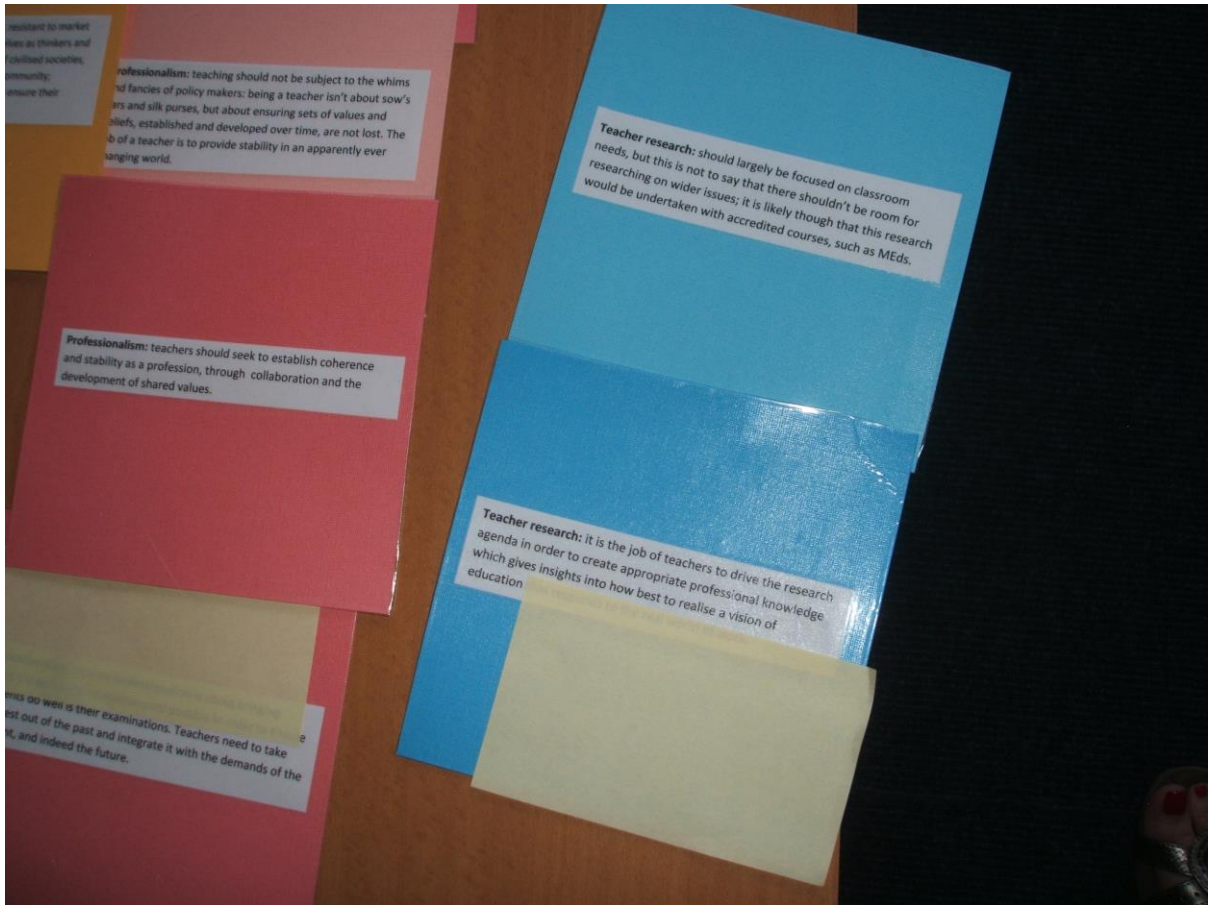


Photo 34.

