

**DRAMA IN PRIMARY EDUCATION: THE IMPACT OF IN-SERVICE CPD  
TRAINING ON THE USE OF DRAMA IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM**

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**Abstract**

This research aims to establish whether primary school teachers' perceptions of drama in the primary school (based on past experiences, during initial training and throughout their professional career development) can be influenced through in-service continuing professional development (CPD), using drama-based games, focusing specifically on living theory awareness and development (an element of teacher identity).

The work is based on an adaptation of Özmen's BEING Model (2011), which emerges from ideas that originated from the theories of method acting or 'The Method' by Stanislavski (1949, 1972). The BEING model provides a qualitative, interpretivist living theory methodology for the research, which focuses on a small sample of teachers, across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. The study utilises reflective diaries and focus groups to discuss the impact of the drama games. Fourteen members of staff, from a single school, from the primary department of an independent school in the East Midlands took part in the study. They ranged in age, gender, teaching experience and drama experience. Open coding and content analysis were used to analyse the data.

The study found that extended CPD training could change the lived experiences and perceptions of drama. Participants experienced a change in their attitudes towards drama and their use of it in the classroom. They also highlighted the benefits of improved relationships with colleagues and appreciated the opportunity to use extended CPD sessions for reflecting on their own learning experiences, their pupils and their professional practice.

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**Table 1.1 List of Acronyms**

BEING	Believe, Experiment, Invent, Navigate, Generate
BERA	British Education Research Association
CCE	Creativity, Culture and Education
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CUREE	Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DfE(S)	Department for Education (and Skills)
DiE	Drama in Education
EBacc	English Baccalaureate
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
ITE / ITT	Initial Teacher Education/ Initial Teacher Training
LEA	Local Education Authority
NACCCE	National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PIPS	Performance Indicators in Primary School
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SATs	Standard Assessment Tasks
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMSC	Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural
TiE	Theatre in Education
UK	United Kingdom

## **Definitions**

### ***Continuing Professional Development (CPD)***

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the process of developing and documenting knowledge, skills, training and experience gained beyond initial training in an area of expertise; a record of experiences, learning and potential application, which may be formal or informal.

### ***Drama***

Drama is a broad term which can describe plays and/or performances, which may or may not occur in a theatre and may or may not have an audience. Drama is also associated with connections involving theatre (but not exclusively) and can also include acting, producing and directing.

### ***Drama in Education***

Drama in Education (DiE) involves drama being used within a school or alternative educational setting and can be identified as a subject or a teaching method. DiE involves the teaching and/or use of dramatic elements such as acting, expression, emotional awareness, characterisation and creativity. It can also involve elements of creative and make-believe play. The use of DiE aims to teach drama concepts as well as help the development of skills such as collaboration, communication, self-awareness and confidence.

### ***Dramatherapy***

Dramatherapy is the use of drama and acting techniques to help with individual development and the treatment or preservation of mental health. Dramatherapy can be used in a variety of settings, including hospitals, schools, prisons, and within businesses.



### ***Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)***

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a government framework that sets out welfare and development goals for children aged five and under. Within my own setting, this consists of Pre-School and Reception-aged children, (between three and five years old).

### ***English Baccalaureate (EBacc)***

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a performance indicator linked to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

### ***Hot Seating***

Hot seating is a widely used and recognised drama activity. A member of the group is placed in the 'hot seat' and they answer 'in character', role-playing another person. This may involve a fictional or non-fictional character, for example, a famous historical character. The rest of the group pose questions to the character and the 'hot seated' character must answer 'in role'.

### ***Independent School***

In the UK, independent schools (also known as private schools) are fee-paying and are governed by a board of governors (elected). Independent schools do not have to comply with many of the state-school regulations and do not have to follow the National Curriculum.

### ***Initial Teacher Education (ITE) / Initial Teacher Training (ITT)***

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) or Initial Teacher Training (ITT) refers to the way in which an individual acquires the understanding of policies, procedures and provision in order to gain and develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours required to fulfil their role in the classroom and within the wider school community. There are many routes into teaching, including university and/or school-based training. ITT tends to be used by the government while ITE tends to be used by universities which sets the process in a context of 'education' rather than 'training'.

### ***Key Stage One and Key Stage Two***

Key Stage One is the term used for the two years of schooling in England, usually known as Year One and Year Two, with pupils ages between five and seven years old. Key Stage One takes place during infant school years and may be part of a whole primary school, including EYFS and Key Stage Two.

Key Stage Two is the term used for the four years of schooling in England, usually known as Years Three, Four, Five and Six, with pupils aged between seven and eleven years old. Key Stage Two takes place during junior school years and this may be part of a whole primary school, including EYFS and Key Stage One.

### ***Key Stage Three***

Key Stage Three is the term for the three years of schooling in maintained schools in England normally known as Years Seven, Eight and Nine, when pupils are aged between eleven and fourteen.

### ***Key Stage Four***

Key Stage Four is the term for the two years of school education which incorporate General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), and other examinations, in maintained schools in England, usually known as Years Ten and Eleven, when pupils are aged between fourteen and sixteen years old.

### ***Lived Experience***

Associated with qualitative, phenomenological research, lived experience refers to the way in which individuals represent their experiences and the knowledge and understanding they gain from this, which may in turn influence perceptions, feelings and choices. Lived experience is personally gained through first-hand involvement, rather than experiences through, or from, others.

### ***National Curriculum***

A programme of study introduced in 1988 designed for schools in order to ensure nationwide uniformity and consistency. It is a set of subjects and standards, used by primary (Key Stage One and Key Stage Two) and secondary schools.

### ***Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)***

A newly qualified teacher is a type of teacher in England. NQTs have obtained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) but have not yet completed a twelve-month programme, also known as an induction, which is statutory.

### ***Theatre***

In theatrical terms, theatre can refer to a building or an outdoor area where dramatic performances such as plays are given. However, 'theatre' can also refer to a play or another activity associated with its dramatic nature; this can also include performing, acting, directing, producing or writing performances, such as plays.

### ***Theatre in Education***

Theatre in Education (TiE) involves a professional team of trained or experienced performers, actors or teachers, who present a suitable project or experiment in schools or other appropriate educational settings. TiE programmes are often devised specifically for learners of a specific age. TiE is an education resource and can vary in delivery and may include, for example, audience participation, workshop, discussion or performance.

## **Preface**

### **Own Context and Position**

Since completing my undergraduate degree at Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln, in 2007, I have taught in a small independent school on the outskirts of Derby in the East Midlands region of England. As a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), I was given the responsibility of introducing and implementing drama as a discrete subject into the timetable for Years Five and Six. This ignited my interest in the importance of drama in the primary curriculum and formed the basis of my Master's Degree research, concerning Year Four pupils exploring the emotions associated with drama lessons.

Over the past eleven years at the school, my own observations and anecdotal comments have highlighted teachers' insecurities about using drama in their lessons. Some examples have included worrying that no written work is being produced, not feeling they have enough 'dramatic knowledge' to be able to teach drama, not wanting to 'perform' in front of other staff or the children and generally having a lack of confidence in starting or planning a drama lesson. I have observed that teachers feel unsure about how drama activities will qualify as a lesson with a clear 'purpose'. However, at the same time, I found that teachers generally recognised the benefits of using drama in teaching and believed it important; a distinct conflict of thoughts, the result being an uneasy tension between belief and practice.

As a performer myself, and having been given the responsibility of raising the profile of drama in my school, I am often asked by other members of staff for guidance when preparing their class assemblies or performances. I suspect that although teachers can visualise what they would wish the performance to be like, they lack the confidence and technical knowledge to be able to articulate their ideas to the children. Drama requires discussions in directing and subsequently being able to help children to develop their performance by modifying and verbalising these concepts. In addition, this sometimes requires modelling to the children and therefore 'acting' by the teacher leading the session. Children need to be guided on how they could develop their performances and some teachers seem to lack confidence in this area, despite using many of these aspects

in their everyday teaching. Teaching necessarily often involves acting out or playing different roles dictated by the objectives and context of each lesson.

The pilot study for this research project, which was part of the taught element of the EdD, also contributed to this perception (Evans-Bolger, 2014). Teachers verbalised that their opinions towards drama lessons did not match the way that they recognised the importance and use of drama in their classrooms. There seemed to be a real disconnect between the two. The participants appeared to struggle with these feelings and there was a conflict between their personal opinions about drama (and having to 'perform' themselves) and their professional thoughts about drama, (where they generally believed that it was a valuable and important aspect of the curriculum).

The pilot study highlighted the complexity of issues surrounding teacher identity as highlighted by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and whether or not primary teachers could in fact have a specific teacher identity including drama, since the subject forms such a small aspect of primary education as a whole, although it could be a marker of a broader identity characteristic, meaning that if teachers could have the opportunity to explore what drama means to them, they might start to recognise their use of drama when they are 'in role' as a teacher. Therefore, moving towards a focus of lived experience and using living theory as a methodology (an aspect of identity, but not dealing with the abstract and complex nature of identity itself), has helped to give the project more focus. It has helped define what drama means to individual primary school teachers (considering their previous lived experience of the subject) and therefore subsequently assess the impact of this in their teaching.

As a teacher, practitioner, colleague, researcher and performer, I feel that I am in the most appropriate position to be able to conduct this research for both personal and professional reasons. In terms of my personal development, I truly believe and am convinced of the benefits of drama and the opportunities for personal development through performance skills, especially for primary-aged children. This has certainly assisted my own confidence, particularly when communicating with people and

expressing myself. I honestly believe that without having the opportunities to perform as a young girl, I would not have become a teacher and had the confidence to lead classes and communicate to large groups of adults. As a child, I was the little girl who hid behind her daddy's legs and found it very hard to speak to new people, but through dancing, singing and amateur dramatics my confidence began to grow. Although, as an adult, I still struggle with new settings (this may come as a surprise to many of my colleagues), I find that I am able to hide and overcome this by 'acting' confidently; these are skills I have developed through my experiences with drama.

Professionally, I have been a qualified teacher for eleven years; I feel confident in my continually developing practice and, in addition, feel as though I have a strong and developed teacher identity, which has continued to progress and widen through new experiences. In addition, I acknowledge that within my teaching experience, my 'teacher-self' is constantly changing and reacting to new training and experiences. My personal experiences of dancing, singing and drama have given me the confidence to not only perform on stage 'in role' but to have the self-assurance to stand in front of children or adults and communicate effectively. I still often feel anxious and nervous when performing personally or 'in role' as a teacher in front of children or parents. However, the drama techniques and skills I have developed have taught me how to channel these feelings and to use them in a positive way. This is why I believe in the benefits of using drama in education. Considering the feelings expressed anecdotally by my colleagues, I feel it is important to investigate where these perceptions of drama come from. An exploration of previous lived experiences and a consideration of one's own abilities within drama, as well as gaining new techniques, could help to alleviate some of the negative experiences and perceptions teachers have about drama.

As a teacher-researcher, I felt compelled to investigate this further. As someone who feels that they have personally benefited from the attributes associated with performance skills and how this can develop personal confidence, I felt this needed further and more detailed exploration of where this conflict came from and how it could potentially be decreased or resolved. The opportunity to explore these experiences

with teachers through extended CPD training gave opportunities for reflection and exploration of both individual and professional identity and how these were connected.

The thesis forms part of a professional doctorate and thereby seeks to contribute knowledge and to develop a deeper understanding of the research context (Lee, 2009). It should also be relevant to both the researcher and their professional context (Fulton *et al*, 2013). This thesis has been developed through four years of part-time study, having already completed two years of work prior to the project development. It is a qualitative, interpretivist study, investigating whether a living theory methodology, using an alternative and extended form of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), using drama games and reflections, can alter teachers' existing lived experience of drama and change their subsequent use of it in the classroom.

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to the research, in particular, the numerous definitions and historical placement of drama in primary education. I feel this is of importance as it helps to explain why drama has held a consistently changing and uncertain position within the primary curriculum, thereby explaining why it can be interpreted and understood by practitioners in different ways; due to teachers' varying and inconsistent relationships with the subject.

Drama has historically held a difficult and complex position in the school primary phase curriculum; it has been ever-changing and unstable. Gillard (2018) provided an extensive summary of the history of education ranging from the time of the Romans tracking right through to the present day; this history provided a complex and thorough report on many of the changes in educational policy, including the impact of political influences as well as critical historical events such as the World Wars. According to Somers (2015), drama was only initially recognised as a subject or topic that was taught or used as a teaching technique in England between World War One and World War Two. Initially it was introduced in schools and was mainly experimental in its structure.

After World War Two, with the increasing freedom of the school curriculum provided by the changes of the Labour government (Gillard, 2018), teacher-led rote learning was restructured to focus on a more child-centred approach. This resulted in the individuality of students being more highly valued and therefore the arts were recognised as an area of learning, as well as an opportunity for pupils to express themselves (Somers, 2015; Gillard, 2018).

Critically, Birmingham appears to have been a key location for the development of drama within education at this time. Between 1943 and 1947, Peter Slade was the first post holder of the Drama Advisor to the City of Birmingham Education Committee, and was heavily involved with the development of raising the profile of educational drama, becoming a member of several key committees including the British Children's Theatre Association and the Drama Advisers Association. In addition, in 1948, Slade became



director of the newly formed Educational Drama Association. This period of time marked a critical developmental shift and raised the profile of drama in education. This continued well into the 1960s.

During this period, *Story of a School* (His Majesty's Stationery Office) had also been published by the Ministry of Education in 1949, and was distributed to every English and Welsh school. In this pamphlet, the headmaster of a junior school in Birmingham described the use of the arts, such as music, art, movement and drama. It was published by the Minister of Education in the hope that other schools would begin to adopt some of the ideas of creative teaching and creative arts it described. A section of the pamphlet focused specifically on drama and recounted the observed benefits of the subject that reached far beyond the classroom environment. It commented on the joy which permeated through the school and the observed increase in confidence as the pupils were given opportunities to further express themselves. In addition, it also recognised the use of drama beyond the traditional conventions of the school nativity play.

I found this pamphlet of particular significance as, despite its simplicity, it reflected the advantages of using drama as a creative mechanism in a school and the benefits as observed by the staff, in circumstances where the arts might have been considered challenging to deliver. Reservations were expressed, however, including the opinion that allowing children to express their emotions more freely might result in emotional outbursts and lack of self-control. The contrary was in fact noted and a stronger sense of unity and school community was recognised. It could have been expected that such a publication, especially as it had been sent out nationwide, would have triggered a significant shift in the teaching of the arts. However, by the time of the publication of the Plowden Report in 1967 (Her Majesty's Stationery Office,) creativity and child-centred learning was still described as desired, rather than embedded, and remained a recommendation for schools to develop and so the impact of *Story of a School* could not have been as significant as the Minister of Education at the time would have hoped.

This inconsistent position and varying levels of perceived value, position and importance within the curriculum, would still be recognised today; teachers' experiences of drama can be somewhat inconsistent. This is highly reminiscent of how drama was viewed in education between World War One and World War Two demonstrating the argument that it has continued to hold a difficult and ever-changing position. The geographic location of a school, as well as staff belief and interest, can undoubtedly influence the use of drama in schools and impact on school ethos.

The Plowden report of 1967 (Her Majesty's Stationery Office) was the final report published as a result of the Central Advisory Council for England (CACE) which was established from the 1944 Education Act. The committee recommended recognising the importance of the individual child and especially their emotional, physical and intellectual development; an ethos largely centred around the work of Piaget (1926).

Increased awareness of drama in education and the recognised importance and values of giving children drama opportunities also elicited new forms of training and special courses, which were led by Peter Slade. These included 'Peter Slade Leaders', a university course for Drama in Education, and a Child Drama course which was established in 1968 by the Birmingham Education Committee. Peter Slade's work was poignant and revered both nationally and internationally (Dodds, 2004). His first book, written in 1954 entitled *Child Drama* was considered a seminal text and echoed the sentiments of the time, which encouraged the change in teaching and learning to be creative, individualised and contributing to the development of 'self', a process which needed to be encouraged and carefully led by adults. Slade continued writing and speaking regularly to promote the rationale and the value of drama and education all the way through to the 1990s.

Brian Way published the book *Development Through Drama* in 1967. Together Slade and Way generated an alternative way of using drama in education which differed from theatre-based approaches, where scripts and scripted performances were developed and the development of 'self' was less of a focus. Their Drama in Education (DiE)

approach centred much more around improvisation techniques and play, rather than acting, which is more commonly associated with the term 'theatre'. A critical shift and difference in definition between 'theatre' and 'drama' was that theatre was associated with a final product or performance whereas 'drama' was concerned with social development, communication, empathy and understanding without necessarily including a final 'product' or performance.

In addition, Slade was considered to be the first 'dramatherapist' (Dodds, 2004) and used the term 'dramatherapy' before the British Medical Association in 1939 (Casson, 2012). This is a term and a strategy that is still used today in some schools, hospitals and prisons. Although 'dramatherapy' is not specifically relevant to this study, the value of drama-based activities for personal and emotional development should be considered in terms of strengthening the argument for drama's valued position in education and its recognition as providing personal benefits for children.

In 1989 with the introduction of the National Curriculum, Wragg, Carré and Carter (1989) surveyed teachers' views and their perceived competence and concerns regarding the National Curriculum subjects (which was introduced as a result of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1988 Education Reform Act). A follow-up survey was completed in 1991 by Bennett, Wragg, Carré and Carter (Bennett *et al*, 1992). Once again, it surveyed teachers' competence in teaching the National Curriculum subjects and evaluated their perceived priorities for training. It is interesting to note that, as expected, drama was not listed within the subjects appraised for teacher confidence and competence. However, drama was mentioned within the listed in-service needs, once again highlighting drama's awkward position as an 'unrecognised' curriculum subject, whilst being regularly mentioned in curriculum-based conversations. Drama, music and PE were not viewed by teachers as a priority, with only 15% identifying these areas as significant ones for training, compared to humanities subjects, such as RE, history and geography and computer based subjects, both obtaining approximately 40% as a perceived training need. This would align with the previous ideas supporting the contention that despite the influx of evidence to suggest the value of drama and the

arts within the curriculum, (which had been reasonably continuous from the end of World War Two), drama's position was still unstable and inconsistent. This was especially noticeable with the rise of the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) culture, and the perception that the curriculum was already overcrowded (Bennett *et al*, 1992). Music was also identified as a subject of low importance, with only 15% of teachers surveyed regarding it as a high priority for training (Bennett *et al*, 1992). However, I would suggest that although music could be associated with the same curriculum issues as drama, because it was (and still is) a named subject within the National Curriculum for Key Stages One and Two, its profile continues to be considered higher, although all the arts subjects within schools are continuing to face uncertain times, insufficient funding and lack of teacher training (Hill, 2018).

The first edition of *Drama in Schools* was produced in 1992 by Arts Council England, used the ideas of David Hornbrook (1991) and developed a framework to give drama a structure and assessment criteria within the curriculum for both primary and secondary schools, although in reality, the focus of *Drama in Schools* was primarily for the secondary curriculum phase. Hornbrook argued that giving drama the status of a subject which developed children psychologically, prevented the subject from gaining status in terms of giving children the opportunities to learn about more theatrical-based concepts such as directing, acting writing and evaluating (Burt, 2005). This would support the argument that drama's position within the curriculum has remained confused and undefined. As it has never been given the status as a discrete subject, the curriculum of drama has never been fully established. The benefits and uses of drama have been discussed and identified over a continuous period of changing governments, new curricula and the rise of attainment-based tests. Drama has continued to be used sporadically in schools, even though it has not featured as a named subject in the National Curriculum.

Research studies by Green *et al* (1998) focused on trainee teachers and identified that it was purely chance whether trainee teachers worked with staff with sufficient knowledge in drama in order to teach it consistently. This inconsistency of drama's

placement in schools was further reinforced by Cockett (1999). In addition, the importance of creativity was highlighted in the *All Our Futures Report* (NACCCE 1999). The report addressed the need for a broad and balanced curriculum and discussed how creativity increased self-esteem in young people and how the arts, including drama, played a vital role within the curriculum.

The *All Our Futures* report (NACCCE, 1999) led by Sir Ken Robinson, focused on the importance of creativity in schools and was commissioned under the Labour Government. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) stated in Robinson's report that drama provision was unsatisfactory due to poor teacher confidence and low levels of funding. This therefore supported the notion that drama's value and position as a subject and as a teaching strategy was undermined and was not a priority in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and therefore held an historically precarious position within the National Curriculum, a view supported by Green *et al* (1998) and Cockett (1999).

The *All Our Futures* report (NACCCE, 1999) also proposed that drama was not taught enough throughout Key Stages One, Two and Three and that the provision for drama in primary education was particularly poor. The report found that drama was taught well in Key Stage Four due to it being a popular choice for GCSE in 1998. It is interesting to note here that in 1998 and 1999 when The *All Our Futures* report (NACCCE, 1999) was being written, drama was the second fastest growing GCSE subject, after Business Studies.

Following the findings of *All Our Futures* report (NACCCE, 1999), in 2002 the Government created a flagship learning programme called *Creative Partnerships* through Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE), funded by Arts Council England, in which drama featured. The aim of the programme was to develop young people's creativity through engagement with the arts. Schools were encouraged to work with a variety of local artists in order to forge creative partnerships and engage pupils with the creative curriculum. The programme worked with nominated schools in different local

education authorities (LEAs) across England. *Saving a place for the arts...in primary schools in England* also reinforced the benefits of the creative arts in the curriculum (Downing, Johnson and Kaur, 2003). The report identified that head teachers recognised the importance of the arts in primary education. The benefits of drama were clearly identified covering many developmental areas. These included improved pupil confidence, the use and freedom of creativity and expression (both verbal and non-verbal) and the development of emotional intelligence including the development of sympathy, empathy, compassion and morality, in other words, fundamental human values. Finally, there were strong indications of the benefits of drama, highlighting links to other curriculum areas such as literacy and history, where drama could be used for cross-curricular benefit.

In response to the growing popularity of drama and its emergence from theatre into new media, radio and television, a second edition of *Drama in Schools* was published in 2003. The updated version sought to raise the profile and highlight the importance of drama particularly within the primary curriculum. One of the key reasons why the second edition was published in 2003 was that the first edition mainly focused on secondary education and was lacking guidance and detail about the use of drama in primary schools. The updated report highlighted the continued need for drama in the primary curriculum and provided examples of best practice.

In 2003, the DfES released *Speaking, Listening and Learning: working with children in Key Stages One and Two*. The guidance provided comprehensive information about the use of drama in the primary classroom, highlighting the importance of drama in the curriculum and addressing potential problems and concerns which may have been raised by teachers including lesson organisation, management and class control. In addition, the document also provided a list of potential drama activities that amongst drama specialists would have been widely recognisable, whilst providing a starting point for teachers who were less confident with drama conventions. This was perhaps the first time that drama held a specific and fixed position within the primary curriculum, not as a subject in its own right, but as one of the four strands of the Literacy Speaking

and Listening Strategy (DfES, 2003). Teachers were informed as to how and when drama could be used; as part of English, or other subjects to enrich learning. In addition, there was also a revised version of the ITE curriculum that stated the need for the inclusion of the teaching of 'Performing Arts' as a subject to student teachers, even though that was not specifically a curriculum subject at primary (Teacher Training Agency, 2003). This could have marked a turning point with respect to drama's previous uncertain position.

However, despite the profile of drama being raised through such reports as the *Drama in Schools* revised edition (Arts Council England, 2003) and the *Speaking and Listening Strategy* (DfES, 2003), and the potential for improved training as part of ITE, in 2008 Neelands wrote an article entitled *Drama: the subject that dare not speak its name*. Neelands identified that the type and quality of drama taught in schools still varied considerably. This view was supported through the earlier research study in drama in primary education by Cockett (1999) and in addition by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) paper *Excellence in English* (2011), which also concluded that drama could be used as a highly valued and beneficial teaching tool in primary schools, and that quality drama teaching could help to raise standards in English. This was apparent in schools where drama was given a status within planning. This highlighted that the inconsistency of drama lessons was also still an issue; some schools had a thriving extra-curricular drama scheme, while others made very limited use of the subject.

Despite the increasing profile of drama, Neelands (2008) discussed the genuine concern that teacher training opportunities, both Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and as part of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the teaching of primary drama, were frequently limited and insufficient. This was in part due to the fact that drama still did not hold a consistent place within all schools. It could be featured as a discrete subject, taught cross-curricularly through lessons, including English, or hardly feature at all across the curriculum. Therefore, teachers' experiences of drama were highly variable, depending on where they had trained, their school experience placements, CPD and potentially their local authority, as well as the level of funding provided by the

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). This all led to a very varied national picture and perception of its importance as a curriculum subject.

Although training was still somewhat limited and/or inconsistent, Neelands (2008) recognised the growing value and status of drama, along with the increased focus on creativity within the curriculum, due to the funding and raised profile provided from the Arts Council England (2003).