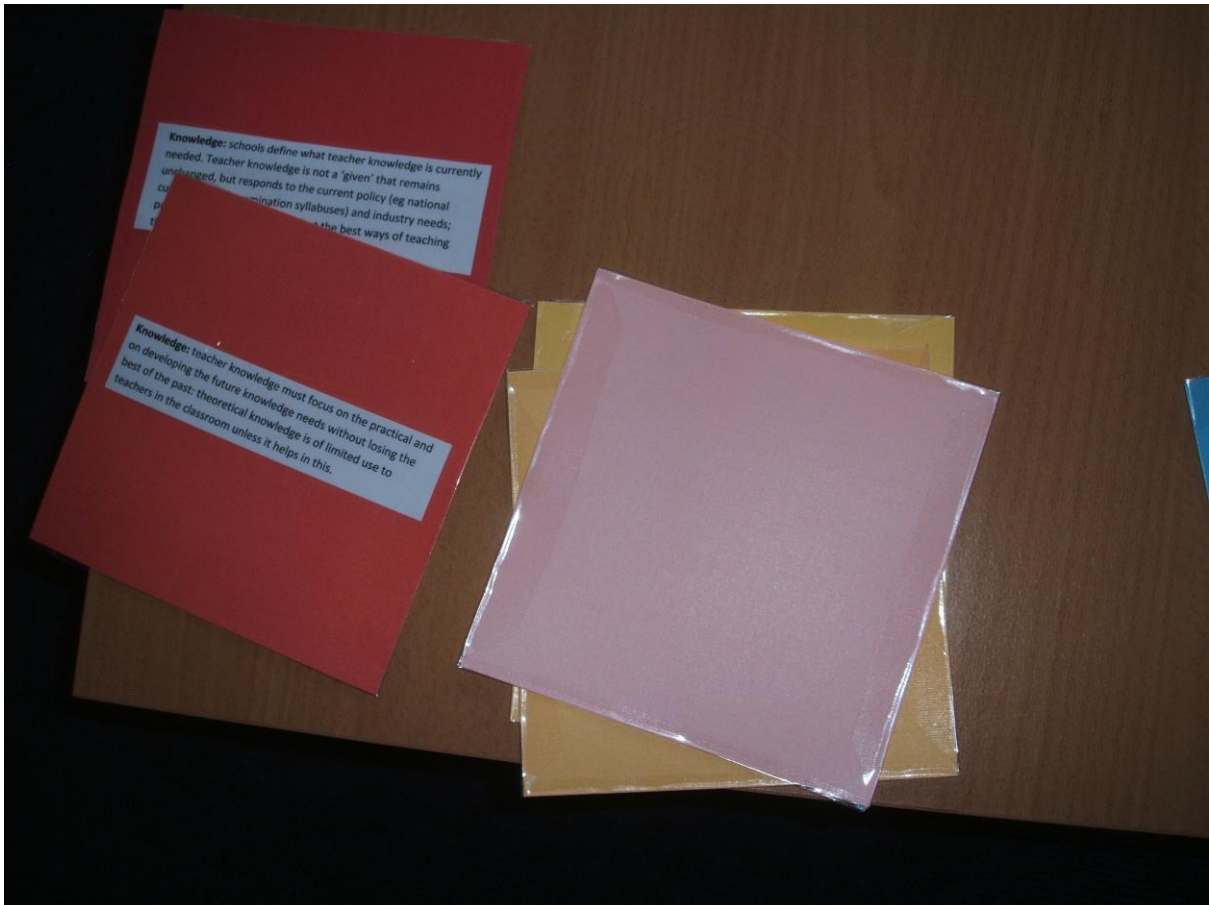


Photo 36.



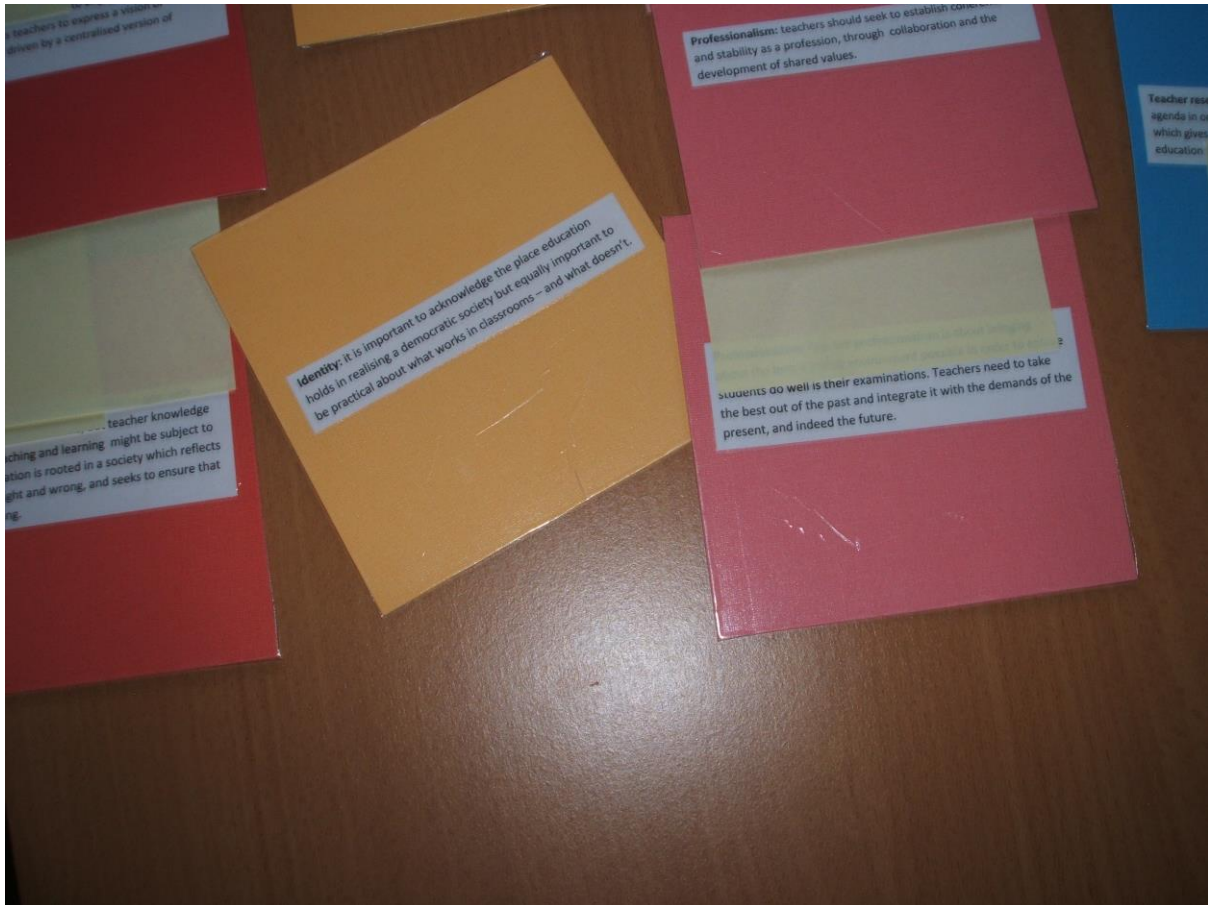


Photo 37.