The problems continued as, after the subsequent general election in 2010 and the formation of the new Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government, the focus shifted away from creativity towards academic achievement in core subjects. The funding for the *Creative Partnerships* programme was cut by the DCMS and Arts Council England in 2011. Therefore, the programme of Creative Partnership activities in schools ended in the Summer of 2011. The cessation of funds could be considered as counter-intuitive, especially considering the Rose Curriculum Review in 2010, in which drama was featured and its virtues extolled:

Drama is a case in point. It is a powerful arts subject which also enhances children's language development through role play in the early years and more theatrical work later, which can greatly enrich, say, historical and religious studies as well as personal development by exploring concepts such as empathy. Similarly, dance is a performing art which is equally at home in physical education, and both are enriched by music. (Rose, 2010: 15)

Unfortunately, despite the evidence in the Rose Review (2010), the new coalition government also rejected the review which had proposed a new curriculum, which had been scheduled to start when the coalition took over. Because of this, teachers still continued to encounter hugely diverse experiences of drama in school, and many were not aware of the ways in which drama could be used in teaching to enhance children's learning experiences (Bowell and Heap, 2010).

Alexander (2009) and Rose (2010), in their reviews, stated that primary schools needed teachers that were skilled and knowledgeable in the teaching of drama, both as a



discrete subject and in cross-curricular lessons to enhance learning and metacognition. 'Reinstating the arts and humanities in primary education requires a campaign on several fronts simultaneously' (Alexander, 2009:22). Unfortunately, despite these findings in support of drama and their reviews of the Primary curriculum, they were not acted upon by the incoming Coalition Government of 2010, despite their apparent commitment to enhancing the standing of drama and acknowledgement that there had been some neglect in the teaching of it.

The benefits of drama, both in terms of language development and as a vehicle for emotional development; socially, morally, spiritually and culturally (SMSC) as well as opportunities to use drama as a cross-curricular teaching tool were clearly outlined in the recommendations for the Rose Curriculum Review:

Primary schools should make sure that children's spoken communication is developed intensively within all subjects and for learning across the curriculum. In so doing, schools should capitalise on the powerful contributions of the performing and visual arts, especially role play and drama. (Rose, 2010:21)

The trend of drama holding an inconsistent position and profile within the primary curriculum is not an unfamiliar concept, but is highly likely to continue, especially with drama's latest minimised position in the current National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). Here, it no longer features as an element of the Speaking and Listening strategy (DfES, 2003) which used to form part of English but it is now mentioned only briefly as a teaching tool. In the latest National Curriculum (DfE, 2013), drama is included in the following statement in the guidance for English across Key Stage One and Key Stage Two:

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. (DfE, 2013: 14)

The most recent National Curriculum has aims, purposes, statutory content and non-statutory guidance (DfE, 2013). Currently, Years Five and Six have a statutory statement voicing the preparation of poems and plays for children to read aloud and to perform. Investigation of voice is recognised through showing an understanding of intonation, tone and volume in order that the correct meaning is conveyed. For each year group within the National Curriculum for Key Stages One and Two, role play and other drama techniques are also included as part of the non-statutory guidelines. There is also a separate section on Spoken Language for Years One to Six that includes statements on the participation of children in discussions, presentations and performances, including role play, as well as improvisations and debates; these are all statutory requirements. However, as the drama elements have been split up and separated amongst other skills, the position of drama is becoming more uncertain compared to its previous standing within the Speaking and Listening strategy in 2003 (DfES).

In contrast, in the Secondary Curriculum (DfE, 2014), drama is identified as a discrete subject as it can be taught as a GCSE subject. However, Gill (2016) reported that between 2005 and 2014, the number of drama GSCE entries continued to decline and, in 2018, Masso reported in *The Stage* newspaper that in 2017, GCSE drama entries fell by more than 8%, which was more than double the decline of drama entries from 2015. This seems unsurprising considering that drama was not consistently valued or given sufficient provision within the curriculum before Key Stage Four and has continued to face uncertain times since the changes in the National Curriculum and the changes in types of schooling, where alternative curricula can be offered. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), which prioritises certain subjects (not the arts) at GCSE will also be a contributing factor.

The independent school in this study *does* follow the latest National Curriculum guidance (DfE, 2013) to a certain extent. However, there is some flexibility since, as an independent school, there is no formal requirement to follow it. With the recent addition and increase of 'free schools' and 'academies' (state-funded, non-fee-paying schools which are independent of local authorities) as places of learning, more

and more schools are no longer obliged to follow the National Curriculum and this again may have an impact on the uncertain position of drama in primary education.

The historically uncertain placement of drama, combined with research promoting the benefits and issues concerning drama in primary education, highlights the importance of researching and understanding how teachers themselves perceive it and that the consideration of these perceptions is likely to vary dramatically due to their previous varying experiences of drama. This is significant in terms of this study as children, when engaged in drama (whether being taught discretely or cross-curricularly), are acquiring a new body of knowledge, understanding and skills, and are still developing their 'dramatic skills'. Therefore, the way in which it is delivered by teachers may have a lasting impact on children's development (Neelands, 2008; Howell and Heap, 2010). For example, teachers who are confident in their use of drama techniques, both discretely and as a teaching skill, will tend to use dramatic techniques more readily in their teaching, whereas those who are less confident may use fewer of these techniques, for example, hot seating, role play, use of voice, characterisation etc. as they feel less confident in doing so. In addition, with the changes to the National Curriculum, less confident teachers are not obliged to use drama techniques as a regular or consistent part of their teaching.

Howell and Heap (2010) suggested the necessity for more primary research and an ambition, potentially a requirement, to support colleagues with additional training and/or evidence provided by 'experts'. The sharing of experience, benefits of drama and dramatic knowledge could be used to support teachers in the teaching of drama in primary education. This could, in principle, bring a clearer insight into teachers' perception of drama in education and help develop teachers' awareness, ability and confidence in teaching dramatic conventions and skills and potentially influence their lived experience and perception of drama (Wales 2009; Özmen, 2011). Increased and consistent training, both as part of ITE and for experienced teachers, could help to build confidence in the teaching of drama, making staff more willing to experiment with their use of dramatic techniques and to use them more in their day-to-day teaching.

The evidence to promote the benefits of drama (including literature, research, anecdotal evidence and my personal experiences), as well as the ever-changing position and status of drama and the wider curriculum issues associated with it (including timetable pressures, teachers' varying expertise and the opportunities to use drama), sparked a particular interest within me, as a practitioner and researcher.

Over my years of study during my Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree, there has been a growth of research suggesting that drama can have a huge impact on many areas of child development and there is evidence to suggest that it is an important part of primary education (discussed fully in Chapter Two). With schools having the autonomy to further limit, to increase (although the incentives to do this may be limited) or to possibly remove the teaching of drama from their curriculum, there could be a significant change in the level of drama taught in schools and, in turn, in teachers' already inconsistent experiences of drama (both during training and CPD). Due to these factors, I was particularly interested in exploring my own colleagues' perceptions of drama, identifying where these feelings had originated from and exploring and examining their present use of drama within their teaching and whether this could be influenced.

It is possible that a teacher's perception and feelings towards drama could intentionally or unintentionally tacitly influence their use of drama within a school community. A previous small-scale study using a focus group of primary teachers, identified that positive interventions may improve practice, and raise confidence in teaching drama (Evans-Bolger, 2014). As Özmen (2011) suggested, such interventions could involve opportunities to observe 'experts', which include effective training and therefore in turn an improved knowledge of the subject. Additional CPD (but not necessarily formal acting lessons) could potentially help teachers to integrate drama as part of their teaching. Acting lessons are not the same as drama lessons; drama lessons involve exploration of self, whereas acting lessons focus specifically on performance skills.

Özmen (2011) argued, perhaps controversially (as it would not be a decision favoured by all), that if teachers were provided with basic acting skills, instead of purely the tools to teach drama, in order to develop their 'role' as the teacher, this could in turn help to change their lived experience of drama. If this occurred, their approach towards teaching drama may be modified and their own perceptions of the subject altered. New knowledge and understanding of basic acting and drama themes might help teachers to feel more confident and comfortable with the subject and in turn may encourage a more open use of drama in the classroom. However, even though this is one potential solution, it would almost certainly not be favoured by all, as my previous research discovered (Evans-Bolger, 2014). When discussing potential outcomes of the research and ways to move forward, for this research, a slightly modified training scheme was discussed, focusing specifically on making teachers more aware of drama knowledge and understanding, instead of a more generic 'acting course'. This may be more successful and feel less intimidating to experienced and professionally established teachers.

### ***Rationale for this Research***

The pilot study allowed for an initial investigation into teachers' perceptions of drama. Based on the evidence provided, existing literature and previous study, there appeared to be some connection between the lived experience of a teacher (which is part of their professional and personal identity), the way they perceive drama in education and the way they use drama techniques in the classroom. In this earlier work, I had identified that this appeared to be impacting on how teachers perceive and use drama in education (Evans-Bolger, 2014).

Given the uncertain position, placement and use of drama in education, this study sets out to undertake primary research to gain first-hand perceptions, attitudes and experiences of primary teachers in my professional context, in one independent school in the East Midlands. The nature of a professional doctorate aims to provide an original contribution to knowledge, associated with a practitioner, performing research within their own setting in order to enhance professional practice (Lee, 2009). Therefore, this

study strives to meet the criteria. Trafford and Leshem (2008) and Matthiesen and Binder (2009) provide useful insight into the doctoral journey and highlight the need for visualising the doctoral journey and focusing on the end of study from the very start. This will ensure the scholarly purpose, suitable judgments, quality and auditing to be considered throughout the doctoral journey. With that in mind, I have tried to ensure that throughout this process, these elements have been considered and will be discussed through the subsequent chapters.

The following questions were used to provide a clear structure and focus for the research.

### ***Research Questions***

1. Can lived experiences and perceptions of drama be modified through in-service CPD training using reflection and drama games?
2. What advantages and disadvantages can be identified by using drama games and reflection for in-service CPD?
3. Can CPD training (through reflection and drama games) change teachers' use of drama in the classroom?

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter provides a critical review of the literature, citing drama in primary education, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and living theory's position within educational theory and research.

Abbott (2014) identified that at the inception of any developing research project, the researcher already has his/her basis grounded from previous personal experience, which is referred to as Polanyi's phrase of 'tacit knowing' (cited in Schön, 1991: 52). However, for the impact of the research to be successful and lead to a subsequent change in practice, existing knowledge has to be challenged. A need to review literature based around the topics being discussed is therefore essential. The researcher needs to be able to recognise the position of his/her research in relation to other studies and therefore conduct studies within the most appropriate theoretical framework (Punch, 2009; Creswell, 2013). Original research must use previous research as a starting point to inform the area of interest and in turn to prevent repetition of research projects (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004).

This chapter is structured around developing, exploring and critiquing the broad themes identified and expressed within the research questions shown at the end of Chapter One. The themes are:

- Drama theory and the use of drama in the primary classroom
- The role of CPD in changing teachers' use of drama in the classroom
- Lived experience and living theory

Each of the above themes will be explored in addition to other key issues raised around the wider research area.

### ***Drama Theory and the Use of Drama in the Primary Classroom***

The complexities, varying understandings and previous experiences of drama all contribute to its multifaceted and complex position within education. This, in turn, influences the way in which it can be interpreted in different ways by practitioners,

researchers and policy makers (Abbott, 2014). In addition, Fleming (2000) identified the long term discussions and research concerning *Drama in Education*. He employed Wittgenstein's concept of 'integration' (2000: 33) to provide an insight into drama teaching and how the very complex and vastly wide definition of drama can be explained and understood, by using a practice which is 'inclusive and integrated' (2000: 44), welcoming and unifying all aspects of the subject. This complex position and potential over-simplification of intricate and historical issues is not specifically limited to the discussion concerning drama in education, but can also be applied to the arts in education (Fleming, 2012).

This study does not seek to answer key theoretical questions concerning the position of the arts in the primary curriculum, nor does it aim to act as a research paper displaying the opinion of the ever-changing curriculum position of drama in primary education. It also does not aim to evaluate the impact of ITE or ITT and its responsibility in terms of giving teachers the acquired body of knowledge in order to teach drama. These are all pertinent areas of interest providing a background to this study but are not its intended focus.

This research project seeks to facilitate an opportunity for a small number of practitioners to open a discussion and ascertain their immediate and deeply personal experiences of drama and how this influenced their use of it in teaching. This will then be related to their previous lived experience of the area, shedding light on how this could be influenced through future CPD and potentially prompting a change in the way qualified teachers think of drama. All of these areas will be explored and discussed critically in this literature review.

According to Fleming (2000), drama is a broad and complex discipline; broad in terms of content, elements and style and complex in terms of the way it is used in education. The context of this study is drama in primary education, for many, the first stage when children will formally encounter it.



Drama was pragmatically defined by the DfES (2003) as a 'learning process' which gave children the opportunity to:

- Use speech, language and body movement to discover, explore, and portray different situations, types of characters and varying emotions;
- Develop and maintain good teamwork when working with others and sustain a role when working independently, and,
- Share constructive ideas with their peers about drama they have observed or taken part in.

Although this definition is from fifteen years ago, and therefore could now be considered dated, the essential ethos of the use of drama in schools has not changed and many of these areas are still identified within the revised National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). However, drama does not feature as a specific section, as it once did within the Primary National's Strategy; *Speaking, Listening and Learning: working with children in Key Stages 1 and 2* (DfES, 2003).

As discussed in Chapter One, there are genuine concerns that the arts, including drama, are gradually being squeezed out of the primary curriculum. In the UK the current right of centre Government has signalled a 'back to basics' policy, laying emphasis on mathematics, English and the sciences. It is also reverting to a traditional, formal examination system. It is interesting to note here that there is a small body of research to promote drama's benefits of learning in such curriculum areas, which will be considered later in the chapter. The ever-increasing accountability of schools, based on test results through SATs, target setting, increased pressure to provide evidence or prove progress, league tables and the risk of Ofsted inspections have changed the culture in schools, moving away from the creative culture which was being encouraged and fostered around twenty years ago (as discussed in Chapter One), meaning that teachers feel that they do not have the time to integrate drama as a valued element of their teaching, despite research evidence to the contrary highlighting its values.

Woolland (1993) identified that drama could be taught as a subject in its own right, as well as being used as a cross-curricular teaching tool (Cockett, 1999; Baldwin, 2003). The value of drama can be identified in simple terms, through social, emotional, creative, intellectual and academic development (Woolland, 1993; Cockett, 1999; Baldwin, 2003 & 2009 and Fleming, 2003). However, Neelands (2008) also considered that there were two key types of drama which could be identified in schools; process and product. 'Product' drama is more concerned with 'theatre' and investigates the traditions of playwriting and essentially 'performance' and would therefore be more generally associated with the teaching and development of performance 'skills'. On the other hand, 'process' drama is less concerned with the outcome of a 'performance' and is usually associated with creative experiences such as role play, where drama is used as a method of teaching and a means of learning across the curriculum and therefore is more strongly associated with the cross-curricular teaching of drama (Neelands, 2008). Perhaps it is this mixed definition of the very word drama within primary education which may start to explain teachers' uncertain understanding of it, a confusion which may, in turn, contribute to the lack of understanding around the two different aspects of drama.

In 2006, Dickenson, Neelands and Shenton School published *Improving Your Primary School Through Drama* which was written to provide schools with the strategies of using drama for whole school development; focusing more on process drama rather than product and on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Neelands (2008) noted that the five core objectives identified in the book as the ways of improving the school through the use of drama, did not actually mention drama specifically, rather, it discussed the value of meaningful context, active learners, self-expression, confidence building, raising self-esteem and working positively. In fact, a hybrid of using both product and process drama, through a more holistic approach, was identified as an area of good drama practice in primary schools.

Dickenson *et al* (2006) established a whole-school approach to the integration of drama in schools which was supported and led by the Head teacher and leadership team. It

was integrated into the School Development Plan. Drama was provided with time in the curriculum. Staff training and funding were also provided and therefore drama was established as a valued pedagogy which permeated through the very ethos and day-to-day routines of the school; its position was understood, its value was supported through all levels of the staff and wider school community. Parents and Governors were also invited to workshops and to share in the understanding of the value of drama. The success of the use of drama at Shenton Primary School was thus due to the fully embedded, whole-school approach and belief, from all areas of the school community, which was essential in order for it to become an integral aspect of the school's development.

The notion of a whole-school approach was also supported by Baldwin's work in 2009; *School Improvement Through Drama*, where, once again, a whole-school approach, including the necessity of the full support of the leadership team, was identified as critical in ensuring drama's full integration into the school's development plan and its use in lessons. Neelands *et al* (2006) and Baldwin (2009) were in the fortunate position of having full support from multiple areas, where a whole-school approach was able to be adopted, and the training needs of the staff and successful integration of drama into the school's development plan, was supported. However, as identified in Chapter One, this was not, and is still not the case for all Local Authorities, schools and teachers. Unless a school already has an existing strong relationship with the development of drama, or is located in an area where drama has strong links to school development. For example, were it not for Baldwin's relationship and connections with Norfolk County Council (Baldwin, 2009), it is unlikely that the whole-school approach would have been fully embraced and maintained; and it would have been difficult to embed it with limited members of staff, 'drama champions' or 'experts' within a school.

Many theorists extol the virtues of using drama as a teaching and learning tool in primary education (Bolton, 1984, Heathcote and Bolton, 1995; Baldwin, 2003; Fleming, 2003). In addition, there has also been several types of research conducted showing how drama has benefited learning in other areas, for example, the research; *The impact*

*of drama on pupils' language, mathematics, and attitude in two primary schools* (Fleming *et al*, 2004). The research used the National Theatre's Transformation Project, which began in 1999, as a basis. Four schools took part in the study based in London; two participating in the Transformation Project and two schools which were closely matched as control schools, who were not participating in the National Theatre project. Year Three pupils were assessed using Performance Indicators in Primary School (PiPS) prior to the commencement of the project and then again at the end of Year Four, after two years of the Transformation project interventions. The project consisted of a mainly quantitative and positivist approach with appropriately developed standardised tests measuring pupil progress, which suggested that the children taking part in the Transformation project generally achieved higher value added results than the control schools, thus indicating the benefits of drama to other areas of the curriculum. In addition, questionnaires were used to measure the self-concept of the pupils and these were found to be significantly higher in the Transformation group than the control group. Fleming *et al* (2004) stated that the results of the study needed to be treated with caution, due to the small scale nature of the research. However, it suggested that the research did provide encouraging data. The study also comments on the scientific approaches to education research which are frequently shunned (Fleming *et al* 2004; 195) in drama and the arts as they tend to place more emphasis on individual rather than collective views.

I found this article of interest as, not only did it highlight the ways in which drama can be used across other subjects to promote attainment, it also discussed the nature of educational research and drama. The notion of qualitative studies and the understanding of truth were also of interest; the development of understanding as well as the confusion of gaining knowledge, rather than certainty. This is significant for this project, as the qualitative nature and the involvement of the participants meant that they were questioning their own 'knowledge' rather than measuring certainty, which means from an ontological and epistemological perspective, we can accept their knowledge as 'their truth' (which will be discussed further in Chapter Three). In addition, although I can appreciate the benefits and placement of using quantitative

data in a study, for *this* research, it is the narrative, individual journeys that are of paramount importance and the notion of forming collective views is secondary to the individual journeys discussed.

Hulse and Owens (2017) recognised the developing body of research, conducted internationally, which indicated how process drama could be used as a tool for developing language learning, including work by Kao and O'Neill (1998), Liu (2002), Farmer (2005), Fleming (2006), Stinson and Winston (2011) and Giebert (2014). Process drama provides opportunities for learning through experiences and unscripted processes, rather than more controlled drama which could involve planned and prescribed role play and texts for a learner to 'act' through (Neelands, 1992). However, as Hulse and Owens (2017) noted, there is still little evidence to suggest that its use is routine within language teaching, which returns to issues identified earlier regarding discrepancies in teacher training, experiences and whole school support. The study took place over three consecutive cohorts of post-graduate Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students studying to teach secondary languages. Written reflections, observations and participant research papers were used to gather data, using the basis of 'naturally occurring' data (Hulse and Owens 2017: 6), as well as questionnaires, focus groups and interviews which took place during the stages of the action research to inform the next steps.

Hulse and Owens (2017) identified that a trainee teacher's success of using drama depended on many other contributing factors such as the individual's previous experiences and the support of the school in which the trainees were using the subject. The development of teacher identity (Trent, 2014) and training links provided between language learning and drama all contributed to process drama not necessarily being used frequently and/or successfully, depending on other external factors. In addition, drama was, once again, seen as an 'add on' into lesson planning as it was viewed as non-serious and fun (Bowell and Heap, 2010 and Hulse and Owens, 2017) and therefore was not considered important within initial lesson planning as other curriculum issues, related to be subject being taught (in this case, languages), superseded the importance

of including drama. This is not unsurprising yet, once again, shows the conflict between the perceived benefits of drama and its inconsistent inclusion. Hulse and Owens' research (2017) aligns well to my own study as they were keen not to pre-determine the outcome of their study, despite their personal interest in drama and its importance within teaching. They sought to obtain secondary trainee language teachers' views as to how they regarded the benefits of drama use within their teaching. In contrast, Hulse and Owens (2017) intended not to set out with a fully planned research design, instead they responded to the data as an action research project. The present research project has set out with a planned design however, the outcomes were not pre-determined and this study is not adopting an action research style methodology.

The undisputed consensus is that drama theorists acknowledge that it can help children develop socially (by developing confidence and communication skills), emotionally (through the development of sympathy and empathy skills) and academically (providing alternative ways of learning outside of the standard classroom environment), but is this something that teachers feel is of benefit to their pupils? Previous policy (DfES, 2003) stated that drama served a function as part of the primary curriculum and should be taught explicitly as part of the Speaking and Listening element of English and also cross-curricularly through topic work. However, there is a lack of research surrounding drama, particularly in primary education (Bowell and Heap, 2010) and how teachers view the placement of it in the curriculum. With the changes to the National Curriculum this still remains unclear (DfE, 2013).

In addition, despite the lack of research showing the benefits of drama to children in primary education, there is a body of research highlighting the anxieties and issues teachers face concerning the teaching of drama. In Scotland, the work of Wilson *et al* (2008) identified that more primary teachers than secondary teachers felt that they lacked the knowledge, skills and confidence in order to be able to use drama successfully in their teaching. The study used a sample of teachers, '...across 41 secondary schools and 79 primary schools in nine Scottish LEAs' (Wilson *et al* 2008:40). However, it should be noted that although both male and female teachers participated in the research, of

the 231 respondents from the questionnaire there were 134 respondents from the primary element of the cohort, all the participants were women (Wilson *et al* 2008:40). Therefore, it could be proposed that there could be inconsistencies in responses as both genders are not represented equally across both primary and secondary teachers which therefore could impact on the data. Focus group interviews were also used as a method of data collection in the study by Wilson *et al* (2008), therefore both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered from the research. The study identified different levels of confidence and experience between the primary and secondary teachers and highlighted the lack of research to promote the benefits of using drama in teaching. However, once again, a conflict was identified; the teachers could acknowledge the benefits of drama and had a willingness to use it, yet a lack of knowledge, support and research meant that the arts were not given the status that could be expected within the primary curriculum.

Dorothy Heathcote's *Mantle of the Expert Approach in Education* (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995) is still widely regarded as one of the most recognised approaches used in the field of drama in education (Quinn, 2008). Heathcote believed that using drama in education was a way of helping children make more sense of the world and in turn, ensure that all children became 'experts', by bringing their own body of information and experiences to their learning, being active participants and exploring the knowledge that they already had, not just in drama, but in other areas of the curriculum such as history, maths and science (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995). A vital element of a teacher's role in helping children to develop as 'experts' was that it was the teacher's responsibility to empower the children and 'to play a facilitating role (i.e., the teacher operates from *within* the dramatic art, not outside it)' (Heathcote and Bolton 1995: 4). From my own experiences, this would appear to be one of the main reasons as to why teachers shy away from using drama conventions in the classroom. I believe they would be happy to act as an external facilitator within a drama setting but may not feel comfortable working within the dramatic art, as Heathcote and Bolton suggested (1995).

An alternative way of using drama in education, particularly in primary education, where the teacher can act more as a facilitator, rather than a participant themselves, would be through the use of drama games, rather than a more immersive 'mantle of the expert' approach. There is an extensive range of teacher resources available giving teachers a wealth of ideas and suggestions of games and activities, based on, and including drama concepts, to use in the primary classroom (Fleming, 1997). Baldwin (2009) identified that drama games can be used as a successful method of 'randomly' mixing children up, rather than specifying or implying a particular issue. Indeed, drama games can be also used as a successful starting point to settle and relax a group before moving into another activity. Fleming (1997) also identified that it is not specifically the ideas that are used in drama, but how they are initiated and developed.

Drama teachers and academics have viewed teaching as a type of performance, and have drawn comparisons between actors playing a part and a teacher working 'in role' (Fleming, 1997). Despite this, many teachers fail to see the connection between becoming a character 'in role' in front of the children, and their daily teaching practice. Instead, the notion of teachers being asked to act in the classroom has been identified to cause anxiety amongst some teachers. Abbott (2014) indicated that research had taken place to suggest that some trainee teachers had concerns about teaching the arts subjects due to the perceived connection between the arts and performance (Hennessy *et al*, 2001). Wright (1999) identified this as 'drama anxiety' which was identified as 'performance anxiety... feelings of fear, apprehension, lack of control over the situation and reticence' (Wright, 1999: 227). From my own experience, although not being expressed in this way, I would agree that the strong notion of drama being connected with performance greatly influences teachers' decisions about whether to use drama within their teaching; they do not want to 'act' in front of the children and potentially in front of other colleagues. However, this is viewed in a completely different way to a teacher being 'in role' in front of the children. Teachers seemed happier with this concept even though they may well be frequently 'acting' in front of the children when, for example, modelling correct responses or behaviour, and being their best 'teacher-self'.