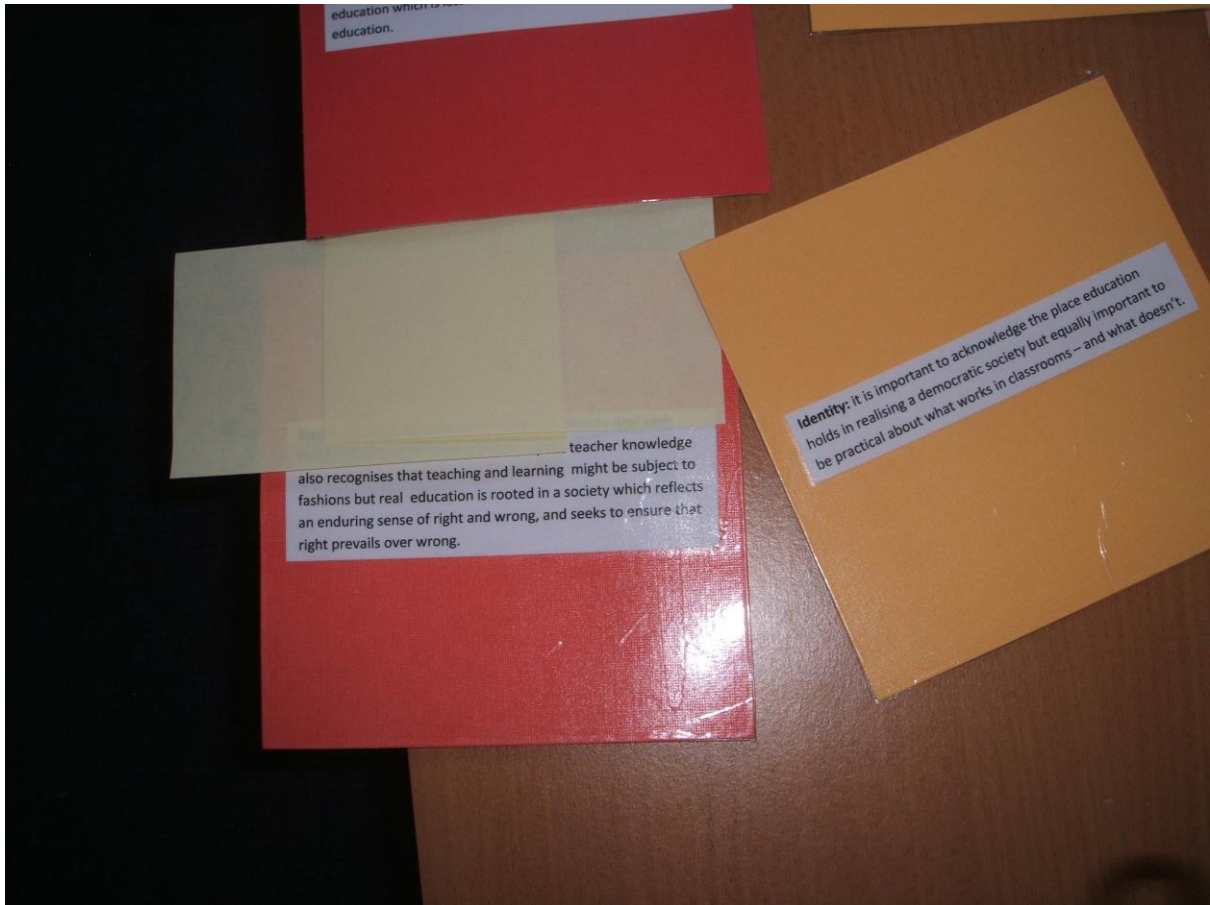


Photo 41.

## **Appendix 11**

### **Stage 1 Interviews**

As I described in Chapter Three, I had anticipated that these interviews would constitute a major tranche of the data collection. However, and significantly, accounts of structures emerging from the interviews were very similar. For example, teaching and learning groups, very alike in construction and timing, were regularly reported as both a means of sustainability and dissemination. Yet research in these schools was often very different in both purpose and practice. Stage 1 data analysis became therefore a means of investigating how and why such differences existed.

#### Stage 1 interview questions

1. Could you tell me something about the research being undertaken at this school?
2. Do you see research as being integrated into your school's life? How?
3. What, do you think, makes successful research in schools?
4. As <Head, Research co-ordinator, researching teacher> what structures and support do you see as necessary for research to be successful?
5. What do you think is necessary to ensure research is sustainable within your school?
6. What are the obstacles you have encountered as <Head, Research co-ordinator, researching teacher>?
7. As <Head, Research co-ordinator, researching teacher>, what do you think is necessary to overcome these?
8. Any other observations?

#### ***Head teachers***

I interviewed five head teachers, each leading successful schools. Two of the schools were state 11-16 schools, two state 11-18, and one was a state 11-18 grammar school. In four of the schools, the heads were well established and experienced leaders. In one school, the head was relatively new (2 years in post) and indeed new to headship before that point. The fifth school also had a head new to headship and in post for only three months at the time of interviewing. In the sixth school the head declined to be interviewed, and it later emerged that he had been in

the process of applying for posts elsewhere (and indeed, was subsequently appointed as head to a prestigious school).

### ***Research co-ordinators***

I interviewed six research co-ordinators, and again, selection for this role revealed varied strategies from heads. In three of the cases, the research co-ordinators held senior leadership team SLT roles, were well established and confident in their 'new role'. Two schools selected well established staff who had additional responsibilities (either heads of department or Faculty; or assistant heads); one school gave the post to two staff as a split responsibility, with one member of staff a part time ex-head of science, and the other, a teacher in her second year. Interview questions for this group of people included questions about their own role, and the types of research support they felt teachers needed.

### ***Teachers***

I interviewed seven teachers, two in one school, and one in each of the other schools. This balance of interviewees (heads, research co-ordinators, teachers) reflected my conviction at the time that teacher research was about school structures as defined by heads and research co-ordinators, and I had expected to 'test' ideas about that theory on teachers, with a view to Stage 2 being about exploring that in more detail, possibly with a wider tranche of teachers as focus groups. In Stage 1, I was really only interested in talking to teachers as 'recipients' of structures and to see whether further structures were suggested by those undertaking research in their classrooms. The teachers were a convenience sample, invited by me via the research co-ordinators, and with the criteria only that they were available in a relatively narrow time frame (during the school day), and that they had at some point undertaken some research in school.



## Appendix 12

### Interview Questions Stage 2: Knowledge

Noting again that two of the questions used quotations from Bernstein and Giroux in an attempt to stimulate teachers responses, the interview questions related to teacher knowledge were as follow:

- i) [Preamble: this is a question I find fascinating, so I'm really interested in your views on this. There are no right or wrong answers]. What do *you* think teacher knowledge is?
- ii) [Preamble: I've got a quote here from Basil Bernstein who talked about there being two sorts of teacher knowledge. One which we use when we think about engaging with policy-makers, which he rather emotively perhaps called 'profane'; and another knowledge which we might think about as professional knowledge, which equally emotively Bernstein called 'sacred'.] What are your reactions to Bernstein's claims?
- iii) [Preamble: Giroux says that teachers have a professional responsibility to be what he calls 'transformative intellectuals' that is, to be active in critiquing policy-makers' versions of teaching and knowledge]. What are your reactions to Giroux's position?