In addition to personal insecurities and anxieties about performing in the classroom, research also suggests (Downing, Johnson, and Kaur, 2003; Neelands, 2008) that timetable pressures, a packed curriculum and potentially a lack of teacher confidence and subject knowledge, mean that primary drama lessons are limited and often only (and not necessarily frequently) taught through a cross-curricular setting. This could also certainly apply to other subjects in the curriculum such as when teachers' express anxieties within, for example, maths, science or computing, where they may lack confidence, knowledge and experience. However, the impact of the hierarchy of curriculum subjects (Christie and Martin, 2007), means that although anxieties exist, their position as compulsory named subjects within the curriculum means that teachers necessarily have to overcome their insecurities and trepidations and teach these subjects, despite their possible reservations. Other recognised pressures within the primary curriculum mean that, as drama does not hold its own curriculum position as a discrete subject within Key Stages One and Two, it therefore does not hold the curriculum position that it arguably deserves. In addition, the diverse training opportunities and experiences during ITT, and varying ways in which drama can be used within a schools' curriculum, all contribute to the argument that it remains unlikely that drama will be used as a discrete subject in primary schools. Even if it is offered cross-curricularly, other issues may contribute to its devalued position.

To further contribute to the argument explaining why teachers may shy away from using drama techniques in the classroom, we once again return to the issues associated with the word itself. In the research paper entitled *Drama is Not a Dirty Word*, Howell and Heap (2010) highlighted that there is still a lack of research surrounding drama in teaching, particularly in drama in education and how teachers viewed its placement and importance in the curriculum. This critical article also investigated why there seemed to be some ambivalent issues concerning drama teaching. In order to ascertain why drama continues to hold such a difficult position, the article focused particularly on the reasons why some teachers and academics appear to be reluctant or hesitant to use it as a teaching and learning tool and recognise its kudos in educational research and academics. It discussed drama in terms of its place in education and educational

research and identified that drama in primary education has an ambiguous and awkward position.

As drama lessons and academic research, and drama education, could be viewed as potentially 'non-serious and playful' (Bowell and Heap, 2010: 580), the benefits and advantages of using drama in lessons and the subsequent research required to justify this position, may be undervalued or overlooked due to its informal nature, which is, in turn, the very rationale and importance of its existence. This could also be reflected in drama research and could provide reasons why drama may not be taken as seriously as other research areas as identified by Bowell and Heap (2010) and Neelands (2008). However, the potential for drama education as a research methodology as well as a research topic, should be taken more seriously in terms of the potential it could provide in allowing for the analysis of data and processing meaning (Norris, 2010). The ability to process meaning could, in fact, also significantly link to the ways in which drama can be used as a teaching tool in other curriculum areas (as discussed previously from page 21 onwards).

Other issues in the teaching of drama and the use of drama techniques have continued to cause barriers which prevent it from being used widely as a teaching tool. These include the perception of 'proof' and evidence of work produced, which can also be impacted by other pressures on the primary curriculum, including time and timetable pressures or restrictions (Royka, 2002). Teacher confidence, including lack of training and/or experience may also mean that teachers are reluctant to use drama as part of their day-to day teaching (Hennessey *et al*, 2001; Royka, 2002).

Despite the ongoing interventions previously mentioned and the advice given from Arts Council England in 2003, Bowell and Heap (2010) continued to raise the on-going issues of drama in education and it is still an issue that has not been resolved. They suggested more primary research and an ambition, potentially a requirement, to support colleagues in order to share findings and to support teachers in the teaching of drama in primary education. This could potentially bring a clearer insight into the perception

of drama in education and therefore develop teachers' awareness, ability and confidence in teaching dramatic conventions and skills (Wales 2009; Özmen, 2011).

I feel that Quinn's article *Beyond the Orchard Wall: Learning through drama in the primary school* (2008), perfectly illustrates the barriers that teachers associate with the use of drama in the classroom, using the analogy of an orchard wall. The research conducted by Quinn was initiated by the question, what do children actually learn in drama? Quinn suggested that this question would not be asked of other curriculum subjects as the outcome of learning is apparent and can be quantified and measured. This is not as easy to quantify within drama used in primary education, especially, as Quinn identified that the learning was taking place throughout the process. Quinn equated the engagement of a drama activity with primary school-aged children to the 'experience of the "pilfered pleasure" when one tastes the stolen fruit from the orchard' (Quinn, 2008: 252). The possibilities within educational drama are vast and are not confined by barriers (Quinn, 2008; Baldwin, 2009 and Dickenson *et al*, 2006). Quinn suggested that teachers needed to climb down from the orchard wall, from where they may be appreciating the enticement of drama and experience the full opportunities that drama has to offer.

However, I would like to suggest an alternative viewpoint to Quinn's vision, that teachers may feel enticed by the prospect of using drama. I would suggest that some teachers can recognise and discuss the benefits of drama and can understand its value within their teaching. I would argue that for some teachers, their own personal insecurities, potentially through lack of training, previous negative experiences or simply lack of confidence in their subject knowledge, would mean that they would quite happily remain sitting on the orchard wall, admiring the virtues of drama from afar, but not actually wanting to participate in the journey themselves.

This is where I have identified an area for my own research, investigating whether a form of CPD can challenge this perception and encourage trained teachers to change their existing relationship with drama and climb down from Quinn's (2008) orchard wall

with renewed confidence. If primary teachers continue to lack subject knowledge in drama and the ITT provision for trainee teachers remains irregular and insufficient, there will continue to be a lack of role models in school who can help to break down the drama barrier.

### ***The Role of CPD in Changing Teachers' use of Drama in the Classroom***

Kennedy (2005) used both UK-based and international sources to understand, summarise and categorise the key features of the nine main models for CPD training in education. The main features of these models are summarised in the following pages in order to ascertain the most appropriate CPD model for my research.

Kennedy (2005) emphasised that, although the key characteristics of each of the models could be split into main categories, they certainly do not stand alone; the following provides the dominant characteristics of each model. However, although Kennedy's definitions (2005) are now listed and defined below as separate entities, the different aspects of CPD can be blended and their features mixed to provide a hybrid CPD model.

*Training* is a widely recognised term and is used far beyond the CPD associated solely with education. However, Kelly & McDiarmid (2002) stated that training has arguably been the dominant form of CPD for teachers. It supports a skills-based approach and teachers have the opportunity to update their skills so that they can demonstrate their competence. Generally, training sessions are 'delivered' by an 'expert', with an agenda determined by the deliverer, with the participant placed in a passive role. Training is also commonly delivered off-site and is often subject to criticism about its lack of connection to the current classroom context in which participants work. Kennedy's (2005) main issue with this model was that it is powerful in maintaining a narrow view of educational opportunities and the training often overshadows the need and opportunity for teachers to be proactive in identifying and addressing their own development needs. This raised potentially important aspects, when considering the development of my own CPD, as the participants needed to be active, and although in

one sense were developing their skills, it was a change of perception that was necessary, not the acquisition of new skills.

*Award-Bearing* usually relies on, or emphasises, the completion of award-bearing programmes of study which is usually validated by universities. This external validation can be viewed as a mark of quality assurance, but equally can be viewed as the exercise of control by the validating and/or funding bodies and therefore may have an alternative agenda. This would certainly not have been suitable for this research, as the changes in attitudes needed to be organic and potentially long-lasting, rather than for a specific award or determined outcome.

*Deficit* CPD can be specifically designed to address a specific, perceived deficit in teacher performance or development and may well be based within performance management. This requires someone to be in charge of evaluating and managing change in teacher performance, and this includes, where necessary, attempting to remedy perceived weaknesses in individual teacher performance. This may not always be clear, as a perceived weakness, as it may also be caused by larger issues such as school management and structure (Rhodes and Beneicke, 2003). Once again, although the lack of drama use in schools could be described as a 'deficit', the change in teachers' use needed to be recognised by the teachers themselves and the change instigated by them. Identifying the use of drama as a deficit could have influenced the participants' responses in causing them to feel as though they 'had' to change their use of drama, rather than 'wanting' to change their use of drama in their teaching as a result of their newly formed thinking.

The *Cascade* model involves individual teachers attending 'training events' and then cascading or disseminating the information to colleagues. It is commonly employed in situations where resources are limited. A potential issue with the cascade model is that the passing on of information can often be focused on skills and knowledge but rarely on values (Solomon & Tresman, 1999). Nieto (2003) argued that teacher education should shift from a focus of 'what' and 'how' to also consider 'why'. This would therefore

not have been suitable as a CPD model for this research, as I did not wish to merely disseminate information, I was aiming rather to promote thinking by giving the staff a new tool which enabled them to consider their existing relationship with drama and in turn, develop that relationship, not only within discrete drama, but also within their wider teaching role.

Kennedy (2005) argued that there was a considerable amount of critique of the '*Standards-based*' model and it can either simplify teaching or limit progress. The emphasis is strongly focused on 'professional actions', which are seen as the way of demonstrating that the standard has been met. However, the consistent language adopted and scaffolding opportunities provided through the standard-based model does provide a common dialogue and may allow for clear professional development. Definite and direct CPD was not the sole purpose of this research so therefore, would not be appropriate.

The *Coaching and Mentoring* model covers a variety of CPD practices that are based on a range of philosophical premises. The main feature of this model is the importance of a one-to-one relationship, generally between two colleagues. Coaching is viewed as more skills-based and mentoring involves an element of professional relationships based around friendship and counselling, where one colleague would be more experienced than the other (Rhodes and Beneicke, 2002). In a similar comparison, coaching and mentoring and the community of practice models are similar, but in the latter it usually involves more than two people. Wenger (1998) highlights that this kind of learning has three main features: generating mutual engagement, understanding and refining and developing.

*Action Research* can be defined as 'the study of a social situation, involving the participants themselves as researchers, with a view to improving the quality of action within it' (Day, 1999: 34). It is suggested that action research can have a greater impact on practice when shared through communities of practice although this is not essential for the action research model (Burbank & Kauchack, 2003).

Finally, a *Transformative* model can include features of other CPD models. It is a combination of approaches and therefore it is not clearly definable itself, as it relies on a range of practices.

To summarise, having considered all of the potential CPD models from Kennedy's work (2005), although Kennedy's work cannot be considered as exhaustive, it is thoroughly extensive and therefore provided the useful basis for identifying the type of CPD for this research. This was considered as a transformative model, taking in aspects of action research (although not being an action research study), training as well as coaching and mentoring.

There are significant and on-going discussions currently taking place, concerning teacher CPD. In 2016, the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) suggested that good CPD should last at least two terms and therefore be an extended experience for teachers. Longer, extended CPD is usually considered to be more beneficial and follow up sessions, allowing for consolidation or support activities will reinforce key messages and therefore make the CPD a more valuable experience. CUREE stated that great CPD either develops pedagogic knowledge or subject knowledge, allowing staff to know their starting points and identify next steps. In addition, critical engagement is needed, including repeated opportunities to encounter, understand, respond to and reflect on new approaches and furthermore, give staff the time to put into practice what they have learned. They need to understand the ideas themselves, not just be told the processes.

CUREE also recommended that CPD should have a strong focus on pupil outcomes and/or the impact on student achievement (Cordingley, 2016). It must be relevant and in addition, reflect the day-to-day experiences and aspirations of staff. However, CPD can be voluntary or participants can be coerced; this does not necessarily impact on the outcome, providing that the CPD provides a positive and professional learning environment, with sufficient time for the participants to reflect. The opportunity to allow for built-in peer support, reinforced with new approaches, including the chance

to focus on what works well and what does not is also beneficial, especially the opportunity to experiment with new approaches.

In 2018, Walker et. al published an exploratory research document concerning early teacher CPD, which identified that productive CPD helps to deal with teacher stress and promotes a positive and supportive school culture. Wellcome (2018) also identified that subject specific CPD is much more effective than generic CPD, however, most CPD in primary teaching is either Mathematics or English based. It also highlighted that teachers need control over their own CPD and teachers in lower performing schools have less control over their CPD, rather than staff working in higher performing schools. In addition, pressures include cost, high levels of workload and a lack of expertise in more challenging schools (due to a higher staff turnover) mean that CPD may be inefficient or lacking in quality. Finally, the favoured approach to CPD would be a cascading learning model where staff are able to disseminate their knowledge.

The originality of this study is, in fact, that the structure of CPD contains different aspects; a transformative model. Taking place in a small school setting, in one case, delivered by an internal member of staff over a period of time, allowed time for the participants to internalise and reflect on the process which have all been clearly identified as models of successful CPD in recent research (CUREE, 2016; Wellcome, 2018). This opportunity is not often facilitated through other models of CPD for teachers, as the participant either has a period of time out of their work setting to participate in such CPD (often only a day), and they then return to their usual work setting the following day and therefore have little time to reflect on the impact of the CPD they have received. They may have opportunities to disseminate their learning to other staff (cascade model), however, once again, the period of time for processing and reflection is limited. The CPD in this study took place over a period of five weeks, of five short sessions (30-45 minutes). Therefore, the extended sessions (although short in nature), but taking place over a number of weeks, allowed for constant reflection (even if only in the background as it was to be revisited several times), discussion; both during



the formal CPD sessions and anecdotally amongst the staff at the other times of the school day.

In addition, there was a sense of 'shared experience' for all staff involved which again was critical for exploring different experiences and interpretations. The study sought to gain the true perceptions of the staff and in addition was intended to change the staff culture of the perception of drama as a shared experience, which would align with the whole-school approach as identified by Baldwin (2009) and Dickenson *et al* (2006).

An existing model of using drama as a means of helping trainee teachers to develop their identity was developed by Özmen (2011). Although designed for trainee teachers, and therefore designed as an element of teacher training, Özmen's model (2011) contains several elements of the CPD models as identified by Kennedy (2005). In this case, Özmen's model could be considered as training CPD for trainee teachers. However, I used an adaptation of Özmen's BEING model to generate a new and original form of CPD, using elements of his research design. I did not 'train' staff but rather asked the staff to question their own existing perceptions whilst also providing activities, experiences and reflection time, in order that their lived experience could be modified. In turn, I was aiming to change their use of drama.

### ***The BEING Model***

The BEING model is a concept designed and researched by Özmen (2011). One case study was designed to give three pre-service teachers active, acting training in order to enhance their teaching skills and increase their awareness in terms of their communication (both verbal and non-verbal), enthusiasm (Tauber and Mester, 1994), effective use of voice and body language (Tauber and Mester, 1994) and constructing strong 'teacher identities' (Hart, 2007) and the development of their 'teacher self'. In addition, Özmen (2011) highlighted that other variables could also be investigated in order to ascertain the value of acting method contributions for teacher education. It is suggested by Özmen (2011) that it could help to develop not only better communication

in teachers, but the very philosophical grounds of the profession and the shaping of teacher identity.

According to Kennedy's model for CPD (2005), Özmen's original model (2011), would seem to be based around a basic training model, without running the risk of it being too narrow, as the 'expert' (Özmen) was hoping that the model would have an all-encompassing influence on the trainees and their overall professional development.

The theoretical perspective of Özmen's (2011) model draws upon 'The Method', developed by Stanislavski, the way in which a performer submerges themselves into the true identity of a role (Stanislavski, 1949, 1972 and Travers, 1979). Method acting or 'The Method' requires an actor to fully immerse into the role they are creating, the performer must present themselves, not represent another (Morris, 2013). The central themes involve affective memory and making connections to a role by recalling experiences which must come from within. An inner realism connected to strong emotions allows a true sense of belief in a performance. It is important to note here, that during my research of drama in education, I did not encounter any references to Stanislavski's work, despite, knowing that amongst world-famous actors, it is a well-known term and is often used anecdotally and informally when people are 'getting into a role'. Therefore, I found Özmen's discussion of using 'The Method' to help facilitate and develop teacher identity of interest and a model through which to structure my research, despite having an alternative goal. However, I did consider whether the fact that 'The Method' is widely known as a term associated with drama, although perhaps not fully understood by those who have heard of it, may undermine the validity of Özmen's work and once again place research in drama education back in the position of not being taken seriously (Bowell and Heap, 2010).

Özmen (2011) noted that many texts were available that provided wide audience-based acting training or preparation for teaching. However, none of these specifically focused or maintained teachers' skills when considering their professional development, therefore Özmen (2011) developed his own universal style model related to the ideas

of Stanislavski; where a teacher must become the role they are playing, therefore 'being' the teacher; this is where his BEING training developed.

Özmen (2011) found parallels between teaching as a role in the same way that an actor would understand it. In both cases, emotional connection must be made. Özmen cited Hanning (1984) who, when working with pre-service teachers recognised that asking them to 'be themselves' in front of a class in the initial stages of their training was an unrealistic piece of advice to give, as the pre-service teachers had not yet developed their 'teacher-self'. Therefore, Özmen developed an acting course for pre-service teachers to help them to develop their own professional identity and recognise how the development of this could help them to recognise their role in front of the class by being aware of their use of voice as well as non-verbal communications. If a teacher can be viewed as acting or in role when they are in front of a class, this could be considered as drama. Moreover, if practising teachers are given this experience to help them realise that they are, in fact, using elements of acting and drama whenever they are teaching, perhaps their perception of the subject and their use of the subject in their teaching could be modified.

In his article, Özmen made no specific reference to where and how he sourced the drama activities. However, having now been in contact with Özmen directly (see email correspondence, Appendix 2, page 138), it appears that the activities were developed through two main areas. The first was Tauber and Mester's 'Acting Lessons for Teachers' (1994). The remaining tasks were developed by Özmen himself. They were completely original to the study and were critically evaluated and subsequently revised again after the pilot study by Özmen. It is unknown exactly what Özmen's qualifications are in relation to designing drama activities, however, by using Tauber and Mester's text as a basis and the ideas involved around method acting, the research is grounded in two renowned areas of development and theory.

The BEING Model, consists of five main elements around the acronym:

- Believe - emotional preparation
- Experiment – use of voice, body movement and sensory awareness
- Invent – changing of body language, voice and senses
- Navigate – establishment of new thinking
- Generate – construction/development of teacher identity

The original CPD model adopts a living theory approach where the participants had to hold a mirror up to their own experiences and perceptions in order to challenge their existing knowledge, all of which are associated with a living theory methodology.

### ***Lived Experience and Living Theory***

In educational research, the broad term ‘identity’ holds multiple definitions in terms of anthropology, social sciences and psychology (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the broad term ‘identity’ is used to focus specifically on an aspect of ‘teacher identity’, defined as the way in which teachers view their socially constructed selves and more specifically, for this study, when they are using drama in the classroom (Troman, 2008; Wales, 2009). In addition, ‘teacher identity’ can also describe the way in which teachers develop their use of drama in the classroom through their personal views, previous or current experiences and perceptions of the subject (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Özmen, 2011). This can be defined more specifically by using teachers’ lived experiences or living theory of drama in primary education.

The initial research design focused specifically on teacher identity. However, after further exploration and the development of the research, the data provided from research conducted in the pilot study influenced my change in emphasis from teacher identity to living theory. Teacher identity covers so many different aspects of one’s self and therefore, felt too vast and complex to share and investigate with the participants. Lived experience provided a more specific and focused lens through which the participants could specifically concentrate on drama; drawing from their past personal experiences, their teacher training experiences and their subsequent experiences as qualified teachers. Focusing specifically on drama’s lived experience served to define

teacher's perceptions and in turn develop the opportunity to assess whether the CPD had influenced their lived experience of drama; ontologically, it would be unrealistic to seek to measure whether CPD had modified a participants' identity. However, their perceptions, or changes in their perceptions of the subject, could be measured as 'truth' in this study (as discussed fully in Chapter Three).

Lived experience is an aspect of phenomenology meaning that a high level of 'thoughtfulness' is involved, including deep and critical thinking and using writing as part of the research. This occurs when a participant remembers an event or experience and unpicks it, for example remembering going for a bike ride with a friend. One may reflect on the events and deconstruct what happened, how they were feeling and what was said. By writing the events, thoughts and feelings down one creates a text which is a version of actions and experiences (Van Manen, 1990).

Whitehead (2008) states that lived experience involves reflecting on what things were like at the time. It involves the participant asking themselves how things seemed at the time an event happened and reflecting on the impact of this experience on one's self. Whitehead identifies these experiences as highly significant to the participant as they are first-hand, highly personal and relevant to the individual. He states that these first-hand experiences play a greater, more decisive part in our lives than academic theory (Whitehead, 2012).

Akinbode's article, *Teaching as Lived Experience: The value of exploring the hidden and emotional side of teaching through reflective narratives* (2012) discussed a process of self-inquiry that took the form of a narrative journey of transformation. The process included reflective practice deepened by focusing on the lived experience of being a teacher. The methodology involved the engagement of the six phases of Johns' dialogical movement (2010). Akinbode noted that this methodology is closely related to self-study research and her approach might make a valuable contribution to this form of inquiry because its objectives focus on deepening reflection; framing and reframing ideas and effecting change and transformation.

Akinbode (2012) cites the extensive literature based on reflection and generates interesting discussion about the different types of reflection, including Schön's work on reflective practice (1987, 1991) and the difference between reflection-on-action (looking from the outside) and reflection-in-action (looking from the inside). Van Manen (1995) and Johansson and Kroksmark (2004) also contribute to this discussion as they state that reflection-in-action may be difficult to engage with, or problematic for practising teachers and would be more suited and related to initiation-on-action. These arguments demonstrate the difficulty in articulating the process of teacher reflection and would suggest that extended opportunity to reflect may allow teachers the opportunities to engage more fully with reflection in action. Akinbode (2012) used Johns' (2010) six phases of dialogue in order to construct the process of teacher reflection; moving from dialogue with oneself, along with one's background, moving into other sources, guides, emerging texts and finally in conversation with others (Johns, 2010: 28). This aligns very well to the ideas of exploring living theory; the opportunity for extended reflection within this research project.

This first phase involves creating a dialogue with oneself, moving into constructing narratives around the insights gained from initial written reflections, as well as dialogue with others within an established community of inquiry for guided reflection (Johns, 2010 cited in Akinbode, 2012). Through this process, it was hoped that the insights developed would inform practice and transform experience as demonstrated in Akinbode's responses to her narrative accounts. Akinbode also draws on the work of Berry (2009), supporting the articulation of personal understanding and Bohm (1996), who discussed the purpose and importance of dialogue with self and others as essential by co-creating meaning. This in turn relates to Mezirow's (1990) notion of reframing reflection and the study of self (Hamilton and Pinnegar, 1998).

A narrative or story approach (Moon, 2010) may help to access insights into experiences that may not be observed through more abstract approaches (Bolton, 2010), and it can also help to promote change. It is rather about communicating ideas, not necessarily

aiming for an accurate representation of events (Ellis & Bochner, 1996; Mattingly 1998). This aligns strongly to the notion of the living theory methodology adopted in this study.

Lived experience is a result of the past and how it will develop into the future. Dewey (1934) states that this experience is constantly changing, past experience will have an impact on the future. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) relate this to living life as narrative and being able to articulate previous experiences in order to process them fully, reflect on their impact and consider their implications for the future.

In addition, it is important to consider some of the emotional aspects of the experiences of teaching and learning and the importance of a teacher focusing on subjective response in order to gain awareness of self in practice. Akinbode (2012) also identified the strong link between the personal and professional self and how they are inextricably linked. However, emotional aspects are rarely discussed in educational research, even though it is central to development and impacts considerably on practice. In Akinbode's study, the process of reflection revealed some uncomfortable hidden aspects of experience; where the participants became aware of areas of themselves that they were perhaps less comfortable with, an awareness of which was considered important in developing more effective, reflective and ethical practice.

Akinbode concluded her article with a discussion about deepening reflection; a willingness to go 'through the mirror' (Bolton, 2010) and look at what is reflected back. This again involved connection on an emotional level and therefore cannot be objective. Akinbode stated that 'acknowledging one's own subjectivity results in one becoming aware of the emotional response, and enables the choice of action that is more appropriately objective'. (2012: 71). Potential drawbacks to these approaches could involve the participants not liking what they see when they look through the mirror and therefore potentially developing a negative new living theory of themselves or their experience. Akinbode (2012) used lived experience as an approach to enable teachers to critically evaluate and explore their teaching, involving a high level of reflective practice and therefore, despite being a critical experience, this should allow

opportunities for growth and development. Knowing that some teachers already have negative or indifferent lived experiences of drama in education, this existence needs to be challenged. Therefore, lived experience seems the most suitable mechanism for this study as it will allow teachers to deeply evaluate their previous lived experience of drama and use writing (narrative diaries) and subsequent focus groups, a method of data collection recommended by Van Manen (1990), in order to evaluate their perceptions of drama. The full methodology and methods used will now be discussed in the following chapter.



### **Chapter Three: Methodology and Methods**

This chapter explains the rationale for the research project undertaken as part of this thesis including: methodology, methods, ethical considerations and participants, as well as the logistical arrangements of the study. It begins with an exploration of the ontological and epistemological position of the research, shaping the understanding and rationale for the constitution of knowledge and an account of how it is acquired.

#### ***Ontological and Epistemological Position***

Ontology is derived from the nature of being (Cohen *et al*, 2011). In the case of this study concerning drama, it involved the framing of the study and understanding and defining the classifications of the classes and shaping the understanding of what constitutes drama (Arthur *et al*, 2012). Returning to the discussions from Chapter One and Chapter Two, the term 'drama' is considerably broad and complex (Fleming, 2000) and the word itself will have different connotations and associations to different individuals depending on their lived experience of the word and subject. However, for the purposes of this study and from an ontological perspective, drama is defined as any practical activity developing physical skills such as body movement and voice, involving verbal and non-verbal expression or communication. It can also be defined through activities which work to develop social and emotional awareness, interaction and creative thinking.

For example, a teacher sitting with their class reading a story in which they are bringing the characters and the experience of the story to life either by giving voices to the characters, changing the volume of their voice for impact (shouting, whispering) or using their body to dramatise the characters as they are reading; this would constitute the use of drama. This was in fact, one of the activities during the N-phase (N-phase, navigate; one of the five phases of Özmen's (2011) BEING model), which is explained fully later on in this chapter, where the participants had to read a story aloud and experiment with their voices in order to change the way in which the audience might perceive the character they were exploring. Whereas, reading a text to a class with no intentional choice of expression or body movement would not be classed as drama.

Reading the story with expression and characterisation is bringing the story to life and therefore the characterisation creates a performance for the children. In addition, changing voice or body movement helps to aid understanding and the creation of characters could be recognised and identified by the audience.

In terms of epistemology (the nature of knowledge and what it is possible to know), it was important to consider what types of evidence would be considered as valid and could be accepted as part of the study. The research (conducted in this study) adopted a qualitative and interpretivist paradigm which is focused on the understanding of the world from the participants' perspective and therefore was subjective in nature (Creswell, 2013). There is a potential tension here between interpretivist and post-positivist approaches. However, interpretivist approaches focus on more qualitative data, as opposed to more quantitative approaches when concerning post-positivist methodologies. For the purpose of this study, individual journeys and lived experiences were of paramount importance, which would have been difficult to quantify in such a manner that would have contributed to the overall story of the study. It was completely concerned with the thoughts and feelings of the individuals involved and was dependent on an honest and open relationship between myself as the researcher and the participants, who were also my colleagues. For the nature of this study, particularly where lived experience and personal reflection was critical for the data collection, it was vital to give authenticity to each of the individuals involved.

Taking a qualitative approach meant that narrative journeys and evidence given by the participants could be considered valid knowledge, whereas in a more quantitative study, terms such as validity and reliability would be additionally associated and measured using statistics to prove a certain hypothesis (Arthur *et al*, 2012). However, with the nature of this study, participant responses could be classed as evidence and seen as 'truth'. For example, if a teacher reflected as a result of the study that they had changed their use of drama within their classroom and considered that they were doing more drama teaching, this can be accepted as truth and used as evidence in the study. The evidence to support this comment was that the teacher was reporting this knowledge

to myself as the researcher and trusting the responses given as I knew the participants personally. If the study was taking a more quantitative approach, quantitative data to provide evidence for the statement would need to be gathered such as;

Where is the evidence for the increased use of drama?

How many minutes did you use drama in your classroom before the study?

How any minutes have you used drama since the training?

Qualitative approaches value lived human experience, embrace complexity and ambiguity and therefore are suited to the purposes and themes of this study (Silverman, 2010 & Braun and Clarke, 2013). For the qualitative nature and structure of the study, being designed to give an honest reflection, which required extended time to evaluate and consider any change in lived experience, the statistical information was not required as it did not provide any additional evidence to support the knowledge provided from the participants that could be considered as 'their' truth. Asking the participants to formally measure their experiences with drama could have, in fact, invalidated the data as the subjects may have felt the need to over-emphasise their relationship with drama rather than share their qualitative, honest reflections.

The nature and value of evidence is teacher testimony (not student or pupil testimony), and I can believe and trust that the responses are true due to the way that the project was designed and the way in which the participants were introduced to the ethical importance and rationale for the research. Giving voice and authenticity to the people participating provided opportunity for extended professional conversations as well as personal and professional reflection. The study was not designed as an evaluation of Özmen's suggested drama games, but as a way of using his research as a frame for the conceptual framework, to discuss teachers' lived experience of drama and whether this could be influence by extended CPD, using drama games, provided and adapted by Özmen's research and in addition using Tauber and Mester's text, *Acting Lessons for Teachers* (1994). Of course, it is still possible that the participants could have been dishonest, some may have made up their reflections to state what they felt I wanted to

hear. However, every possible care was taken in the explanation of delivery of the CPD to ensure the participants knew that only honest and genuine responses were necessary and that absolute truthfulness was essential to the research.

The fundamental building blocks of the research, developed through the conceptual framework, was developed through the participants and their narrative reflections. Their living theory originated from their personal knowledge, experiences and their reality, not an existing theory or framework. The outcome of the research was developed organically with the participants being integral in recognising and analysing how the CPD training had changed or influenced their perception of themselves, their personal and professional identity (their lived experiences) and finally their thoughts and use of drama in primary education. Özmen's work (2011) was an appropriate framework to construct, develop and conduct the CPD and then to help evaluate and record the changes in feelings.

### ***Pilot Phase and Methodology Development***

Based on the initial phases of the pilot study and the feedback from the presentation of the research project, an evaluative case study methodology was adopted as the most appropriate approach. Participant-led reflective diaries were utilised as a focus for conversation in two subsequent semi-structured focus groups as a method of data collection. The data analysis consisted of a journalist style approach (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Key themes identified through open coding and content analysis (Creswell, 2013), focused on individual and group comments to ascertain how the participants interpreted and made sense of their lived experiences and whether it had had an effect, either positively or negatively, on their existing perception of drama (Wales, 2009; Özmen, 2011).

### ***Case Study***

This research adopted a case study approach similar to that used by Özmen (2011). With myself as the researcher being an insider within the research setting, I was therefore acting as a practitioner researcher and my position and potential influence within the study will be explored later in the chapter.

Cohen *et al* (2011) identified the case study methodology as one yielding rich detail, narrative events, and as a way of blending description with analysis. An evaluative, qualitative study allows participants to share and compare honest experiences and in turn 'get under the skin' of real situations and to gain depth of discussion (Stake, 1995; Gillham, 2000; Thomas, 2011; Yin, 2014). This was well suited to the current study as personal perceptions and experiences were required in order to provide examples of how perceptions were influenced or adapted with a very deep level of self-reflection and narrative inquiry (Van Manen, 1990; Whitehead, 2004 and Akinbode, 2013). This aligns well to the ontological and epistemological nature of the study, where the truth of knowledge could be obtained through qualitative, participant responses, rather than quantitative data.

In addition, a key characteristic of a case study is that it is somehow bound by additional variables such as geography and people. In this case, the study is bound by geography (East Midlands) and contextual setting (a single independent school). It is an evaluative case study which takes the 'case' into consideration, acknowledges changes to conditions over time and relies on multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2014); in this study, CPD training, tasks, reflective diaries and focus groups. In this research, the 'case' is the participants who provide the original and qualitative evidence. Although the case study took place in a single school, the school itself was not the case as this would have meant that the school's policies would need to be considered.

Given the small-scale nature of a case study, the importance of trustworthiness must be highlighted (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). This could be viewed as complicated because case studies are unique situations and therefore the 'case' must be carefully considered in order that the correct information is gathered. Yin (2004) encouraged the researcher to clearly understand and identify the theoretical perspectives of ideas to be examined in the case study, which may be concrete or abstract. In terms of this study, both concrete and abstract terms were investigated as the 'case' itself involved drama (a more concrete aspect although has been identified in Chapters One and Two as having multiple definitions) and the participants' lived experience (an abstract aspect

with multiple dimensions and meanings as discussed earlier, as it forms part of teacher identity).

Gillham (2000) highlighted that a case study methodology enables the researcher to 'find out what really happens' (2000:11) and to view situations from the inside out (Van Manen, 1990). This is particularly important in this study, which has taken place within my own work-setting, with colleagues as subjects and co-researchers, as they were required to evaluate and comment on initial stages of analysis. Therefore, researcher influence, the complex position, balance of being an insider/outsider (Mercer, 2007), bias (Creswell, 2013) and reflexive issues (Lipp, 2007), formed a key aspect of the research design. Justification for the methods selected was considered paramount in order that researcher influence on the data collected could be assessed and therefore minimised (Gillham, 2000; Yin, 2004, 2014; Lipp, 2007). As Thomas identified, a researcher is 'intimately connected' (2011:3) to their case study and therefore researcher bias must be minimised and acknowledged in order to validate the data and make the study more reliable. For the purposes of this study, the methods were specifically selected in order that my influence and bias could not be connected with the data as far as was possible within the usual constraints of research design (see further detail within the methods section of this chapter, from page 60).

The limitations of a case study methodology must be concerned with the fact that they investigate a 'case'. This means that results will not be representative of a wider research study, the implication being that one cannot generalise from a case study (Gillham, 2000; Thomas, 2011). In addition, the results of a case study are more difficult to compare and contrast with other situations, and therefore verify, due to the very nature of the 'case'. However, as a researching professional, one's main focus is perhaps development of own practice so limited generalisability is not necessarily as problematic as with other research paradigms.

## ***Ethics***

The Bishop Grosseteste University Research Ethics Policy (2013) and British Education Research Association (BERA) guidelines (2011) clearly outlined the steps that must be taken when conducting research studies. The researcher not only has a responsibility to adhere to ethical guidelines for the participants, but also with respect to the sponsors of the research, in this case, my work setting and to the educational research community as a whole (Oliver, 2010).

For the purposes of this study, ethical consideration must be given to:

- The teacher participants – ethical consent was gained (see an example of the consent form, Appendix 1, page 136);
- The principal researcher – ethical guidelines adhered to in order to protect the participants, researcher and validity of the study. I hold a full CRB/DBS clearance certificate;
- The originator of the BEING model, Kemal Sinan Özmen – contact was made with Özmen, the nature of the project was explained, full reference is made to Özmen's original work and contact maintained throughout the project (See email correspondence, Appendix 2, page 138);
- Bishop Grosseteste University – The BG ethical guidelines were adhered to in order to protect all parties;
- The staff, parents and pupils of the school – formal consent was gained from key management personnel, participants and feedback disseminated to the school community, as appropriate;
- Pupils and parents were not directly involved in the research and did not participate in the study, however, due to the duty of care of the staff involved, the pupils and parents must be considered, as the research, if ethically inappropriate could have had an impact on the members of staff involved and therefore indirectly affected the pupils or parents of the school.

In terms of access and authorisation, the project was located within my own work setting. Therefore, the main ethical concerns involved ensuring that informed consent

had been obtained from all relevant parties, in this case, the Head of the whole School and the Head of the Primary Department where the individual participants were employed gave verbal consent to the project taking place. However, formal consent was also obtained from the staff participants using the 'Research Information Sheet' and 'Research Consent Form' (see Appendix 1, page 136). In addition, the project was authorised through the ethical submission and response to the pilot thesis proposal. No alterations to the project were made.

The teaching staff members of the primary department of the research setting were all invited to participate in the research as they represented a range of variables including age, gender, key stage, experiences and subject interest. This ensured that a range of different perceptions were explored. All members of staff had the option to opt out at any stage of the data collection. This was in order to give staff an opportunity for selection, inclusion and the right to withdrawal. Staff members with high levels of drama training were also invited to take part in the training if they wished.

Informed consent was formally obtained prior to the research commencing. The consent also made participants aware of how their responses were used in the study and how their responses might potentially be used in journals and papers written subsequently. The participants were also made aware that they had the right to withdraw from the training and focus groups at any point during the data collection period. I maintained an accurate account of the research and was mindful of plagiarism and accurate referencing as detailed in the BG Referencing Handbook. I also ensured that the data and subsequent findings remained accurate and were not distorted or falsified. This included seeking additional support and confirmation of themes from another source during the analysis stages. Discussing data with my supervisors and other educational professionals helped to refine the analysis. At all times, I remained conscious of the ethical and moral implications of discussing personal data and ensured that anonymity was maintained.



In terms of confidentiality and anonymity, the ethical issues surrounding this study concerned the researcher being open and honest with the participants, making sure that they were aware of what they were taking part in and why, without contributing any researcher bias into the discussion. At the same time, I aimed to maintain the validity of the data by explaining to the staff that they needed to be honest with their opinions and that their comments would be anonymous. As the research was taking place within my own work setting, and therefore at some stage is likely to be shared with the staff (due to the school sponsoring and support of the research), great care has been taken to protect the anonymity of the participants. Names have been changed in transcripts and responses and no information relating to specific members of staff are included in the research in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality to the participants. Where particular comments were felt to be useful or specifically relevant to the study and were of a more personal nature, in terms of identity, I obtained consent from the participant for it to be used in the study. Occasionally, one or two members of staff have become particularly identifiable due to their deeply personal responses and the examples they gave to illustrate a specific point or reflection. In these cases, consent has been specifically obtained from the participants and they were happy to allow their anonymity to potentially be compromised and their identity potentially revealed to colleagues. However, this was felt to be less problematic as many of the personal reflections were shared by the participants in the focus group conversations.

After data collection, it was important that all data was stored in an appropriate and ethical manner in accordance with data protection and security. Transcripts and documents were stored in an organised fashion in order that data could be easily accessed. While every effort was made to ensure anonymity, the work is being presented as a narrative thesis from which identities could later be established. This effect was therefore minimised in the documents by changing names, removing specific personal information and by password protection of the original files.

In the case of this research, I also had a responsibility to my colleagues to ensure that no harm (physically or emotionally) came to the participants (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992)

and therefore health and safety was considered of paramount importance. By working with drama activities of both a physical and emotional nature, I had a responsibility to ensure that the welfare of the participants was maintained throughout the project. The activities took place in an appropriate space with furniture out of the way. The participants were also made aware of appropriate clothing and I explained each task/game clearly so that the participants had a choice to take part at each stage and that any potential health and safety concerns/issues were made clear to the participants. In addition, if at any point the researcher considered that the participants may have caused physical harm or injury to themselves or others, then the task or activity would have been halted. The potential for emotional discomfort was also considered. Due to being acutely aware of some of the personal anxieties about participating in the research, there could have been emotional risk involved for participants. I was able to mitigate against this because of my professional skills and knowledge of the group and was prepared to modify or halt any activity if this became an issue. None of the drama activities or games were curtailed due to health, safety or emotional concerns, but I had considered potential issues and these were included as part of the planning to avoid personal injury, inappropriate contact between the participants or emotional discomfort.

Considering integrity of knowledge, publication and dissemination, potential ethical issues which may arise during the process of this research centre mainly on the issue that the researcher has multiple identities as part of the study. The first is the role of researcher, the second as a teacher (working in one's own setting and delivering the adapted BEING model course) and the third as the colleague of the participants. Mohr (1996) highlighted that teacher researchers have a dual responsibility to their students. In addition, as the research took place inside the school setting, the researcher must ensure anonymity of the participants throughout the research process and not discuss any of its contents informally, revealing the responses of the reflective diaries, especially as the research is likely to be shared amongst the school community (Oliver, 2010).

### ***Sample/Participants***

For this study, all teaching staff in the primary department were invited to participate in the study. One member of staff has extensive experience of drama in primary education and therefore, this member of staff was invited to evaluate the success of the BEING model during the subsequent phases of the study to provide an additional 'expert' viewpoint.

The following table (table 3.1), identifies each of the participants (with names changed to protect anonymity and their relevant teaching stage and level of experience.

**Table 3.1 Participant Profiles**

<b>Participant Name (changed for anonymity)</b>	<b>Teaching Stage &amp; Experience</b>
Claire	EYFS specialist, experienced teacher
Daisy	EYFS teacher, 3-4 years' experience
Jan	KS1 teacher, experienced teacher
Amie	KS1 teacher, experienced teacher
Maddie	KS1 teacher, 1-2 years' experience
Alice	KS1 teacher, experienced teacher
Kathryn	KS2 teacher, experienced teacher
Charles	KS2 teacher, experienced teacher
Tom	KS2 teacher, 1-2 years' experience
Laura	KS2 teacher, experienced teacher
Harriet	KS2 teacher, experienced teacher
Jessica	KS2 teacher, experienced teacher, SLT
Julia	KS2 teacher, experienced teacher, SLT
Maggie	KS1/KS2 experienced teacher, SLT

For the purposes of anonymity, names have been changed, but still reveal participant gender. Teaching age ranges have been identified within the key stages and levels of experience have been split into three sections; between one and two years, three and four years, and experienced teachers (for the purposes of this study) who are considered as those who have been teaching for five years or longer. These details have been included as some of the participants refer to their key stage and experience specifically and consider their teaching experience with particular age groups vital to

their existing experience of drama. Although this may allow their anonymity to be compromised, this has been acknowledged by the participants and has been minimised through the name changes and sensitive inclusion of the data. Further detail about the participants, considered relevant to the study, are included as part of the analysis. The personal lived experiences helped to explain the participants' thoughts and feelings towards the project and are therefore considered to be of paramount importance to the living theory and narrative journeys of the CPD training and reflection process.

### ***The BEING Model***

This study used an adaptation of Özmen's BEING Model (2011) to test whether in-service style CPD training could influence teachers' lived experiences of drama. The pilot study of this research evaluated the effectiveness of the adapted model on primary teachers within my own setting. By using an existing training model developed for pre-service teachers in Turkey (Özmen, 2011), the pilot highlighted the importance of understanding how the model of Özmen's work was structured and how Özmen's work in Turkey could be modelled on the CPD literature in terms of the UK. This study sourced acting games and activities from established drama experts. The most significant text for this study is by Tauber and Mester (1994) as this was a focus for many of Özmen's activities and so maintains consistency between the studies. In addition, some of Özmen's original activities were similar to many games associated with common acting practice. Özmen's activities were more focused on using drama as a means for teachers to reflect on their professional self or become more aware of their character traits as a teacher and therefore, these activities were selected as they prompted useful points for reflection and discussion in the focus groups. Participants were not made aware of which activities were generic and which were created by Özmen, they were integrated within the activities phases. The full list of activities used can be found in Appendix 4, page 144, with Özmen's activities identified.

For the purposes of this research, the BEING model has been piloted and adapted for experienced primary teachers working in England. It used specific acting training tasks, both general acting activities and those designed specifically for teachers. These

explored whether a teacher's existing perceptions could be modified. Therefore, instead of shaping a teacher's existing identity, the study sought to draw on and make participants more aware of their existing lived experience in order to see if there could be a shift in their perceptions of drama and how it was used in their teaching. An example of this could be increased confidence in using drama techniques in the classroom through heightened awareness, using voice development and non-verbal aspects such as gesture and body language.

Although Özmen's model and training scheme provided a very useful starting point for this study, it was necessary to adapt it for experienced teachers because;

- some activities were inappropriate for trained and practising teachers, rather than ITE; too immature, embarrassing and uncomfortable such as role play and recreating aspects of their teaching in front of an audience;
- the activities needed to be focused more towards drama;
- the course was long (14 weeks) and thus unworkable with experienced, busy teachers who were not seeking CPD in this area.

Based on the feedback from the first stage of the pilot study, the full training took place over the course of five weeks, with 30-45 minute sessions scheduled each week (one for each stage of the adapted BEING model). I was confident that this was an appropriate amount of time to complete each stage of the BEING phase sufficiently and with enthusiasm from the staff. Time was allocated within the usual staff meeting time and therefore, it was not taking any additional time out of the working week that the staff were used to. In addition, short training sessions were felt to be more appropriate, especially as I was acutely aware that some of the participants were highly anxious about the CPD sessions. Keeping the sessions short was specifically planned to ensure that the participants knew the sessions would not last too long, thus hopefully reducing their anxiety towards attending. In addition, there was also an opportunity to return to the CPD for an extended period in the academic year that followed the completion of the BEING training in the summer term (2014-2015) to obtain final reflections or comments on the process.

The activities identified in each of the five sections of the revised BEING model were significant as they had been specifically selected to make the participants more aware of their existing lived experience during their teaching. For example, INVENT concerned the use of voice, body language and sensory awareness, the participants were encouraged to investigate how changing their existing presence in the classroom and role as a teacher may manipulate or change the atmosphere of the classroom. An example of an activity could be the sensory awareness game as discussed by Boal (1992). Becoming more aware of one's own voice, non-verbal communication such as body language and gestures may heighten participants' self-perception and therefore shift their lived experience of drama.

Presently, the BEING model does not appear to have been cited or critiqued by any other researchers. Therefore, it seems particularly pertinent that the ideas are trialled, modified and evaluated through this small-scale study, especially with it being relocated in a different context with trained teachers and taking place in another national context.

The validation of a study is enhanced when the researcher clearly understands their subject area by using their own understanding and the work developed from other sources (Creswell, 2013). Thus, by using an existing study and replicating some of its elements, it could be argued that the validity of this study may be enhanced. On the other hand, such replication could be seen as simply repeating the mistakes of Özmen's original design. Since there is only one study of this type, and because it is also a relatively recent study, there is no reason to be merely accepting of its data and conclusions – instead there is every reason to want to replicate and test its effectiveness. Özmen's research (2011) was a small-scale case study using three participants and therefore it has limited application one cannot generalise from its conclusions. By conducting the study for a second time utilising information from a pilot study conducted earlier and subsequent modifications, Özmen's research can be tested in a different context.

The BEING model provides the basis of the structure and design for the current research. However, there is one fundamental difference; the BEING model was initially designed for three pre-service teachers working in an English Language Department in Turkey (academic year 2009-2010), in order to help to develop and refine their developing teacher identity. The pre-service teachers went through a 14-week acting course as well as taking part in additional teaching demonstrations and assignment-based tasks as part of their course. Through the use of session journals and subsequent participant interviews, the data was analysed through a constant comparative method, derived from grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Özmen also asked another researcher to analyse the proposed thematic categorisation with reliability confirmed by a 97% agreement (Özmen, 2011).

### ***The Adapted BEING Model CPD***

The original BEING model was developed by Özmen, 2011 for pre-service teachers and was adapted by myself in 2014 for use with experienced teachers in order to help them recognise their lived experience of drama and work through drama based-CPD in order to see if their existing perceptions and lived experience of drama could be adapted into new thinking. Özmen (2011) used drama games as the main approach when working with his participants and therefore, the adapted BEING model also used drama games during the E, I and N phases. Fleming (1997) and Baldwin (2009) identified the benefits of using drama games as an introductory activity in order to achieve certain goals. This study aimed to give teachers access to drama through multiple areas and therefore, the drama games provided the opportunities to explore many different areas of drama in short-burst experiences, over a period of several weeks. An alternative approach such as 'mantle of the expert' (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995) may have given some participants a richer and deeper dramatic experience in a certain area. However, due to the time constraints and the nature of knowing that some members of the group would be highly reluctant to participate in such approaches, drama games were selected as the method in order to promote the highest amount of participation from the group in a non-threatening and light-hearted manner.

The 'B-phase', **Believe** stood for the emotional preparation of the BEING model and focused around the understanding of the beliefs about one's own position and context both personally, professionally and in relation to drama. The B-phase consisted of emotional preparation, allowing the participants to explore their past, their 'mission', their reasons for becoming a teacher. The participants were asked to observe and analyse the emotions that they felt in relation to teaching as well as their personal positive attributes or concerns. The phase also explored the characteristics of a professional identity and the lived experience of how this had developed for each of the participants. It was important for the participants to consider all the 'resources' that they had acquired both personally and professionally in order to explain how their teacher-self had developed; these included personal experiences, training and knowledge. The participants were required to explore the relationship between their personal and professional 'selves' and consider the comparison between the two.

The participants completed a shield of acquisitions (see Appendix 3, page 140), a narrative questionnaire (see Appendix 3, page 140) and participated in the initial focus group discussions to share their experiences and begin to come together as part of their CPD experience. In line with a living theory methodology, the introduction of the study was designed with activities to open communication, develop relationships and establish a working group dynamic, trust and co-operation, without the use of conventional 'drama' activities (Johnston, 2005). In addition, the initial tasks were designed to prompt opportunities for reflection and as reflection required time to ponder in order for living experiences to be processed, the personal and professional reflection were located at the very start of the training before the subsequent stages of the CPD was completed to minimise any influence of the study (Van Manen, 1990; Whitehead, 2008).

After the first session, the participants were invited to keep a reflective diary of the course, this could be added to at any time during the entire CPD process. The first session was also specifically designed not to include any 'drama' activities or games as the anxiety of the participants was clear from the pilot and therefore the first session



was designed to open dialogue, share experiences in the focus group (as identified in approaches for successful teacher CPD, see pages 32-33) and try to help calm the participants before the next phase: experiment.

The 'E-phase', **Experiment** CPD session was the second week of the CPD and was really designed to give the participants their first shared experience of drama games. The experiment phase focused around the drama elements of use of voice, body movement and sensory awareness. The objective of the acting tasks was to help the participants to become more aware of themselves and the impact of their presence. Therefore, the tasks were designed to experiment with body language, understanding and experimenting with the voice and shared experience and awareness using sensory exercises. The participants were able to develop their improvisation skills and become aware of how to use the drama space as well as communication, both verbal and non-verbal, by trying to recognise the patterns of one's self as well as that of the other participants. The activities including sensory activities (Boal, 1992), voice relaxation (Mangan, 2013) and vocal health (Tauber and Mester, 1994). A structured range of activities were planned to heighten the senses, develop awareness of both non-verbal and verbal communication and experimentation with many aspects of the voice and body. A summary of each of the activities used can be found in Appendix 4, page 144.