I was seeking, through this collection of questions, to establish: i) teachers' understanding of what to them constituted teacher knowledge, with a view to mapping this against teacher knowledge models; ii) awareness of there being differing types of knowledge that teachers could engage with, that is, policy-makers and professionals and iii) any views on whether and how teachers might claim autonomy in the construction of teacher knowledge. Finally, I was seeking to overcome the difficulties with teacher articulation by the use of the quotations as stimulus material.

## Appendix 13

### Interview Questions Stage 2: Professionalism

The interview questions relating to teacher professionalism were as follow:

- i) [Preamble: There's quite a debate about this next area – professionalism in teaching.] How would you define professionalism in teaching? (What, do you think, are the characteristics of professionalism?)
- ii) Do you think professionalism has or is changing?
- iii) Do you think there is a shared language that teachers and policy-makers use in talking about professionalism?

All three questions were designed to segue into a fuller conceptualisation of professionalism through teacher voice. What was unexpected however is that teachers, in answering question one, almost automatically addressed the other two questions. So reference to change, to discourse, to professional behaviours arose naturally out of question one. I nevertheless continued with all the teachers to ask the remaining questions, but frequently teachers were repeating answers, or would themselves indicate that they felt that had already addressed that question.

Question i) then served to open up issues of definition, of discourse, of changes over time, and of behaviours. In analysing responses in the section below, I have used these same headings, though, as indicated above, quite often the responses all emerged from question i).

## Appendix 14

### Interview Questions Stage 2: Identity

The interview questions relating to teacher identity were as follow:

- i) [Preamble: I'm looking now at teacher identity. It's another of those 'no right answer' areas.] How would you describe your own identity as a teacher?
- ii) What factors do you think have contributed to your own teacher identity?
- iii) Do you think identity is a stable concept, or do you think it might change over time? If so, what changes might you expect to see?

Question i) was seeking to understand whether teachers did indeed have a defined sense of a teacher identity, with question two developing that idea to explore how that identity had been formed, with a particular view to the impact of policy. I was also interested in this question to establish whether identity could be said to be stable, or whether there was indeed a sense of this shifting as Sachs suggested. I was also interested to see whether there emerged a sense of identity which intersected with professionalism and teacher knowledge, again as suggested by the literatures. However, I did not construct this as a separate question, since it felt to be a leading question: rather I was hoping to see areas such as this discussed in response to question ii).

Question iii) was seeking to establish whether any mapping with the models of teacher identity (Wenger and Bernstein) was possible. This is a complex area to explore. Bernstein's four models, for example, suggest a coherence of identity which I suspected would not be evident in the teachers' responses. Instead, I hoped to be able to analyse teacher answers in ways which would allow me to take key concepts, such as the relationship of teacher to State, and thus to see whether the models had resonance with the realities of teachers' lives.

## Appendix 15

### Interview Questions Stage 2: Teacher Research

The interview questions relating to research were as follows:

- i) How do you understand teacher research, and what is its significance, if any, to you?
- ii) Should research be part of teaching? Why?
- iii) In your experience, and if you have undertaken research, has that research impacted on your own professional practices, and if so, how?
- iv) Do you see research as a means to reclaiming knowledge, identity and professionalism? (teacher emancipation)

The literature review demonstrated that teacher research is an area which has generated substantial literatures, and numbers of themes could have informed the interview questions for this section. I was concerned that the selections I would have to make would allow me to access the key areas of significance and ownership. The interview questions generated for each research question therefore reflected these two areas.

Unlike all the previous responses to the interview questions, in the area of research, teachers were voluble. They spoke with enthusiasm and at length about their own experiences and offered extended responses to the questions. There is an interesting area to be explored on whether it is the act of research itself which generates a discourse available to teachers and with which they feel confident. If so, this might indicate these discussions are indeed demonstrating a relationship between research and emancipation. If not, it will be revealing to see or whether the discourse used is that of policy, and teacher articulation is limited to that genre.

## Appendix 16

### Card sort teacher participants

School/Name	Time Teaching	Responsibility
<b>School A</b> <b>State Grammar</b> <b>11-18</b>		
*Tom	20+ years	Teaching Head Physics/RE
*Ray	20+ years	Head of ICT Department
*David	18 years	Head of English Department..
<b>School C</b> <b>State 11-18</b>		
Ruth	4 years	Geography teacher
Cecilia	9 years	Science teacher
<b>School D</b> <b>State 11-16</b>		
*Jesse	3 years	History teacher
*Rachel	16 years	Research co-ordinator Head of MFL Department.
<b>School E</b> <b>State 11-18</b>		
*Simon	20+ years	Research co-ordinator English
Alison	7 years	Science

*\*Previously interviewed in Stage 2*