After experimenting with many different drama games and working collaboratively as a whole group, the 'I-phase', **Invent** was designed to involve changing of body language, voice and senses. The main objective of the I-phase concerned giving the participants the opportunity for observing the existing atmosphere of the classroom and for manipulating it to create the target atmosphere. These tasks involved practising personal gestures, mimics and postures as well as nonverbal communication patterns that were unique to oneself. General acting exercises were planned in order to construct automatic and habitual reactions deliberately. Many activities were repeated from the E-phase, however, they were extended and developed, allowing the participants to use a task which had been familiar from the previous week, then developed in an alternative way. These included voice relaxation (Mangan, 2013), vocal health (Tauber and Mester,

1994) and sensory exercises (Boal, 1992). In this session, a more open range of activities was developed in order to heighten the senses, develop awareness of both non-verbal and verbal communication and focus more on self-experimentation, specifically on improvisation, adaption.

The penultimate session, the 'N-phase', **Navigate**, was designed specifically for the establishment of new thinking and dispositions, for problem-solving and rethinking the objectives, as well as overcoming the problems that emerged in the previous stages, including resolving potential previous negative experiences of using drama and overcoming nerves. The N-phase provided opportunities for pondering over the missing links of the professional identity and referring to the previous stages to find a solution. The participants had to evaluate and challenge their constructed teacher identity in terms of the first stages of the CPD training and in turn compare any changes through their career development. Discovering the uncharted territories of their teacher identity: is it really like what it was originally planned? The activities involved role play – 'Blind Offers' and 'Absolute Power' (Johnston, 2005). These activities involve a lot more freedom than previous sessions. The participants attempted new tasks with limited guidance and used their previous knowledge to navigate through the activities rather than being guided specifically, as in the B, E and partially I-phases.

The final phase of the CPD sessions was the 'G-phase', **Generate**, which involved the changed construction or understanding the development of teacher identity. The participants had to experiment with performing in the 'role' of the teacher considering their lived experience in micro and macro teaching demonstrations using newly gained drama techniques in the classroom. Performing their new 'drama teacher identity' in the practicum, the real classroom context and in turn creating further ways of interactional expression. The conclusion of the session involved observing the change in teacher identity over time and within different classes and teaching contexts. The participants were also given the opportunity to decide on what to do next to invest in the development process of their teacher identity and whether or not it was a positive or negative experience. The activities involved: Instant Images and Moods; an

empowerment game (Johnston, 2005). The final stage of the model allowed the participants to take complete ownership of their work. This allowed them to identify whether or not the experience has been positive or negative and the influence of this on their drama identity. In turn, given the extended opportunity to reflect and look back through their narrative diaries, it provided the participants with opportunity to reflect on the lived experience of the process and discuss within the final focus group whether the BEING model CPD had adapted their lived experience of drama.

### **Methods and Data Collection**

**Table 3.2 Methods to Gather Data and Answer Research Questions**

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Research Methods/ Data Collection</b>
<i>Can lived experiences and perceptions of drama be modified through in-service CPD training using reflection and drama games?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All questions needed to be addressed through and via the CPD training; these games and activities asked the participants to address their own perceptions, personal influences and attitudes.</li> <li>• Narrative diaries, the initial focus group and final focus groups also provided the data.</li> </ul>
<i>What advantages and disadvantages can be identified by using drama games and reflection for in-service CPD?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from the CPD was gathered through the reflective diaries. The participants could add to their diaries throughout the process. They then reflected on their development/ changes in perceptions.</li> <li>• The focus groups triangulated the information gathered from the reflective diaries and helped the participants to verbalise their thoughts and changes in their perceptions.</li> </ul>
<i>Can CPD training (through reflection and drama games) change teachers' use of drama in the classroom?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus groups enabled the participants to share their opinions, challenge their perceptions and reflect on their experiences or shift in thought. Focus groups are thought to provide more reliable data than interviews, ensuring that the researcher is separate from the discussion.</li> <li>• In addition, revisiting the participants after the research (the following academic year) was a useful way to find out if their lived experiences had altered as a result of the CPD.</li> </ul>

## ***Data Collection***

### ***1. Reflective Diaries***

As with Özmen's study (2011) and the methods used in Akinbode's lived experience study (2013), the participants were asked to keep a weekly reflective diary sharing their thoughts and ideas (both positive and negative) based on the training. This gave the participants an extended way of expressing their feelings in a narrative fashion, without the constraints of time, other participants' opinions or researcher presence influencing the data (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Based on the results of the pilot study, the participants found this a useful experience and the lack of structure (an open exercise book) provided rich detail and depth of thought. The participants could add to their diaries at any point during the training, in addition to their regular comments directly after each session.

Reflective diaries were chosen as a means of data collection and as a prompt for the subsequent focus group conversations as they provided a method of rigorous reflective thinking, rich data in terms of depth and a deeper and more critical level of reflection (Akinbode, 2013; Bold, 2012). This allowed the participants to challenge more of their own beliefs and question pre-existing ideas (Bold, 2012, Van Manen, 1990). This was particularly important to this study as the participants were being placed in situations and scenarios where they may have felt uncomfortable and awkward and therefore they needed the time to reflect on their experiences before responding with their feedback (Akinbode, 2013; Bold, 2012). This certainly came across in the pilot study, with some of the members describing the process as 'painful'. The opportunity to personally reflect and then record the experience helped the participants to process and evaluate. The participants also benefited from the opportunity to reflect back on their journey throughout the process in order to identify whether or not their perceptions of drama had changed and provided rich detail through their narrative accounts (Akinbode, 2013; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

The main limitations of using reflective diaries as a form of narrative in educational research are the ethical issues that may arise from using them. These may concern the

shift in ethical issues that may occur as the project develops as well as the issue of maintaining anonymity throughout the project (Bold, 2012). In addition, the data created from reflective diaries may have an element of fiction about them as participants may inadvertently erroneously reconstruct events in the process of recording them (Bold, 2012; Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). However, as the participants were encouraged to reflect throughout the process and not just summarise at the end of the whole CPD training, it was hoped that the reflections would remain generally accurate throughout the process.

## **2. Focus Groups**

For the purposes of this study, the focus groups were designed as a method of triangulating and verifying the data as well as an integral part of the teachers' CPD, providing them with the opportunities to share their reflections as part of the research process. The participants shared their responses and therefore, if a member of the group was to recount or comment inaccurately, the focus group data may be able to highlight the anomaly and corroborate the evidence (Creswell, 2013).

In addition to the reflective diaries, two focus group sessions were conducted during the research process; the first before the training began, to establish initial thoughts and to ascertain pre-existing ideas about the use of drama in primary education. This stage was trialled during the pilot study and served as a useful ice-breaker as some the participants were clearly nervous and uneasy about the whole process. For a larger group, this would be an essential element of the study as participants may have felt more nervous and intimidated working in a larger group. A final focus group was completed at the end of the training to ascertain and evaluate whether or not there had been a shift in the perceptions of the participants and use of drama in the classroom. Focus groups provide a useful means of evaluating and identifying a shift or change in opinion (Krueger and Casey, 2009).

This method of data collection differs from Özmen (2011) who used interviews; this was a deliberate change due to the complex position of the researcher working within the

study setting. Focus groups were selected in order to provide a more informal setting to gain rich detail of staff perceptions and to avoid researcher bias entering the data. There may have been an element of peer pressure where participants could have felt that they needed to comply. However, the addition of the diaries meant that participants could still share their individual and honest responses in a different format. It was felt that individual interviews may have provided more unreliable data as the participants may have been more inclined to give answers that I was hoping or wanting to hear and that I could have inadvertently swayed the conversation in a certain direction through biased questioning, especially as I worked with all the participants (Lipp, 2007; Le Gallais, 2008; Creswell, 2014).

As Litosseliti (2003) discussed, focus groups provide a more natural environment for participants to work in. It is a collaborative process. The researcher can provide initial questions and then observe and note how and in what direction a debate progresses. The conversation is guided through pre-planned, semi-structured questioning in order to maintain focus throughout the discussion (Gillham, 2000; Litosseliti, 2003). Although I was present during the focus groups and prompted the initial conversation, I ensured that I stayed out of the focus group circle and sat away from the group. I remained out of the line of sight in the hope that the participants did not seek to read my body language or seek approval through non-verbal communications.

The problems associated with using focus groups in this particular research may include the potential lack of control by the researcher and potential dominance by one or more members of the group or one member of the group assuming prominence (Litosseliti, 2003; Krueger and Casey, 2009). However, this is minimised by using the semi-structured questioning which ensures a mechanism to re-focus the conversation if participants move slightly off topic and in addition gives opportunities for the researcher to invite potentially quieter participants to share their viewpoints. Litosseliti (2003:21) also highlighted the possible limitations of focus groups as being: 'bias and manipulation', 'false consensus' and 'difficulty in making generalisations'. Through an ethical introduction, the participants were told of the purpose of the research. Also,

by asking the participants to be honest and informing them that their own experiences, thoughts and ideas were central to the research, the intention was that the participants felt they could give an honest account of their ideas. In addition, although all the participants contributed in some way to the focus groups, some contributed more than others. Therefore, it was important to seek a balanced view from all contributors by comparing their responses from their reflective diaries in order that all voices could be heard.

A difficulty with reconvening a focus group may be that the participants' circumstances change and therefore may be unavailable to take part in a follow-up discussion (Bloor, *et al*, 2001). To minimise this issue, the participants were made aware of all dates in advance and the follow-up focus group took place shortly after the final training session (long enough to allow the participants to complete their reflective diaries, but short enough to ensure that they were available to take part). In addition, as the CPD was scheduled in staff-meeting time, all participants were available to attend (yet still had the option to opt out if they did not wish to participate or continue to participate).

### **Analytical Framework**

Gillham (2000), Yin (2014) and Thomas (2011) all highlighted that the analysis of data arising from a case study methodology is complex and one of the most challenging aspects of case study work. They suggest that an analytical framework is adopted throughout the planning process so that the project does not become stalled at the analysis stage. The analytical framework employed to analyse the data consisted of several steps based around a content analysis approach as it provided a suitable means of reducing the amount of qualitative data without removing the quality of the text (Flick, 2004). Lived experience studies are very much qualitative studies (Van Manen, 1990) and therefore the rich detail of the narrative data must be protected and utilised throughout the analysis.

The first stage of the analytical framework was a series of note-making exercises made during the analysis of the reflective diaries and of the transcription process of the focus

groups. This allowed me to have a full understanding of the discussion from individual viewpoints and from the focus group as a whole (Litosseliti, 2003) and to become familiar with the data. It highlighted the key themes, agreements and tensions in the content. From these notes, the open coding of the data allowed the key themes and headings for content analysis to be determined. Coding can be descriptive and allow different viewpoints and perspectives to be identified (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). At this early stage of the research analysis, open coding, as identified by Strauss and Corbin (1990) appeared to be the most appropriate form of coding. It allowed the breaking down of the data into smaller units therefore helping to make sense of responses without modifying the meaning of the responses (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). The open codes were expected to be based on broad themes identified in the literature such as the headings of the adapted BEING model. However, this was necessarily dependent on the responses of the participants and therefore could not be pre-determined. I did not want to allow any pre-conceived themes or ideas to influence the validity of the research, especially as I am intimately connected to the research as both as practitioner and a researcher (Lipp, 2007; Mercer, 2007). The drama expert within the staff team was also invited to code the data, similar to that of Özmen's study (2011). Once the open-coding was completed, the data could be summarised and reported through content analysis (Flick, 1998; Krippendorp, 2004). This provided an unobtrusive method of analysing the data and reporting the key findings from the research (Akinbode, 2013; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Creswell, 2013).

Living theory has helped to provide the open lens for the analysis of the data. Open content analysis allowed the participants to perform the first stage of the analysis with the data provided by the narrative diaries and final focus group. This was because they were reflecting on their experiences and identifying the key themes that emerged for them from the CPD sessions. The participants were working as co-enquirers within the study and therefore had ownership of it - I did not wish to pre-determine what the participants were to gain from the research. This was identified during the final reflections of the study, by the participants, and some of the findings were somewhat unexpected and will be discussed fully in the following chapter.



#### **Chapter Four: Presentation and Analysis of Data**

In this chapter I present and discuss the data addressing the research questions shown earlier on page 15. It is structured around the presentation and analysis of data and illustrates the previous, changing and newly constructed positions of the participants, concerning their lived experience of drama, as well as their use of drama when teaching the primary curriculum. The data examines personal and professional perceptions, previous experiences, the impact and use of practical drama activities and shared discussion to form new or alternative thinking. The data is comprised of many forms; written tasks from the B-phase of the study from all the participants, a reflection on the I-phase (a written task completed by the participants), verbal quotes and the collation of discussions from the two focus groups (one after the B-phase and one after the completion of the BEING training). Finally, written quotes are presented in addition to the collated data from the reflective narrative diaries completed by all the participants before, during and after the training (May-June, 2014).

The analysis has been constructed to take into account both the personal experiences and individual viewpoints of the participants as well as the shared thinking, collective agreement and/or differences in opinion arising from the focus group discussions and a comparison of the reflective diaries. Due to the qualitative nature of the data, sections of the narrative diaries are included in the chapter so that both individual drama journeys can be seen and experienced as well as the collective thoughts, ideas and differences in opinion of the focus group. For the purposes of clarity and understanding of context, written quotes can be identified through quotation marks and spoken quotes (from the focus group discussions) can be identified through speech marks. Extended block quotes have their sources stated in their introduction.

Due to my insider position as a colleague, member of the primary team and professional connections I had with the participants, it was important not to predict or pre-determine anticipated responses, in order to minimise the impact of researcher influence and bias (Lipp, 2007; Mercer, 2007). Therefore, open coding and content analysis were used as the method of analysing the data. In order to limit the amount of

researcher bias, the concluding focus group helped to provide the basis for the key areas and I was careful to ensure that all areas were fairly explored. I also refrained from using pre-existing ideas for coding themes. The data produced by the CPD training and focus group sessions was explored and common themes were identified. The themes included the impact of having extended in-service training and, in particular, training being led by a colleague (rather than an external visitor), who was skilled in drama knowledge and techniques. The benefits of teachers' CPD in wider curriculum subjects was also discussed as was the potential benefit, as a whole staff, of having extended time to reflect and discuss educational areas, not just those concerning drama. In addition to this, possible shortfalls of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), in preparing colleagues to deliver drama lessons were discussed. It was apparent that past personal experiences and levels of both personal and professional confidence could have a huge impact on a teacher's lived experience of drama and how they use it in their professional practice.

The participants were given the opportunity and time to reflect upon and share both personal and professional experiences. Many of the teachers discussed their own personal experiences of drama, both as a learner and as a teacher and recounted how they felt at the time. Some participants also described how their experiences and beliefs about drama had changed over time (including their own confidence, knowledge and personal/historical use). The benefits of drama and its use in teaching were also widely discussed, including how the teachers valued the personal and social development afforded by drama lessons and activities and how these contributed to overall pupil development.

It was widely accepted within the narrative diaries and focus group discussions that drama had intrinsic values both for the children and for staff. The potential that drama has across the curriculum was also discussed. Colleagues mentioned how drama could explore virtues such as empathy, sympathy, patience and tolerance. It was also suggested that drama lessons could teach students about communication, including verbal and non-verbal, through collaborative tasks. Furthermore, it was posited that

these skills had an everyday application, both in the short-term and long-term. All the participants agreed that they believed that pupils who learned to communicate and empathise better with their peers would be better equipped for later life. It was accepted that skills such as reflection could be developed through drama games and activities. In the narrative diaries, the teachers discussed past lessons when they had asked pupils to act in a particular way or to become a character from a specific text. To do this the students would often be encouraged to think of a past event, when they had experienced a particular emotion, so that they would connect with a feeling or character in an authentic way.

Whilst it was agreed that drama has a great deal to offer the pupils and staff, a number of barriers were mentioned. For example, timetable pressures, curriculum coverage and the potential perception of a lack of true measurable 'work' being produced were all considered as significant disadvantages of leading drama as a discrete lesson. It was also felt by many of the participants that there was insufficient manoeuvrability within the timetable to set aside time for drama-based activities, particularly as a discrete subject rather than used as a cross-curricular teaching tool. Another issue was a lack of professional knowledge and/or confidence in leading purely drama activities, without seeking to engage pupils during a scheme of work in another curriculum area, such as history. Many of the colleagues felt insufficiently prepared to teach drama and tended to shy away from it as they were intimidated or felt unprepared and without adequate knowledge and understanding. It was felt by some of the participants that this was exacerbated in drama as there was 'nowhere to hide' as it involved teacher 'modelling', and therefore being centre-stage and 'performing' or 'acting'.

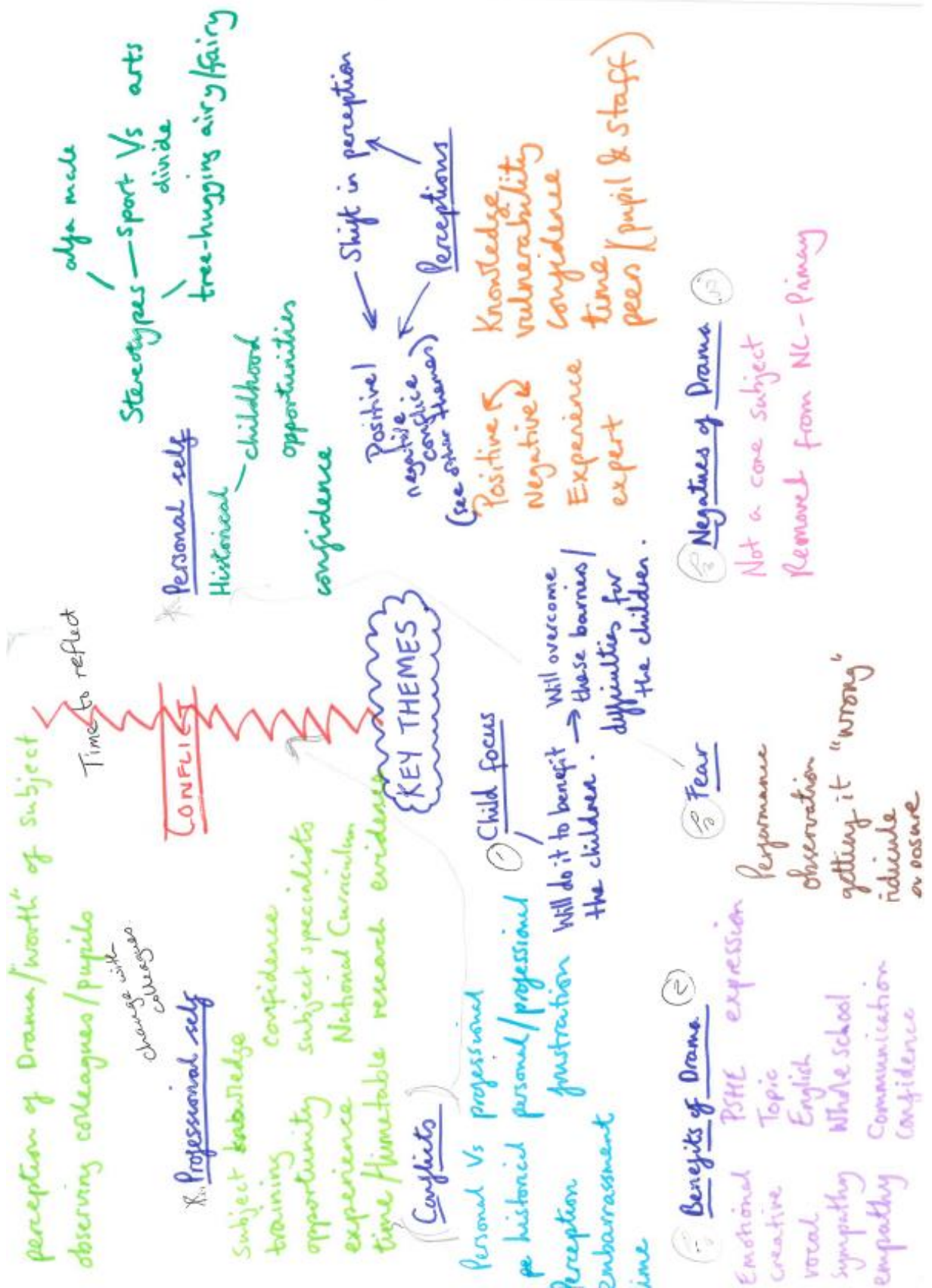
Practical barriers such as a perceived lack of 'written work produced' and 'evidence' were also discussed as potential negative influences. Another perceived barrier was the practical availability of the school hall or an appropriate 'space', as many of the teachers had associated drama with the necessity of using the school hall, perhaps as a result of watching the 'end result' of drama such as whole school productions and end of term performances, regularly watched by parents and colleagues. In addition to this, the

whole school productions at the research setting (the school) are of a very high standard, and are usually produced by the same team of staff every year. Once again, drama was being associated and identified as a 'performance', not a learning process or experience.

Many of the staff stated that they believed the 'expert' staff members were naturally skilled at this and that they 'couldn't do that'. Tom stated that he was reluctant to start as the standard was so high and said that he 'was the sports guy, not the drama guy'. Charles sympathised with this view but stated that 'the only drama... [he] did was the acting that was required in his day-to-day job'.

Each of the main themes which emerged in the data will be discussed through the initial research questions in this chapter. I decided to present the data in this way, exploring each of the research questions individually, by exploring the key themes as I wanted to ensure that all participants were given a voice throughout the study. As some of the participants contributed more in certain areas, if each individual narrative had been explored as individual case studies, there would have been an imbalance between the contributions of the participants represented. In addition, although the individual journeys were a vital element of the study for each teacher, it was their collective journey that helped to develop the concept map of the key themes which emerged from the data; the main areas of interest or concern which were highlighted by the participants. After initial transcription and exploration of that data, key themes and ideas became very apparent that were representational of the participants. These themes helped to develop the concept map for the analysis and identify the areas to be discussed. The themes that were identified through the initial analysis of the data and the relationships that could be linked between them are presented in the concept map I developed on the following page, figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Concept Map of Key Themes



### **Research Question 1**

#### ***Can lived experiences and perceptions of drama be modified through in-service CPD training using reflection and drama games?***

Özmen's aims (2011) were to provide student trainee teachers with basic acting skills, through the use of drama games and activities in order to develop their professional identity and to help them develop their 'role' as a teacher. Tom, who had a very negative attitude towards drama, derived from historical personal lived experiences, acknowledged that his 'professional self' could be viewed as playing a role; 'Sometimes, when things aren't going particularly well, you feel as though you have to 'act' in front of the children. But how far you can class this as drama, I'm not sure.' Immediately, Tom identified the conflict within the definition of drama (as identified in Chapters One and Two), he used the word 'act' to imply that he was performing in front of the children, to mask his true feelings. He could not however, accept this as a form of drama, despite using the word 'act'. His negative associations with the word were far too strong and deeply rooted within his previous experiences to allow him to accept his use of drama in the initial stage of the CPD. He shared in the initial focus group:

It's the word 'drama' for me. I hate that word. I can't stand it. It conjures up images in my head, being on stage, some fruity actor (*gestures with arms, group laughter*), it's the word drama, the connotations for me are horrendous. I've met so many people in my life, just like "Oh, I'm a drama student", and you're just like "You're not, you're boring!" It's the word drama that gets me. But when you sit back and actually realise how much drama you actually do, it's fine, but it's... the school I went to, you were either a sportsman or you did drama. You couldn't do both (*laughter*). No! That's the kind of school I went to. If you did drama, you were labelled as gay. You would never, you wouldn't do it. You did sport, it's the truth.

For me, the statement from Tom above, provided so many areas of key interest which justified the reasons and rationale for this research. Tom identified a deeply personal previous lived experience where he felt categorised during his education; a sportsman or a drama student. The word itself provided negative images in Tom's mind to such an extent where even though he could see in his professional self that he was perhaps

‘acting’ in front of the pupils in his class, he could not accept this as drama. Gender issues, stereotypes, sexuality and the perception of what a drama student would behave like also provided Tom with further justification for his negative associations with the very word itself. These issues will be explored further in the chapter.

In this study, some of the same games and activities were selected and modified to be used with qualified teachers to ascertain whether their lived experience of drama could be changed through extended in-service CPD.

Throughout the adapted BEING experience course (explained in Chapter 3, page 56) the participants were asked to initially explore their personal and professional selves, look back into the past to examine their perceptions and feelings towards drama and try to understand where these feelings came from; and as identified in participants such as Tom, some of these lived experience emotions and previous memories were very strong and highly negative. During the BEING training sessions, participants were exposed to some new and unfamiliar drama techniques, but then also had the opportunity to reflect on these, as well as explore if their feelings towards drama and/or the teaching of drama were changing, either in a positive or negative way, had partially changed or had remained unchanged as a result of the process. The participants also had the chance to discuss these thoughts, feelings or changes in semi-structured focus groups; one at the start and one at the end of training. This provided opportunities for individual reflection, shared thinking, including positive experiences, anxieties and conversation which also created new thinking and ideas.

Prior to the commencement of the CPD sessions, initial responses to the training varied greatly; some staff were generally very positive about the upcoming experience, some staff were extremely anxious about the training, some were seeking specific objectives from the sessions and some had mixed emotions about the prospect of the CPD.

In relation to initial attitudes towards drama, these also varied enormously. Claire stated in her reflective diary, ‘although a little scared, I do think the whole research

project sounds really interesting.’ Daisy shared similar anxieties, although like Claire was interested in taking part, ‘...a little worried about what to expect although talking through... re-assured me.’ Daisy was experiencing a ‘fear of the unknown’ but once she knew what the project and the CPD entailed, felt more comfortable with the concept.

Amie, on the other hand, like Tom displayed a strongly negative reaction to the prospect of the study with her initial comment in her narrative diary, ‘I’m one of those people who saw the title and thought “Oh no!” Drama fills me with dread.’ She was clearly very reluctant to take part in the study. In her narrative diary, she shared a lot of her lived experience as to why she felt so anxious about the project: ‘I hate being the centre of attention as I might make a mistake. When I am put on the spot, my mind goes blank or I become tongue-tied.’ Amie’s previous experiences of drama clearly had a lasting impact on her feelings towards drama as a teaching professional, allowing anxieties towards the subject to develop and become more pronounced with the very word provoking a sensation of dread. Fortunately, this was, in fact, one of the main reasons why she therefore decided to take part in the project, as she wanted to see if her opinions, feelings and anxieties towards the subject could be challenged and changed.

In stark contrast to Amie’s initial responses to the study, Maddie’s reaction highlighted her historic and consistently very positive lived experience of drama and how it made her feel: ‘Empowering! Drama allows you to be anyone you like. Drama is my release – de-stresses me, love to dramatize my stories, bring them to life.’ Maddie also acknowledged how she used drama in her everyday life, not just in her teaching; she used drama as part of her personality and to share her life with others.

As already discussed, Tom, in particular, expressed strong feelings of an alpha-male and sportsman mentality. His generalisation of stereotypes, associated with his previous lived experience, meant that he found it difficult to consider the idea that one could be both a sportsman and an actor. Tom was relatively new to teaching, and naturally rather taciturn in his demeanour; he recently had had to ‘come out of his shell’ since qualifying. He wrote that he was a little uneasy in his new professional teacher identity, and in his



B-phase reflections, he had to consider the connections and conflicts between his personal and professional identity. He identified that, having always considered his personal and professional identity to be completely separate, as time was moving on, the gap between the two was narrowing. Tom's personal life had changed due to his choice of becoming a teacher, which he shared in a conversation in the initial focus group:

Tom: At school, I try and be professional and have a professional image... the way I look... I even do my hair in the morning... at home I'm a complete mess... (*laughter*), I'm completely different... I'm completely different with my friends.

Harriet: Would you say you share any elements of yourself with your class? Like your nieces and nephews?

Tom: I talk about my nieces and nephews but I don't talk about what I get up to... but I think over time, they're becoming closer together... my personal life has changed because I am a teacher... what I used to do at university, I wouldn't dream of doing now... I think it's a choice that you make, it's a lifestyle choice. You have to make allowances with your personal life to be a teacher.

Charles: I agree, but also, having someone at home who is not a teacher helps keep a barrier all the time... I don't know if other people find that... because I get told off for having a teacher voice at home (*lots of nodding, quiet laughter*) and that's not only my wife, that's also friends.

Charles also acknowledges here that the teacher being 'in role', with the use of a specific teacher-voice, implies an element of performance where the teacher is using a specific voice, or tone of voice in order to show their professional selves.

Taking part in drama workshop, the B-phase and the initial focus group tasks, had meant Tom had to give even more of himself than he felt comfortable doing. He commented after the first focus group, 'I found the first discussion difficult. It was quite an uncomfortable thing for me to do as I had to justify things that I hadn't really thought about in the past. A bit like how I imagine therapy to be, I don't know. Is that fair?' He explained that he had clearly defined interests and he used his love of sport as his rationale to explain why he had no interest in drama. In his narrative diary, he explained

that his aversion to drama was historic, both as part of his teaching and his lived experience of drama. In his diary, he noted:

I, myself have never acted or felt any need to express myself in this fashion. I opted out of school plays and avoided participating in drama lessons. I'm a sportsman. Even at university I tried to melt into the background when drama was mentioned. Part of this is simple lack of interest. The other (smaller) part is that the thought of standing up in front of people, especially other adults, and acting makes me physically cringe.

Tom's clear explicit dismissal of drama as a subject that he could potentially enjoy and as one in which he had low interest and regard of its potential as a developmental tool, raised some interesting points, such as the relationship between drama and masculinity. His identity was that of a 'sportsman' and not an actor or someone that 'does drama'. Furthermore, Tom could not see how someone could take part in an arts-based activity, such as acting as well as competing in sport. It could be inferred that Tom believed the two identities were polar-opposites as he could not be a sportsman as well as a supporter or participant of drama.

The potential relationship or conflict of attitudes between performing arts and sports, (as well as Tom's own feelings and potential anxieties about standing up in front of an audience and how he would avoid this situation as much as possible), raised many key discussion points. These comments were particularly pertinent, especially as Tom regularly played rugby in front of large crowds of people where he was, in fact, 'in front of an audience' and 'performing' and yet he did not identify a link between the two performance contexts, in the same way that he did not make a connection to drama when he was 'acting' in front of the children to hide his true emotions. Tom demonstrated an aversion to drama and stated that drama played a negligible part in his teaching: 'In my day-to-day teaching, drama plays a very little part...in terms of the actual teaching of drama, I try to avoid it (if I'm being completely honest!)'. It was interesting to note that despite having a negative attitude towards drama and teaching it, Tom was still keen to take part in the study and see if he could change his attitude and alter his lived experiences and perceptions of drama. He had previously

participated in the pilot/developmental stages of the research project and was involved in the very early stages and development of the research. Tom's continued participation in the study could be explained by there still being a tension between his own feelings towards drama, as well as what he had observed about drama as a teacher and practitioner. He wrote:

Drama provides somewhat of a personal conflict. As a teacher, I know that I should be doing more drama and be actively involved. But as a person, it is something that I don't understand and I don't think that I ever will, or will ever want to. Even though, as a teacher, I know I should. And there lies the conflict!

Therefore, this is potentially why he agreed to participate in the study, despite his many personal and long-term historical reservations and his clear discomfort to 'share' and explore new areas of his teaching practice.

Several members of the initial focus group also shared negative or conflicting experiences of drama activities and drama lessons during their own education. In her narrative diary, Laura identified why her previous experience of drama had been particularly limited:

My experiences of drama at school, all the usual Christmas shows, concerts etc. I did enjoy them though, it was the 1980s and my school was tiny (8 people in the year group) so there weren't many opportunities. At secondary school, I was more into sports, so I didn't really get in to drama productions.

Once again, there was reference (also identified by Tom) that if you were 'into sports', then one did not participate in drama based activities, cross-curricularly. This could simply be due to lack of time to allow opportunities for both (such as a timetable clash), or perhaps because participation in the arts and sports are viewed as mutually exclusive. Interestingly Alice also made a statement about how she labelled herself as having a scientific background and therefore the idea of working within the arts felt new and unfamiliar to her: 'I have a scientific background, I am feeling out of my comfort zone, nervous, apprehensive and uneasy.' Once again almost implying that science and the arts could not be mixed, reminiscent of sports and drama. Both examples show teachers

stating their preferences for certain subjects. Furthermore, it could be interpreted as primary teachers pigeon-holing themselves into discrete subjects and excluding themselves from others. Further study could examine primary teachers' tacit knowledge of different subject areas and how this impacts upon their teaching practice. This would be of interest for teachers such as Alice (science-based) and Laura (sports and languages based), especially as research has shown links between the use of drama to assist learning in other subject areas such as language (Fleming *et al*, 2004; Fleming, 2006 and Hulse and Owens, 2017). Longitudinal studies could track teachers' preferences for subject areas during ITE (initial teacher education) and how it develops over time. However, the focus of this study is teachers' perceptions of drama. People are naturally 'conservative' and seek familiarity and comfort. There seemed to be no correspondence between the age of the participants and their relationships to and acceptance of new ideas. In fact, gender, experience and age did not seem to provide any correlations between the participant responses.

Many of the participants clearly had positive attitudes towards many aspects of teacher development and CPD and therefore were recognising the benefits of learning about drama, even though they acknowledged that some of the training might have made them feel anxious, uncomfortable or 'out of their comfort zone'. In addition, some participants had specific objectives of what they wanted to achieve from the training. Claire stated, 'I hope I am able to re-evaluate my teacher persona and can only see how the whole process will have a positive effect.' Charles, who also supported this viewpoint stated, 'I like the sound of being able to learn some more active strategies to use in the classroom. I don't feel I have been too proactive in bettering my practice recently so having an opportunity to do so is welcomed.'

Many other participants also highlighted the value in having the time to step back, reflect and use the time to consider their teaching persona, the impact this had on their teaching and the opportunity to discuss thoughts and ideas with colleagues in a more reflective and focused way; something that there is often less time for in usual day-to-day schedules. Claire reinforced this with her comment, 'I don't think you get enough

time as a teacher to reflect on your “teacher being” and so this will be perfect.’ Considering these comments, the participants in the study were not only being provided with the CPD training, but they were also acting as co-researchers as they had the opportunity to participate, reflect, evaluate and make suggestions for further research or comment. These comments were crucial in the development of the project and the rationale for its creation, originality and purpose.

By looking at the initial reflections, it was clear that all of the participants came to the research with different experiences and positions. However, despite some members initially being apprehensive and sharing some of their concerns, nerves and obvious worries about participating in the research, all participants were willing to take part fully in the study and identified their own hopes or aspirations for the process of the training. For example, Alice stated in her reflective diary, ‘My hopes – to improve confidence, facilitate use in the classroom, develop different strategies to achieve learning objectives in lessons. See sense, conquer fears. Realise own potential.’ These aspirations were particularly pertinent as they not only addressed professional teaching objectives, such as improving practice and gaining new strategies, but they also considered other, more personal aspects of self-development such as overcoming anxieties and improving potential, as Tom had implied. This could suggest that even teachers that feel unequipped to teach drama confidently, acknowledge that drama skills equip the participant with life skills beyond the classroom. The perceived benefits of drama and its application to real-life contexts by primary teachers is striking. This is compounded when teachers state their natural aversion to the subject thus highlighting the conflict of thinking.

Charles emphasised the opportunity to have the chance to explore and develop his drama subject knowledge, skills and understanding. In addition, he recognised that drama had been an area where he had lacked prior support or input; this included during his ITE and in previous places of employment. He appreciated having the time, space and support to do this: ‘Drama is something I have enjoyed in the past but not had too much support in while training and teaching. Enjoying drama and teaching drama are

two separate things that I'd like to improve upon.' This would also align with the ideas expressed in Chapters One and Two, that teachers' experiences of training and using drama during ITE could be somewhat sporadic and depend on the training institution and school placements.

Being the only other male member of the participant group, Charles had a much more positive view of drama both historically, personally and professionally and he also classed himself as an alpha-male sportsman, like Tom, in the fact that they both participated in sports outside of their professional time and did not take part in any drama-based activities as part of their hobbies, both in their previous lived experience or in their present day lives. Charles did not, however, identify the conflict between these two areas, whereas Tom did. It would therefore suggest that it is one's own personal lived experiences which shape the opinions, either positive or negative, of drama and even those who may share similar experiences, or describe themselves in a similar way, still may not hold the same perceptions as each other. This would also indicate that sometimes a seemingly negligible lived experience (which may have taken place in formative years), or a single negative encounter or experience can have an impact on how we, as humans, view a whole subject for life. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore these feelings further, whether they came from previous peer groups or peer pressure, family life, location, education, or many other factors which may influence one's own lived experience and perceptions.

From analysing the data over the course of the study and exploring the journey of each member of the group, it was clear that many of the participants had a change or slight shift in their perceptions of drama. Many wrote in their reflective diaries, 'I do not feel the experience has changed me as a person...' However, this was regularly followed by the word 'but' and the participants then went on to explain and discuss new thinking or areas of the study that had stimulated new ideas or given the participants the opportunity to consider themselves, the pupils in their class and their own professional approaches as a teacher. This would support the position that the research design did not seek to alter a teacher's personal or professional identity as the area is far too

complex. However, by focusing specifically on the lived experiences of drama, changes were noted and observed by the participants. For example, Amie wrote in the final entry of her reflective diary, 'I don't feel I've changed in any way BUT today has been very creative, I have had to go with the flow. Perhaps I'm not as boring as I thought.' Therefore, the process had encouraged Amie to reflect on both her own personal and professional identities and in turn, on how she perceived herself and how she was perceived by others. The opportunity to be more relaxed in training, try new ideas and be more creative gave Amie the opportunity to explore a new side of her personality that she had perhaps not thought about recently, or even at all. She also felt comfortable in the focus groups, as she was surrounded by familiar faces. This, in turn, caused a change in her living theory of her perception of her personal and professional identity, without changing it as a whole or causing a seismic change in the way she saw herself. In addition to this, in beginning 'I do not feel I have changed as a person, but...' teachers could be alluding to the transformative nature of drama. This could be due to the use of role-play in drama games, whereby the participants become different people and the idea of 'The Method' allowed participants to fully believe their changes in attitudes and embody them in their lived experience of drama.

For many of the participants, they were reminded of what it felt like to be out of their 'comfort zone' and in the position of a learner, which often led to subsequent discussions about the children in their classes and how they would feel in certain situations where they may be less confident or be feeling potentially unsure or uncomfortable; not just in drama, but in any lesson, of any subject area. This was stated by Harriet, who said, 'The activities have been useful in prompting me to reflect on how pupils feel when we put them in certain situations.' This was also reflected by Amie, who wrote, 'I was worried about getting it wrong. Helping me to understand what children may be going through at the start of lessons.'

Many of the participants were placed back in the position of a learner, they expressed feelings of being unsure, lacking in confidence, potentially a little fearful of what was to be expected from the CPD sessions and this clearly made many of the participants revisit

a former part of themselves from their lived experience; back to a time when they were a learner. This was considered to be very powerful as the participants showed considerable empathy towards some of the children in their classes (for some, they could consider individual children they were teaching or had taught previously), who found specific areas difficult, or those who seemed to display some signs of anxiety towards certain areas of learning, or situations within school. A phrase which was mentioned often in both the narrative diaries and in the focus groups referred to the CPD providing the opportunity to take the participants out of their comfort zone. In the final focus group Julia shared with the group:

I think it's interesting, what you said (*referring to Jan*), about going out of your comfort zone. I think we have all done something here (*referring to the BEING CPD*) that has taken us out of our comfort zone. But hopefully, that's benefitted us. Quite often, I think, we don't take children out of their comfort zones enough. We think that perhaps they need to stay within their comfort zone and it perhaps shows us that we need to take them beyond their comfort zones to help them grow as long as they do not go too far and enter a panic zone.

The term 'comfort zone' was not something I had really encountered in my literature research surrounding drama. Maddie and Julia discussed in the final focus group conversation the range of working within the comfort zone and that the best learning took place just beyond the comfort zone. However, Jan identified that she felt the physical discomfort of 'squirming' when she knew that she was entering a panic zone. Comfort zones research is specifically mentioned in outdoor learning and experiential learning and referred to the zones (comfort, outside comfort and panic zones), identified and discussed by the participants (Luckner and Nadler, 1997 and Brown, 2008).

A key theme which emerged from many of the participants and their experience of the CPD was being put back in the position of a learner; this made many of the staff consider how the children would feel in lessons, not just in drama, but in areas where they may have less confidence or feel anxious. Alice stated, 'I think the experience has probably made me more aware of the feelings of some of the children in my class and I would possibly think twice before asking them to complete things that might make them



uncomfortable,' thus serving to help develop teacher empathy and understanding. The feelings of teachers being placed out of their comfort zone and understanding how the children would feel in these situations was also echoed by Maddie: 'It is important for adults to be pushed out of their comfort zone so they know how the children may feel... not only with drama but with subjects they have anxieties/stresses about.' This would align with ideas of Mezirow's work on transformative learning and reflection in the study of one's self (1990, 1991). Interestingly, this was also Pope Jean Paul's view on teacher training programmes for example, that trainee teachers should be made to study something they have no natural affinity for so they never forget how difficult learning can be for some.

This raised an interesting discussion point of when and how pupils should be taken out of their comfort zones and the impact of lessons which may increase anxiety or nervousness. As practitioners, this is something we want pupils to experience so that they develop their resilience, problem-solving strategies and ability to push themselves through more challenging areas of their educational development. However, as already stated, this is often more associated with outdoor, experiential learning, whereas it should potentially be considered more by practitioners in the classroom, especially in subjects where they have more confidence and therefore, may not recognise the anxieties of their learners.

A conflict in opinions between the participants developed here. Alice recognised that she needed to be aware of this so that she could prevent pupils from experiencing these feelings. However, Maddie encouraged these feelings, recognising that teachers needed to be taken out of their comfort zones as a reminder of understanding how pupils would feel, in order to increase teachers' awareness of these feelings but not to discourage from these learning experiences. As part of the CPD sessions, 'dramatherapy' was discussed and explored as a means to help the staff understand how some of the activities used in their training sessions were used not just in schools, but in types of therapy and training beyond the classroom. Laura identified in her diary how some of the drama games could be used to help children in school, particularly

those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) to work through specific and focused feelings, thoughts and emotions, as long as it was handled in an appropriate way:

Useful for SEN children (as you have just said) dramatherapy. I have reflected on several occasions that certain children in my class would be hugely pushed out of their comfort zone. Helps you to reflect on what is it to be a learner. If we'd been doing different activities which totally within my comfort zone, I wouldn't have been forced/ able to put myself so easily in the position of the learner.

Jan also identified in her diary a key thinking point in the area of being a learner. Initially, she explored her own personal experience as a learner and how she felt, on occasion, as a more reserved member of a group. She then created a connection between her feelings and experiences and moved this forward to consider the shy or more reserved children in her class. She wanted to consider when and how to use drama as part of her teaching, in particular considering how to manage the children, focusing specifically on those members of the group who were more shy:

Considerations for shy/reserved children- I don't always want to share my feelings with others – children may also feel this. I am not a natural performer and can feel under pressure and uncomfortable in big groups – many children feel this too. Need to be careful some children use drama to ridicule others and highlight their weaknesses.

Jan identified that the management of drama lessons, by the practitioner, was absolutely crucial in ensuring that all members of the group were nurtured as part of the learning experience and if they were, this could be a critical and rewarding learning experience for them. Often, in drama, pupils are acting 'in role' and therefore behaving like someone else; if this is not managed appropriately, children could potentially use the opportunity to be unkind or raise personal issues about others. Jan acknowledged that children may not always want to share feelings or emotions and may feel uncomfortable in doing so, therefore, the planning and delivery of drama-based tasks must be carefully considered, in order that all members of the group feel valued and are able to share their experiences without fear or prejudice. The developmental nature of the awareness of others and their feelings, their balance of tact and honesty, and their

developing degree of empathy could all be skills developed through this kind of carefully structured drama teaching.

The following extracts are from the narrative diaries at the end of BEING training. Daisy explained that the initial task of identifying personal acquisitions made her realise that she was using drama a lot more frequently in her teaching than she had realised, 'after creating the shield of personal acquisitions, I realised and recognised that I use acting/drama in many areas of the curriculum and many times throughout the day.' This was also echoed by Amie, who was one of the most reluctant and nervous participants, in realising that drama already featured as a regular teaching strategy. In her final reflection she wrote, 'I can act and I do act (in my own way) but only when I feel confident to do so. The more I think about drama, the more I realise that I do use it on a daily basis and I have become better at it in the last two-three years.'

Amie also used the shield of personal acquisitions to not only evaluate her inner thoughts and feelings about her personal and professional self but also some of the qualities of her physical attributes that she could also relate to drama and an awareness of self:

I use my hands to talk, demonstrate meaning with actions, expression. Calm, quiet voice most of the time. Struggle to raise voice at times so use bell, claps, whistle to get attention. Short – so usually stand when talking to adults, but easy to join children on the floor! Calm and patient, organised.

Harriet also found the initial stages of the BEING training highlighted some of her personal qualities that she already knew of, however, she wanted to see if the exploration of this, through this training could change or develop her thinking in this area:

Having filled out the shield and questionnaire, I am even more aware of how self-critical I can be! Intrigued to see how this develops – I realise that I am a perfect personality for this research. Will it make me more confident/ less critical or will I overanalyse every session and worry about how I come across.

Others identified drama as a way of allowing pupils to express themselves and learn more about each other's personalities and emotions, not just in drama lessons specifically, but in other curriculum areas. Kathryn stated in her final reflection, 'I felt that all sessions were useful and could be put into practice with children and adults as ice breakers, as well as drama activities. Many would also be useful to be included in our PSHE programme, especially the emotional awareness type activities.' This was also supported by Laura who recognised that drama should not just be viewed as a subject to help children 'perform', but also as a means to teach social and emotional skills: 'I do feel that in today's society where "fame and celebrity" is held in such high reverence, we have to be mindful that children see drama as a skill for life, rather than a chance to "stand on a stage and be the centre of attention"'. This recognises that drama may not only be used as a discrete subject, but also in other areas of the curriculum and can mutually benefit both pupils and staff. This point also could be used to counteract and minimise the earlier fear that, if used, taught and delivered correctly, drama could be of benefit for all pupils, especially those who were shy or struggled to communicate their emotions; this will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

For the participants who were generally more comfortable with drama and regularly used drama in the classroom (even if only as teaching tool, rather than a discrete subject), their changes in perception were subtler and the training simply brought their existing confidence with drama to the surface and their interest and enthusiasm was motivated through the study. Maddie stated, 'I really enjoyed the whole process. I love drama and I would like more opportunities to develop as an actress but I don't have time. Luckily my job lets me act every day!' This utterance is in stark contrast to Tom's belief about drama playing a very small part in his teaching practice.

The CPD sessions reinforced and reignited Maddie's clear energy, enthusiasm and passion for drama. In addition, Kathryn found the activities useful and could see the links and interactions between drama and real life, once again highlighting the importance of drama for life skills, for teachers to use in their professional practice and social and interactive skills, not just to learn how to 'act' or perform. She wrote:

At the end of the session I felt positive and found the activities useful and reaffirming that use of voice, body, tone, mirroring are all useful tools both as a teacher and a member of society. Every day we interact with pupils, colleagues, parents, loved ones and all the above affect our interpretation of their mood and our mood. Life is a drama; drama is life – every day!

The training also provided staff the opportunity to reflect, not only on their professional attributes, but also on their personal attributes. Some of these reflections were quite poignant and really demonstrated that the extended time provided through the CPD sessions for honest and critical reflection helped the participants to learn more about themselves as well as the children in their class. Daisy highlighted this by stating in her diary:

Through the workshops, I have felt nervous at possible discussions as I am easily embarrassed. I overthink a lot and I think this was evident in this process as I would think about the type of activities we may be given. I do not think I have changed during this process. However, it has made me consider how I already use drama and acting and also think about some the expectations we have of the children; in year group assemblies etc.

Harriet made some interesting comments about how she felt about the process of the CPD. Again, she didn't feel the activities had 'changed' her, however, she did recognise an increase in confidence within her present staff peer group. It would be interesting to observe whether the activities would have helped her to feel more confident in other group situations:

I don't think the activities have changed me as a person however, I have found the whole experience really interesting- reflecting (after the drama sessions) on how I approach tasks and felt during them. I would say that having spent time together with the group, I do feel slightly less self-conscious and more confident to speak up. However, I am totally sure that if I did this again with another group, I would be back to square one...

I found this response from Harriet a contradiction to my own personal experiences of how drama has helped me personally to develop, and although, I accept that with a different group of peers or colleagues, Harriet may have felt less confidence, with her increased confidence and awareness of self, Harriet may have felt more inclined to

participate more fully than her previous lived experience had allowed. Perhaps this reflected how she saw things at the early stage in the process.

This increased confidence or feeling was comfort was also recognised by Amie and Tom and in addition, other participants commented on the enjoyment of having extended time to share personal experiences and professional reflections with colleagues.

Several participants highlighted that their awareness of drama had been heightened or their interest in drama had been reignited and they were keen to use more drama techniques in their teaching. Charles stated, 'I have very much enjoyed trying these activities out as I feel I always learn new skills and ideas better by doing them myself.' This also reinforced the point that interactive CPD sessions were perhaps more useful as they provided practitioners with the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of using the drama activities, and having a go themselves, not just referring to resource books or observing an 'expert'. Charles found the opportunity to try the activities himself a relevant and useful part of the CPD that he felt he could then use himself in his teaching. This was further supported by Laura who stated, 'Any INSET is more impactful when all staff are involved and it's done over a period of weeks – people talk about it outside the session too!' This would align with Kennedy's (2005) critique of certain models of CPD training, with opportunities for colleagues to be fully involved as a whole team, to have short bursts of training which were revisited and then subsequent opportunities for reflection and discussion providing a richer experience for the participants. This reinforced the fact that the extended CPD had an impact that went beyond the sessions themselves and were being discussed, albeit informally, in the staffroom outside of the sessions; it promoted thinking and discussion. Laura's overall reflection at the end of the first sharing session stated, 'it has been good to spend time with colleagues in this setting and plenty of things to take away/ use/ reflect on.'

In addition, colleagues became more aware of each other's perceptions and this provided reassurance, that other participants had similar feelings or experiences of

drama. This also led to increased *esprit de corps* and togetherness in the staff noted in the following page. Laura wrote in her final reflection:

Tom, Alice and I seem pretty much like-minded on many issues. It's good really that none of us feel super-confident leading/engaging in drama activities. We all agree on its value and are happy to facilitate. I enjoyed the discussion. It was good to be able to talk to colleagues about educational issues and it made me think that it would be good to do it more often, maybe in staff meetings about other subjects.

For many of the participants, with indifferent views or generally positive views towards drama, their lived experience only provided small changes in thinking or a renewed awareness of a memory from the past. However, for the participants who appeared to be the most reluctant to take part in the study, their changes towards their lived experiences of drama shifted much more dramatically; they highlighted a change in their perception of drama, how they viewed drama and how they would subsequently use drama in future in their teaching. In addition to the shift in their perceptions of drama, the training provided unexpected responses by those who were the most reluctant to take part, as it really helped to develop their relationships with colleagues. Amie stated in her reflective diary:

Today I'm feeling closer to other staff members. Activities have made me work with staff who I would not have worked with before. I feel more comfortable as part of the group.

Becoming closer as a staff group and feeling more confident with one's peers was also highlighted by Harriet, as stated earlier, as feeling less self-conscious and more confident to share her thoughts in a group even if this meant exposing her insecurities when communicating to a group of adults; she felt comfortable doing so. In the final focus group Harriet shared:

I know that I'm a really self-conscious person, talking in front of a group of children is absolutely fine... but even now... with you all sitting here, and I know you all well and would talk to you all happily individually, I can feel myself blushing and I find that is a real... and I don't understand why, I can't help it, but I would cringe at any kind of thing where all the attention is all on me, and it's really weird that when you're in that situation with children, it doesn't bother me at all. I can be daft or stupid or whatever.

Once again, teachers encounter a separation of anxieties and issues when they are 'in role' in front of the children, even though this could be considered as performing, the staff felt comfortable with this. Charles implied that this was possibly because in the classroom, with the children, the focus is not on the teacher, "When you're in a classroom, the spotlight isn't on you. They're not being critical of you." Jessica recognised that her teacher-self was very much part of her personality but was a role that she played on a daily basis; she 'became the teacher': "Since becoming a teacher, for me, it's my alter-ego. Every day is a form of performing. It is a performance and I would agree with you (*gestures to Tom*), you have to have humour, it keeps my sanity." Humour was mentioned several times as an important aspect of a teacher's toolbox and humour was one of the only areas where Tom could see a consistent link between his personal and professional self. In addition, Tom reported in his diary improved relationships with colleagues as a result of the CPD, he enjoyed the opportunity to relax a little and show a little more of his personality which he saw as a benefit:

I do feel that my colleagues have seen me in a different light and this has eased me into being more expressive and jovial when I interact with them on a day-to-day basis. So if for nothing else, this process has been useful and successful and I would recommend that other 'non-drama' teachers give it a go and try to engage with some of the methodology.

Tom reinforced in his statement the exact rationale for the research taking place; the opportunity for reluctant drama participants to try and experiment with new and unfamiliar ideas in order to see if their pre-existing perceptions, issues or anxieties could be challenged. In addition, Tom did share a lot of his issues and anxieties in both of the focus groups. However, he shared a lot more of his personal reservations, frustration and anxieties about participating in the activities in his narrative diaries. Therefore, it was fascinating to note that Tom was observed (by more than one participant in their narrative diary reflections) that he immersed himself fully into the drama games. The other participants enjoyed seeing how confident he was in experimenting with the drama games, when this was in fact, the exact opposite of how Tom was feeling towards the CPD, especially in the initial stages.



Amie also commented on how reassuring she had found the experience, in terms of recognising that others had the same anxieties towards drama as she did; speaking in front of a group and performing, 'I am reassured that others feel the same as me about performing in front of adults.' In addition, despite being anxious at the start of the training, Anna also identified three key areas which had been highlighted for her through the process of the study, namely, 'the importance of pushing boundaries (moving out of comfort zone) for us and the children, the importance of working with people that you do not usually work with and the importance of praise and encouragement.' All three of these aspects are certainly not specific to the teaching of drama, but do highlight important areas of development, both for staff and for children which will be discussed further in relation to research question 2. In addition, Tom also identified the importance of both verbal and non-verbal praise not only for himself as a nervous and anxious participant, but also understanding the value of verbal praise, not just non-verbal praise and reassurance for the pupils in his class, something which he had not always considered. He wrote:

In terms of it benefitting the children, I think that it has highlighted the importance of nurturing praise and showing acceptance. What I mean by this is that when we finished an activity, I felt myself actively seeking praise! But obviously, due to the set-up of the group, I was able to read emotions/ reactions in order to gain acceptance. A child, on the other hand, would need verbal approval and praise. If this was not given and received, then this could have a negative effect on that child's view on drama and being expressive.

Interestingly, the participants also identified key personal factors which they felt were of benefit from the training such as, feeling more relaxed, confident and at ease with colleagues, making eye contact, being less concerned about the perceptions of others and in the end, enjoying the experience a lot more than they had expected. Jessica stated, 'This experience has been really effective in allowing us, as professionals, to critically reflect on our positions. It has also shown me that I really shouldn't worry about what others think of me.' This highlighted the fact that the training had both a personal and professional impact. This was reinforced by Harriet who stated, 'It has also been a good thing (I think!) for me to be pushed out of my comfort zone as often, the

things I can worry about are really not that bad!’ This allowed Harriet to reflect on her own personal lived experience and the influence that this has on her daily routines as well as her position as a teacher and a learner.

At the very end of the training, in the final focus group Tom said, “I have not really considered how I could use these drama activities in my teaching and I find it hard to acknowledge how they could be helpful. I think this would come at a later stage; I don’t feel ready for dramatic enlightenment.” This statement was of particular interest as it implied that although Tom could see the potential positive impact of the training with regards to his developing more comfortable relationships with his colleagues, he had yet to connect how this could be used in his teaching, but could also acknowledge that this may change with further time to process. This also supported the importance of reflection in living theory, allowing time to process and reflect on the experience, not just an initial response (Whitehead, 2008; Van Manen, 1990). Therefore, a few months after the study, Tom, (who was considered to have the strongest feelings against drama and who also discussed the major conflicts he experienced between his personal and professional viewpoints about drama) was asked to complete a final reflection to consider whether any of the BEING training had had any lasting impact on his teaching. In the extract below, which has been included in full due to its powerful nature, Tom identified the many ways in which the training had shifted his lived experience. In addition, he had made even more significant changes to his teaching and his contribution to the life of drama at the school and therefore really showed how the CPD training had ultimately completely changed his lived experience of drama (I have underlined comments which showed changes in lived experience or critical thinking):

#### **Tom – Self-Reflection**

As previously stated, I have always been a non-participant or a reluctant participant in anything remotely to do with drama. After starting my PGCE, I realised that this would have to change but was somewhat glad that discrete drama objectives were removed from the national curriculum (for selfish reasons).

I agreed to take part in the BEING model process as I was aware that I needed to overcome my personal barrier to ‘drama’ for the benefit of the children I teach.

Since taking part in the BEING model programme, I have introduced drama games into my literacy teaching and often use different versions of games to 'wake up' my learners or to fill time gaps throughout the day. My children love the variation of games and enjoy expressing themselves creatively; I also ensure that I am an active participant so that my actions encourage those learners (mostly boys) who are a lot like I was at that age: somewhat unwilling to participate.

I have also found that I am more confident in social situations with my colleagues; this has helped me to come out of my shell. I am by no means a theatrical thespian but I feel more able to express myself without feeling that I am providing people with ammunition to make fun of me!

Quite unbelievably for myself, I also agreed to play the part of Jack's Mother in an adapted version of Jack and the Beanstalk. This was a staff pantomime performed for the whole school in which I had to wear a wig and a dress and actually 'act'. Obviously I was very nervous but realised that this was for the benefit of the children and that again, I would be setting a good example to the pupils. This was the first time that I had been on stage in this capacity since I was seven years old. The most surprising thing was that I actually enjoyed it! And I also enjoyed the fact that the children found it funny and other people complimented me. Whether these compliments were platitudes or not, it still felt good to be praised for doing something I felt uncomfortable about.

I am so glad that I decided to take part in this project and I feel like I am certainly heading in the right direction in terms of overcoming the 'drama' barrier that I had constructed for myself.

Tom's reflection was of significant benefit to the analysis of the research as he highlighted many key areas, which were echoed by many other members of the group. However, as he really was the most 'anti-drama' in terms of enjoyment and willingness to take part, his responses to the CPD, and ultimately the changes that were made as a result of it, were pertinent. He identified himself as a reluctant participant; many other members of the research group repeated this viewpoint or opinion. He identified the clear benefits of drama not only to himself, in terms of developing both personal and professional relationships and confidence with colleagues, but also the benefits of drama to the children. He realised that he actually enjoyed being pushed out of his comfort zone, even though at times it felt like an unpleasant experience. Finally, Tom identified that the only barriers that he had towards drama were the ones that he had created for himself and therefore the process of the CPD had helped to challenge and change these barriers and ultimately, after time for reflection and changes in his

practice, to remove them. He also identified and was correct in his earlier reflections; that he needed more time to think back and digest the process and the impact of the CPD before he would feel ready and confident in his own abilities to apply some of the ideas and drama techniques in the classroom.

In general, all participants made a positive step in their lived experience towards drama. As discussed so far, they felt closer to colleagues, more relaxed, enjoyed the time to explore new thinking, and generally felt more at ease with the subject. They became more familiar with the use of practical drama strategies for both themselves personally and to use in the classroom professionally. However, one participant demonstrated almost the opposite results in their response to the CPD training. Claire had stated at the beginning of the study how she could only see that it was going to be a positive experience; she was a confident dancer and used to being 'in role' as an EYFS teacher, constantly performing in front of the children, using voices, acting out role plays etc. However, Claire's response to the CPD was quite the opposite of everyone else, as detailed in one of her narrative diary entries as follows:

At the beginning of this process I was quite excited about being able to embrace 'drama' and be more confident. However, the whole process has made me realise that I am what I am and I will never feel confident taking part in drama activities (especially in front of colleagues I work with). I also considered how I would have felt if I had gone through this process with staff I had known for 12 years (e.g. my last school) and whether I would have felt less self-conscious with people I know really well. To be honest, I now feel even more self-conscious about my short comings in drama than I did at the beginning of the process. It has also made me consider how children must feel when they are asked to do something out of their comfort zone.

In addition, there may also always be a competitive element or a perception of natural talent, which could have deflated those who considered themselves as not matching up to a certain activity or not suited to a particular subject. In connection to this, Claire's response was worth noting, as she was not considered to be one of the participants to have particularly negative lived experiences about drama. Therefore, for the CPD to have made her feel more anxious about her abilities in drama was an interesting and

unfortunate result, especially as the CPD seemed to have the opposite affect for every other participant. Claire was one of the newest members of staff team and the negativity she displayed towards the study could be explained by her not knowing her colleagues very well. In addition to this, she had a leadership role and may have felt additional pressure to perform exceptionally well. This may have resulted in Claire being taken even further out of her comfort zone than her colleagues and could have potentially entered her panic zone, as Maddie discussed. Therefore, Claire's negative experience of the study remains an anomaly which could be explained by the social, cultural, individual and historical dynamics of the research setting.

Perhaps, being considered as a performer in other ways and through dance meant that Claire had never yet considered her confidence levels in drama specifically and therefore, she considered herself to feel reasonably comfortable as she was used to being around performers, choreography and 'performing' herself. She reported in the final focus group conversation: "Is it a perception of what you think you're good at doing?" Therefore, as Claire saw herself as a performer with her dancing experiences and background, perhaps the experience of purely drama exposed Claire's lack of knowledge and true confidence in this area. Therefore, as Claire, potentially already had a perception that she was comfortable with drama or performing in general, the new lived experiences of feeling exposed and uncomfortable meant that Claire's perceptions of herself did not in fact align with her real lived experience of drama. She thought she was comfortable with drama, using evidence she had from other performance areas, when in fact, she was not as comfortable as she thought. The drama techniques and games used in the training were very different and therefore exposed gaps in Claire's lived experience of previous types of performance and drama conventions. Like some of the other participants, Claire also highlighted the experience of being in the position of the learner and how that feels. A lot of EYFS learning revolves around role play, speaking out aloud in groups. Therefore, feeling in the position of the learner may have also encouraged Claire to question some of the activities she used in her everyday teaching and this may have made her feel a little unsettled.

This was also reinforced by Maggie who recognised that within our own setting, at a small independent school, drama was generally handled as a very positive experience for all pupils involved. However, Maggie could quite easily see how staff and pupils could encounter issues with drama in different settings: 'Our classes are so supportive of each other, a lot of stress is removed from them and they feel comfortable to perform. However, this is not the case at other schools where confidence/ support for each other/criticism/larger classes are all bigger issues.' Maggie's perception was that within our school, the children were in a more positive situation to encounter drama and therefore more supportive of each other and with lower levels of stress; it would be interesting to explore these ideas further to ascertain exactly how and why some staff perceived that the children were in a 'better' position to explore drama.

The CPD training helped to promote new thinking, new discussion and links to other areas of development not only for drama but for other key areas of pedagogy such as teaching techniques, other curriculum areas and staff development, reflection time and relationships. These aspects are explored further in research questions 2 and 3.

## **Research Question 2**

### ***What advantages and disadvantages can be identified by using drama games and reflection for in-service CPD?***

When analysing the data from the narrative diaries and focus groups, several key themes became apparent when identifying the advantages and disadvantages of using drama games and in turn the subsequent reflections on the impact of the CPD by the participants. In terms of analysis, these themes also helped to identify the perceived advantages and disadvantages of having drama within the primary curriculum, either as a discrete subject or as a teaching tool used cross-curricularly. Each of the key themes will be explored and discussed through research question 2, using sub-headings to identify the main themes which emerged from the data which were discussed by the participants in their focus groups. Talking about the efficacy of the games and the experiences of the BEING training aided the participants in their reflections as part of the narrative diaries and the final focus group, extracting these experiences and reflecting on their outcome and subsequent impact.

#### **Personal/Historical Experiences and Conflicts**

Many of the personal and historical experiences and conflicts concerning previous lived experience of, or participation in, drama have been discussed in research question 1. Many of the participants had generally negative or limited experience of drama and therefore had developed negative lived experiences in relation to the subject. Other factors which contributed to a lack of drama experience in the participants included limited experience during teacher training (ITE), or indeed no training experiences at all, as highlighted by Charles and discussed earlier on page 78. This appeared to contribute to a lack of confidence amongst the participants in teaching and using drama, especially without a cross-curricular link. All participants were happy to use drama techniques in class as long as it was attached or linked to a topic, but this confidence appeared to grow for some of the participants as the training developed, which is proof of the efficacy of the drama games. Alice stated in her narrative diary, 'I can see how some of the sessions could be adapted for use in the classroom... drama involves forms of expression,

emotions, opinions, thoughts, entertainment, alternative to writing/drawing.’ The drama games also helped Laura to identify the value of drama in the primary curriculum, she wrote in her diary:

I can see the value in planning and teaching drama in primary schools. The children (mainly) love it. You get to see them using knowledge in a different way. For example, in History, they can use their knowledge of a historical character to ‘become’ that person, using sympathy and empathy to imagine what life would have been like for them; it is a much richer learning experience than for example, researching a historical figure and writing a fact file about them!

The training was adapted from Özmen’s original model of helping trainee teachers to develop their professional identity. By allowing trained teachers to explore both their personal and professional selves, as well as working through basic drama techniques and conventions, the CPD was designed to be multifunctional. It not only helped the participants explore their own lived experiences, but also to develop their professional ideas and give them increased confidence and provide practical ideas to develop their own use of drama in the classroom. This was recognised by Daisy during the initial focus group: ‘Sounds as though the sessions will involve scenarios which may occur in a classroom setting.’ This was then reinforced after the first CPD training session with Daisy reflecting on her professional attributes and writing in her narrative diary, ‘I realised [I] had many more attributes than I had recognised in the past.’ This was also reinforced by Amie’s comments, as discussed earlier in research question 1.

Kathryn also recognised how drama CPD and the use of drama games could help staff to recognise their professional selves and model this to the children. Interestingly, at the start of one of the CPD sessions, Kathryn entered the session not feeling fully engaged with the project or the task. However, the process of having a physical CPD session, which involved being interactive with staff, becoming engaged with discussion, participating in drama games and activities and then reflecting on the experience, resulted in a shift of Kathryn’s attitude during the session and in turn a rather important reflective point:



Felt quite tired, so not totally engaged as I came into the session. During the session, I became engaged as the whole idea of teaching and drama are completely linked – so the project is important to all teachers. It's always good to be reflective and look at your strengths and weaknesses as a person and educator. The most important part of being a teacher is to be a role model.

It is curious to consider here, that Kathryn did not identify knowledge or competence as the most important aspect of being a teacher, instead more important in her opinion was being a role model. The BEING training was not designed specifically to provide the participants with a considerable amount of knowledge relating to drama, but to provide a change in approach. Tom identified within his changing lived experience that through the training his confidence and acceptance of using drama in front of the pupils had changed and he was therefore happier to be a 'role model' and become more fully involved with drama activities with the children.

The opportunity to allow for the observations of 'experts' and observations of pupils using drama had marked a considerable shift in teacher perception of drama and the teachers felt that an opportunity to observe 'experts' would help to build their confidence and encourage them to use drama more readily in their teaching. Amie stated in her narrative diary that she was 'Inspired by other teachers. Working with outgoing members of staff really helps to boost my confidence. Watching others teach. Share experiences.' Laura also stated that, 'I realise that the more you observe them and use them (drama activities), and experiment, the more confident you'll feel!' These comments further justify the rationale for allowing extended CPD to give teachers the opportunity to try out, discuss and reflect on drama activities, or in fact any areas of the curriculum where teachers feel less confident or lacking in experience. This would help to overcome potential barriers to their use in the classroom and help to both improve personal and professional confidence and change existing lived experience of the area. This links to the literature discussed in Chapter Two, concerning mixed experiences of drama and inconsistent ITE training (Cockett, 1999; Hulse and Adams, 2017).

Alice shared some of her anxieties about approaching the planning and the implementation of a drama lesson: 'I have a fear – the need to think quickly – not

planned. Worried about experimenting.’ However, this fear was reduced when she shared in her reflective diary, ‘It has been useful to be able to see demonstrations – not out of a book.’ This once again suggested that the limited amount of drama training during teacher training (ITE) and lack of extended CPD reduced teacher confidence as discussed in Chapter Two, and although there was a large selection of resources available to teachers, if they did not feel confident with the concept of drama lessons as a whole, they are highly likely to be reluctant to use them.

In addition, if teachers know that their children are experiencing drama in subject specific lessons, or with other teachers, they are also more likely to limit their use of drama in the classroom. This was echoed by other members of the focus group conversation and reinforced by Tom: ‘My teaching partner teaches drama as a discrete subject. This provides me with a subconscious safety net; I am able to justify my lack of drama teaching by reassuring myself that my pupils are not missing out on this fundamental strand of holistic education.’

The study also yielded evidence that another potential fundamental reason why the curriculum is lacking in creative drama could be due to the fact that teachers lacked confidence in their ability to teach drama, either through a general lack of confidence in the subject or a lack of training (Downing, Johnson, and Kaur, 2003 and Neelands 2008). Despite this, they were willing to use drama conventions cross-curricularly, as long as the drama techniques could be linked into a topic-based theme. This was considered separate and different by the participants as they were not teaching ‘drama’ but using drama as a learning experience. For some participants this helped them to view drama in very different ways. During the CPD sessions Jan felt comfortable making links between the ideas of the drama games and topics within the curriculum. She wrote:

Some of the activities could be used across the curriculum i.e. the three chair game. For young children you could set a scene and they could then decide what character and emotion they would play and use this for creative writing. The ‘work with your fingers’ could be used during PE – in partner work. The children could teach each other some footwork patterns etc.

Tom also identified that when he was using drama games as part of another curriculum area, the role he took within these lessons was different to the way he would 'act' when using drama as a discrete subject: 'When drama does manage to sneak itself into my lessons, usually in the form of "drama games", I act as a facilitator, rather than an active participant.' In the CPD sessions, the leader of the activities and the staff involved were all classed as participants. Tom continued, 'I understand that my pupils enjoy this part of their education so it should be accessible. That doesn't mean I need to join in! (Even though I know that my participation would definitely increase the levels of enthusiasm in my class, especially amongst the boys.)' Once again, Tom identified a gender issue within his perception of drama. He suggested that his increased participation in drama lessons, rather than just acting as a facilitator, would potentially mean that the boys in his class would be more engaged. Tom may have been presuming that all the boys in his class were not active participants in drama, regardless of the teacher. He was also potentially suggesting that as a male teacher, acting as a role model, (as Kathryn suggested earlier), would help the boys to become more involved. In addition, it was perhaps Tom's own negative previous lived experiences of drama which helped him to make presumptions about the boys in his class, based on his own personal thoughts and feelings. In fact, the participation of the children may not have been affected by Tom's involvement or lack thereof. The fact that he was a male teacher or the influence of his negative perceptions of drama may have had little or no impact on the experience or subsequent participation of the children in his class, especially the boys.

Drama games or activities used as a teaching tool as part of other curriculum lesson were clearly viewed as 'separate' or different by many of the participants. The participants did not view themselves as teaching a 'drama' lesson, they were simply using drama as any other teaching technique as part of a larger theme, lesson or topic and therefore felt much more comfortable with this perception of the subject. A key advantage of this was identified by Jan, 'Drama could be used in all areas of the curriculum, - the advantages of this is it allows all children to be active participants.'

### ***Benefits of Drama to the Children and Staff in Primary Education***

All staff gave positive comments to indicate that they valued drama both for use with the children and also acknowledged the benefits of the CPD training for their own professional development (although they may not have done so in the past). Jan commented: 'Some activities could allow you to become a more reflective teacher i.e. ask the children for direct feedback on lessons – say what they think.'

In terms of the drama games specifically, the participants all commented on some of the specific activities included throughout the BEING training in their reflective diaries and as part of the final focus group. A range of different and varied drama games were selected from Özmen's (2011) work (as detailed fully in Chapter Three and listed in Appendix 4, page 144). The participants' responses to the different activities varied greatly; some found specific activities highly beneficial in terms of personal awareness, professionally (in terms of their awareness of their identity) and gave ideas as to how these could be used in the classroom. Equally, some participants found little or no benefit from the very same activities and could not understand their rationale.

The breadth and depth of the different games selected therefore proved important since every participant found several of the games to be beneficial and successful. There did not appear to be any pattern in the responses to the games, no correlation between teachers and their teaching age-range, experience or responses. All of the participants had one or more favourite drama game, equally the same game could have been viewed by another participant as having little or no significant benefit or interest. Therefore, the wide range and variety of games was essential in order to ensure that all participants were able to gain something of use from the sessions. The following extracts provide evidence to support the benefits of using drama games as a teaching tool through in-service CPD. It would appear as though the more generic drama games (for example, *Silence of the Mirrors*, *Light in the Blindness* and *Work with Your Fingers*) provided the warm-up, introduction to the CPD and allowed participants to relax into the training and begin to make connections between these activities and how they could be applied in their teaching. Özmen's tasks (such as *Talk to Your Other Self* and *Act Out the Worst*

*Teacher*), which explored more of teachers' professional self, prompted more extended discussion, often more humour and enjoyment from the group and more detailed reflections from the participants.

In the initial task, the *Shield of Personal Acquisitions* (See Appendix 3, page 140), as part of the B-phase of the CPD, the participants had to explore both their personal and professional identities: Jan's acquisitions included, 'voice intonation, eye contact, body actions to show concepts, inspire children, creative, fun activities, engaged, happy, ready to learn, cross curricular links, topic books, resources, background knowledge/reading, observing colleagues, visiting other schools, external courses...'. Many of these attributes are strongly associated with the successful planning and implementation of drama lessons; covering both specific drama skills, as well as techniques for personal development (Baldwin, 2003 and 2009). Amie also echoed the same sentiments as Jan, that when teaching, one is 'in role' and being aware of one's own voice, actions and expressions in order to present to the children your 'teacher-self'. Amie wrote in her narrative diary, 'in the initial focus group conversation, most people said they have a teacher persona which is big and bold, different to self.' This highlights that teachers are very aware of their teacher-self, but possibly had not considered how much of this teacher-self used drama conventions in order to develop the teacher's role and presence. This was further supported by Harriet who stated, 'The sessions have also made me view my role as teacher in different ways and highlighted the similarities between teaching and "acting".'

Vocal health was included as one of the activities in the BEING training. The importance of the protection of teacher voice was discussed, as well as activities including how to warm up the voice for extended use in the day, change of tone and how to throw and project the voice successfully. This was considered to be useful by several of the participants and once again, something which they had not encountered as part of their training (Munier and Kinsella, 2008). Amie stated as a reflection in her narrative diary: 'This is useful to know – never really thought about voice box etc. Could implement techniques in the classroom, so found this helpful. Have done the laryngeal massage a

few times in the morning, on the way to school. Could talk about where different voices come from and repeat this activity with the children.’ In addition, Maddie, who had vocal health problems herself, recognised the importance of being aware of vocal health, not just for staff but for the children as well: ‘I feel that this is crucial – I have real problems with my voice and teaching should set children up for survival in society – I will definitely use this in my teaching and I will integrate it in my drama/literacy lessons.’ Charles and Jan also reported that they would like to use some of the ideas given with their own classes. Jan reported, ‘good for performance practice – can they throw their voice?’ and Charles wrote, ‘Vocal health was good. I could see benefits to doing this daily with a class, a little bit like brain gym.’ This is an interesting comment since Brain Gym™ has now anecdotally largely been discredited.

The *Arm Raising Activity* was identified as one of the activities which either provoked an enthusiastic response (and the participants could see potential positive uses with children), or in total contrast, the activity was not considered to be of value at all. Amie’s response, once again, highlighted her negative lived experience of drama and as it was very near to the start of the training, also illustrated Amie’s own awareness of both her personal and professional self. Therefore, although she didn’t find the activity of personal benefit or could recognise how she could use it with children, she did use it to identify some of her own personal qualities: ‘Nonsense! This probably means I find it hard to connect with people – I do! Did not feel urge to put hand up at all. Only put it up when I sensed others doing it around me.’ Maddie and Charles on the other hand, both could recognise positive qualities of the games and could see links to use within their teaching. Maddie stated, ‘Interesting - characters that I consider to be similar to myself raised their hand at exactly the same time! Could use this activity with time in Maths – put your hand up when you think..., or a calming activity, relationship building – could use to partner children up, are they thinking on the same wave length?’ Charles also commented that, ‘Arm raising is something I have done before as a way to calm down a class and help with time passing understanding. It was interesting to be the last person and see how others reacted if you took longer to put your arm up.’

*Silence of the Mirrors* is a widely recognised drama game that is used both as a drama warm up activity, but can also be used in many different circumstances and lessons to develop motor skills, concentration, focus and non-verbal communication. It was one of the few activities that many of the participants were already very familiar with and, because of this, was selected in order to help them feel at ease before being moved further out of their comfort zones in future activities. Maddie identified where she had used this activity in the past: 'Used during dance, this can encourage the children to complete movements that they wouldn't usually do.' However, as much as she recognised the benefits of using the game as a teaching tool, she found the task difficult to complete herself as a participant: 'Improves concentration and attention to detail but I found this task really difficult! Working with someone who is my manager... I felt like there was an expectation for me to act in a certain way. This made me feel shy and anxious, I'm not a shy person – why did I behave in this way?' Maddie's reaction to the activity was to become more self-conscious, when she normally considered herself to be an out-going and confident character in drama-based situations and with her peers. In addition, this highlighted with a potential implication for future study, with the participants working with members of the school leadership team and reflecting on the impact of this. This could not have been avoided in this study, as it was important for all members of the primary staff to be included as a cohesive team, whether they were members of the leadership team or not. However, this could be a potential consideration for further investigation; to consider the impact of management participating in CPD and how this could alter the outcome of the sessions.

Amie on the other hand, who had clear anxieties about most activities before they began, found the *Silence of the Mirrors* task quite comfortable, potentially because she had already used this activity in the past and therefore had more confidence, especially as she had used this activity, but not as part of drama, '...use this in PE lessons regularly. Interesting to do with different people – you get a sense of people. Alice – similar to me (nervous, cautious). Tom – adventurous, fun.' Amie enjoyed the task as she was able to explore her relationships and responses to different participants and the presence of some of the leadership team did not cause her to feel more anxious, she

enjoyed the interaction with others. It would be interesting to know whether Tom would have recognised himself as adventurous and fun, particularly as he shared so many personal anxieties and reservations about participating and being fully engaged in drama activities.

*Three Chairs* explores emotions and atmosphere within a room and how these can be changed rapidly. The activity involved the participants being in close proximity and whispering to each other. Tom found this an awkward experience: 'I found it quite strange to be whispered at and to whisper at other people due to the close proximity – I found that a little bit uncomfortable. I also found it quite difficult to keep a straight face and just wanted to laugh! Not sure if that's a good thing?!' Although Tom found the experience strange, the urge to laugh may have meant that he felt particularly uncomfortable. However, his entry in his narrative diary implied that the laughter was caused as he was amused by the situation and possibly found the activity and ice-breaking experience amusing. Tom appears to have been genuinely amused by the tasks, he recorded feeling closer to colleagues and more relaxed as a result of the BEING training in his narrative diary. The activity appeared to successfully help the participants to get more involved and explore different experiences through a collaborative process with colleagues. Jan reported in her narrative diary, 'very good – good to think of ideas/events and link them to your emotions. Good for children to explore and express their emotions and recognise how events can impact. Would be good for children to role play real events that have affected their emotions and share with their friends.' Jessica also commented, 'This activity made me realise how powerful words are at changing our emotions. I was quite impressed that all the people I whispered to recognised I meant fear.' Some of the activities were designed to highlight the impact of non-verbal behaviour whereas *Three Chairs* was designed to highlight the power of words. Jessica recognised, 'how quickly the impact of words can change one's mood or atmosphere'.

*Light in the Blindness* aims to raise awareness of other people's presence or energy to improve the feeling of team spirit, co-operation and trust. The participants had to move



around the space with their eyes closed. They were not allowed to communicate in any way and had to use their other senses and awareness in order to avoid bumping into each other and, in turn, move around the room safely and comfortably. At the beginning of the activity as I explained the task to the group, there were clearly some reservations about the safety of the experience and some of the group clearly had concerns which they reported in their narrative diaries. Laura wrote, 'I felt pretty uncomfortable and mainly loitered out of the way. This is nothing particularly to do with the group of people I was with; I wouldn't like it whoever was in the room.' However, Amie, although reluctant at the start acknowledged that her feelings about the activity became more positive as time went on, 'Concerned about banging/hurting someone/ touching them inappropriately. Got easier with time. Activity was fine, no issues!' This was also echoed by Charles who wrote, 'Walking around with eyes closed was ok, although I didn't want to bump into anyone! It helped ease tension and I could see how it could help settle a classroom environment.' Jessica also recognised the power involved in the experience, despite her initial reservations. 'Walking around with eyes shut was a very scary activity. It was also empowering though as I was amazed that I didn't bump into a lot more people than I did.'

Jan enjoyed this activity and found some useful links to use with teaching, 'good to teach about the senses'. Amie also stated that the activity, 'could be used as sensory activity with the children- walk towards the noise, try to find your partner by listening to their voice or blindfold activity where partners give directions.' Maddie also recognised how children may not find this activity easy at first, and would need some time for them to get used to it, she could recognise how the activity could help to build relationships and also suggested ways of adapting and developing the activity, 'Although I can see how this could be stressful for children at times, I feel that it would be a good trust building activity and I feel it's important to provide children with a range of experiences. This would be interesting to try with music; does this music change the way you feel?'

*Work Your Fingers* helps the participants to observe the body language of others and develop the synchronisation of movements with a partner. The opportunity to predict

movements of the partner leader aids the development of observational skills and cooperation and this was fully recognised by Jan who wrote, 'good for observational skills and as a cooperative game – learning to work with others – fun!' Tom found the activity strange and could only see the benefits when working as the participant being led:

This activity was strange, especially when 'leading'. I think this was because I couldn't see the reaction of the person behind me. I found it much easier to be led but was concerned that the person leading would try to make me do something out of my comfort zone. I felt that I understood the concept of the exercise more when I was being led.

Amie also found the task an abstract experience. However, being partnered with Laura meant that they both were able to gain something from the task and as they both felt unsure and shared an empathetic learning experience. Amie wrote, 'Initially did not understand what we had to do. Once started became obvious. Enjoyed this task, only problem thinking what to do next to make it interesting.' Laura reflected, '...glad to be with Amie on this as I know that such activities are not 'her thing' either – the knowledge of this probably put us both at rest a bit! Personally, I don't enjoy things like this but I can certainly see the value of these for children.' All participants in their reflections mentioned feeling unsure and out of their comfort zone but despite this, could see the benefits for use with children. Although they perhaps did not particularly enjoy the activity themselves, they stated that they would be happy to use it within their teaching and could understand how the discomfort in the initial stages could help to in fact end up alleviating tension and create team experiences. This would suggest that, although the participants were aware that children may also feel the same concerns such as feeling unsure, out of their comfort zone etc., the teachers in the group still felt it would be of value to allow their pupils to have the same learning experiences.

Another, classic drama warm-up is *Slow Motion Life* and this activity was generally very well received by all of the participants; they enjoyed contributing in the game and they could see how this could be used successfully with children. Amie and Tom both responded very positively to the activity with Amie writing, 'Another fun activity,

enjoyed repeat and replay activity, actions became bigger and louder the slower they got...' and Tom reporting, 'I really enjoyed this slow motion activity especially when we were in full slow motion mode. I had to think about all of my actions and facial expressions and I was therefore extremely aware of how I was trying to portray myself. This would be good when discussing feelings/emotions of a character with my class.' Maddie was able to identify another layer of learning within her *Slow Motion* experience as she had spent the day 'in role' with her class before attending the CPD and was dressed in costume. She recognised how this also affected her contributions to the activity and wrote in her diary:

Exaggerated movements were more fun. I was dressed differently today as I was a teacher in role – an air hostess and I felt this has made me more confident to do anything! This activity really made me think about specific movements/characteristics of people when things were slowed down.

The participants all enjoyed to opportunity to over-exaggerate their 'teacher selves' and the process gave them the opportunity to further analyse and consider their 'teacher in role' mannerisms by analysing their body movements, facial expressions and gestures.

*Talk to Your Other Self* was determined to be a liberating and stress relieving activity for many of the participants. In Özmen's training (2011), the participants have to share their conversations in front of the group. However, I knew that the staff would feel particularly uncomfortable doing this, especially as the group was well known to each other and therefore people may feel very self-conscious about sharing their vulnerabilities. Therefore, I decided to complete the task as a whole group so that everyone was speaking at the same time and not listening to each other in order that, hopefully, the contributions would be honest and true. This decision proved successful as confirmed by Amie who wrote, '...do this a lot anyway in life – find it almost comforting/reassuring. Wasn't too uncomfortable as everyone else was absorbed in what they were talking about so didn't feel isolated. Wouldn't be able to do this individually without the cover of everyone else.' Maddie also enjoyed this opportunity to express and communicate herself in a different way by writing:

Really enjoyed this activity. It released stress! Discovered lots about myself in this session. I can quite easily say my thoughts aloud. I have learnt that talking aloud prompts the majority of my conversations! Was so natural to do this that others began to communicate with me! Made me realise that talking through my problems is my way of coping with them.

Harriet used the task as a self-help experience. She recognised that she already used talking to herself as a strategy, but within the training environment, identified that she could use the process as a more positive tactic rather than a negative one, 'made me realise quite how much I do this – over analysing things. Often a 'downward spiral' but I can turn it around and be more positive/ encourage myself.' The activity proved to be beneficial for both the teachers and the children, with Jan identifying that the activity was, 'good for young children to express their thoughts/ worries/concerns. Good for their social/ emotional development...' and Maddie recognising that the activity could be:

...used to get stresses and anxieties off people's chest. Would be ideal to do during PSHE and would celebrate the fact that we are all different/ think differently. What occupies one person's mind doesn't affect someone else's mind. Celebrates the fact that we are all individual and unique.

This identified another opportunity where drama could be used cross-curricularly, but also could be used for children's critical social and emotional development (Slade, 1954 and Way 1967).

Another of the drama activities used in the CPD was *Preparing a Reading*. Increase in reading attainment engenders an increase in self-esteem (Lawrence, 2006). Reading is evidently a regular and vital feature of primary education, with both children and teachers reading independently and aloud on a regular basis. A reading-based drama activity was familiar to the participants. However, they were asked to read their extracts with contrasting tones and expressions, as opposed to ones that would be more expected to the characters they were representing. This highlighted the importance of use of voice and how different tones and expressions can significantly alter how a story

or characters are interpreted. Daisy wrote, 'The reading extract made me think about the acting put into a story – already recognised before but not the extent.' Jan also reported, 'Good to give role model ideas on reading with intonation and expression. Show how one text can be read in different ways to create difference moods etc.' Maddie suggested practical ideas, 'Use constantly in guided reading – could have a box with different accents/ stresses etc. After this activity, does it change the way you read the paragraph?' In addition, Amie found comfort in this activity as she had pre-determined text to use and therefore enjoyed the structure provided by this, 'Not a problem, do this all the time, silly voices, actions, expression, felt as if it was a script – didn't have to think on my feet!' Once again, there was recognition by the participants that they were using these drama techniques already as part of their everyday teaching but some had not made the connection to the extent that they were already doing this, thereby highlighting their present lived experience of how they were using drama in their teaching already, without even realising it.

One of the most entertaining and enjoyable activities for the group was one of the final drama games entitled *Say What You Mean/Act Out Worst Teacher*. In this activity the participants have to role play a classroom scenario, imagining they are communicating to a class. However, they have to be inconsistent in terms of verbal and non-verbal communication and act in a way that would be conflicting and confusing to pupils.

This activity promoted many reflections in the narrative diaries and was clearly a memorable aspect of the training. Amie wrote, 'Felt like I was able to vent frustrations and say what I'm often thinking but can't say. Fun to watch more outgoing staff (Maddie and Tom) going really crazy. An escape from reality.' Once again, Tom was identified as one of the more outgoing members of the group. In this case, he had made the conscious decision to act in this way however, his on-going lived experience of drama continued to linger in the back of his mind, despite enjoying the activity at the time:

I decided to fully throw myself into this activity and just thought, 'why not?' I enjoyed doing this activity at the time but just like all dramatic things, I felt embarrassed when the noise died down and felt that everyone was looking at

me. This is one of the major problems I have with drama – the aftermath! Overcoming this might be the next step in becoming a fully-fledged thespian!!! Not.

Jessica enjoyed the experience of the activity, ‘this was great at really releasing stress! I felt quite liberated after this.’ Harriet also noted the connections between teachers being ‘in role’ and being aware of their verbal and non-verbal communications, ‘Makes you think how some things you have to stop yourself from saying, to remain professional, and perhaps just say in your head! This shows how teaching can be a bit of an act!’ This was further supported by Laura who summarised the rationale for the inclusion of this activity in the training, ‘perfect activity for reflection on ‘teacher identity and self-identity’ as so often we have to give a positive false response in order to promote confidence with children in our class – this is can obviously be wearing at times!’

The utterances given by the participants demonstrate the thought processes that come into play during drama games and the professional persona of the teacher. It is interesting that Tom appeared to be having an internal dialogue in response to the drama game. Furthermore, he made a conscious decision to ‘throw’ himself into the activity which in itself gives a visceral tone to his narrative diary account and indeed the drama game. Harriet and Laura identified how teachers maintain a professional persona and regularly perform by selecting what to say/not say and how to say it/not say it. Thereby facilitating learning and promoting confidence in the pupils.

Returning to the benefits of the BEING training for staff and pupils in general, Julia’s insights in her reflective diary were of interest for multiple reasons. She was considered as the one of the participants with existing ‘expert’ knowledge of drama; she had studied drama at university, had taught discrete drama lessons and, in addition, had led larger performance events across the primary school. She was therefore viewed by the staff as one of the staff team ‘experts’. Therefore, Julia’s responses in her narrative diary were of noteworthy interest for many reasons as her opinions contradicted some of the opinions raised by the other participants. Many of the staff could make strong

links between several of the activities used in the CPD and how they could be used in the classroom (as discussed earlier), as well as understanding how and why they were being used for staff training and development. Julia, being one of the most confident members of the training group, struggled to make these connections and identified in her narrative diary that the training had made her more reflective in other ways. The study had caused a change in her lived experience but in a completely different way to all the other members; Julia was considering more of her practitioner-in-role, not as a class teacher but as a manager and as part of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

I am generally at ease with drama activities, participating etc. I couldn't see the relevance of some of the activities i.e. how they could be used as a teaching tool or how they could change my teaching style/repertoire. I've realised I'm not generally very reflective so have found this side of things difficult. I am aware that how I appear to children is important - I make every effort to show enthusiasm when teaching, to be positive and cheerful for them. I exhaust myself with teaching because I am always playing a role, performing. I use up a lot more energy as my professional self than my personal self. Teacher identity/role/ practice? – This applies to the admin side of my role, not my role as a classroom/subject teacher. Perhaps I need to make changes to how I perform my role with adults – as manager, coordinator etc?

The implications of this would suggest that the CPD training and the subsequent reflections were all able to contribute some form of new or changed thinking for the participants. For those where drama was a concern, they mainly related their reflections to their relationship with drama (which was not unexpected, due to the nature of the study). However, for the drama 'expert', additional areas of reflection were facilitated by the opportunities to explore one's teacher-self through the means of drama.

The concluding reflections in the narrative diaries from the participants, after the final focus group, highlight the change in mind-set and the changing lived experience of the participants over the course of the BEING training. Amie had many preconceived negative ideas and reservations about the concept of drama, and the CPD helped to alleviate some of these fears. She also felt reassured as she was surprised to learn that many of the other participants had anxieties too. She notes: 'the word 'drama' created

panic, worry. Had preconceived ideas – hindrance. Felt slightly uneasy before the sessions – what was expected? What would I have to do? Felt intimidated by the circle, exposed, nowhere to hide. Settled more as the conversation developed. Agreed with many of the points raised.’ Amie’s comment that her preconceived ideas caused a ‘hindrance’ in her thinking and illustrates why many teachers may shy away from using drama due to their previous, negative experiences. This may cloud their judgment or hinder their choices when planning their lessons.

Charles also had preconceived ideas which were changed as a result of the CPD and he enjoyed having the time to explore his individual identity. He reported in his diary:

Coming in to the session, I was apprehensive about what we might have to do. I have enjoyed hearing what others said their strengths and similarities were as I could agree with most and contribute accordingly. When it was time to do the drama games, I wasn’t too nervous because I was reassured that we wouldn’t be doing anything by ourselves. I have found some activities awkward such as mirroring as they are very much open to interpretation and don’t require too many boundaries. I quite like having the license to explore my own individual identity without directing others whilst I do it. I guess this would also be the case for the some of the children.

This was also reinforced by Laura who stated in her diary:

Feelings before the ‘drama games’ started – as soon as you said ‘drama games’, I had lots of ideas in my head about what they would be... I also thought that half of the people would be feeling a bit like me, a bit anxious, quite keen to opt out and about half the people who would think ‘great – I can’t wait for this! We’ve also got to bear in mind the children who are reluctant to ‘let themselves go’ and are not as confident either in class activities or on the stage (I was/am in the latter category!)

It could also be considered that the use of the word ‘game’ may have initiated feelings of apprehension for some of the participants. This could have been due to people already having negative past experiences in addition to the ‘competitive’ element most games have. Although the games in this study were not of a competitive nature and there was no perceived ‘winner’, some participants may have felt the need to compete



with their colleagues to participate whereas others may have had such negative associations with the word that caused them to withdraw. This could have caused them to become more anxious than if the word 'activity' or 'task' had been used.

Many of the participants commented that the experience had been valuable in helping them to consider and reflect on some of their teaching practices and in addition gave them practical ideas to use in the classroom. Daisy commented that it was, 'good to consider where we could go next – how we could go further and use in lessons. Was also surprised to hear when some said about certain activities, feeling nervous.' Moreover, in recognising their own nerves, anxieties and being placed in the position of the learner, many staff commented on recognising how to manage these activities with the children; they suggested that they were a valuable learning experience but would need to be considered and delivered carefully in order to be successful. Jan wrote:

I enjoyed some of the games far more than I anticipated. I was much happier during partner work or small group work than performing as a big group. Had empathy for children who are uncomfortable performing during whole class situations. Thought drama was an excellent vehicle for children to express/explore their emotions as many hold things in.

This was further supported by Harriet, who wrote, 'It was interesting thinking how different scenarios evoke different emotions for some people... Makes you think how individual children would feel differently to one another when faced with a situation.' In addition, Harriet also recognised how the dynamics of a group could have an impact on the contribution of participants by writing:

I enjoyed the activities when it was in a group, however, I found that I didn't say much as one character in particular was louder and more confident so I was comfortable letting her dominate the situation! This certainly says something about me and my character! Also, shows how group situations in class will often end the same way, unless pupils are paired or grouped to avoid this. Saying that, it may be the case that quieter group members prefer for someone else to dominate anyway!

Furthermore, participants identified that they were more comfortable performing 'in role' in front of children, however, they become more anxious when 'performing' in front of other adults. Alice commented in her narrative diary, 'Happy in front of children, not adults...' and Daisy also stated in a response to the initial focus group, 'Could relate to some things people were saying – confident in front of the children – talking and acting. However, became nervous, embarrassed and flushed when talking to a large group of adults.' This was therefore the rationale for allowing participants to contribute their reflections through their narrative diaries, particularly for those who were more reluctant to share their ideas verbally with the group. Whether participants contributed significantly to the focus group or not, Laura acknowledged, 'It's nice to talk to colleagues about something 'different' about thought provoking topics and things that are relevant to our daily lives but that perhaps, are never actually thought about in any depth.' Charles also recognised the benefits to both children and staff, 'Listening to some of these final ideas, I like the idea of breaking own fixed barriers in school in a controlled environment. Allowing participants the chance to be 'the worst example of themselves' would give children opportunities to explore a side to themselves they probably don't often get to explore.'

Finally, to summarise the advantages of using drama games and reflection through CPD is well illustrated in Tom's concluding statement in his narrative diary. After the final focus group, he summarised the benefits of the extended CPD and the advantages of using drama games and how they had changed his lived experience of the subject:

I think that, upon reflection, I have used this process to push my own personal boundaries with regards to 'drama'. I have used 'drama' rather than just drama (notice no apostrophes) as I now have a different viewpoint on what drama actually means to me. I no longer see it as 'an old fruit treading the boards', but now rather view it as a vehicle for expression and emotion. Please don't misunderstand me, I still cringe at the word... I have, however, tried to throw myself into all of the different sessions and I have come to the conclusion that it is more enjoyable to have a little bit of fun than to sit and sulk in the corner. In both situations everyone will stare at you but it is probably better to draw attention to yourself for being engaging and dynamic and not for spitting your dummy out because you feel awkward.

This closing statement from Tom would suggest a key shift in his lived experience of drama; from the first focus group where the very word drama caused feelings of hate and frustration, Tom's association with the word changed due to his exploration and reflections of his previous, existing and newly developed relationship with the subject. Linking back to the ideas of living theory (Van Manen, 1990; Whitehead, 2008 and Akinbode, 2013), this was knowledge that Tom had to acquire for himself, through his own dialogue, commencing initially with himself and then extending it with others. This was not knowledge that could have been directed to him, it had to be self-explored and 'lived' in order for his thinking to be challenged.

### ***Disadvantages of In-service Drama Games***

The data provided by the participants affords significant evidence to promote the advantages of in-service drama games and reflection through extended CPD (as detailed in the previous section). However, some elements of the discussion indicated that drama was not perceived as valuable as other subjects and was considered by the participants as an add on or a useful tool, as Laura reported, 'if you have five minutes left at the end of lesson to fill the time'. On the other hand, at times it was described as an integral tool for teaching and a vital part of the curriculum and therefore conversations did appear to contradict at times which would align with the initial rationale and the basis for this research illustrating the conflict concerning drama's position in the curriculum, teacher confidence and subject knowledge.

In addition, some of the activities appeared to take the participants beyond their 'comfort zone' and therefore they were not able to gain a lot from the experience, Daisy commented on the *Light in the Blindness* activity, '...really disliked this – reflex made me feel the need to open my eyes, felt out of control.' However, in Daisy's subsequent reflection of the activity, she identified that the task 'would build on teamwork,' and despite not enjoying the activity herself, she would be prepared to try the activity with her class. Daisy's responses could also relate to her having feelings of vulnerability, being self-consciousness and lacking confidence in 'performing' in front her peers. She

may have been concerned about the way she looked in front of her colleagues, especially as she was not able to look at them.

Some staff were certainly feeling more comfortable than others, according to their level of engagement and their level of experience or comfort with different games. The 'compulsory' aspect may have been an important element to consider causing some to shy away from the task and feeling that they had no choice in taking part. However, if the participants had been given choice of which games they took part in, considering some of the high levels of anxiety and reluctance to step out of their comfort zones, the results may not have been so interesting. The 'compulsory' nature of the games, meaning that all participants took part, could have been the aspect which allowed the teachers to break through their own personal barriers. As Amie discussed earlier, her personal preconceptions caused a hindrance to her thinking in drama, the fact that the participants all had to participate meant that they had to step out of their comfort zones and recognise that the experience possibly was not as bad as they had expected it to be. Even if, as a whole, they had not enjoyed the whole experience, they still seemed to have gained valuable thinking from the process.

The BEING training was designed to give all participants the opportunity to contribute to the sessions without placing any individuals in the spotlight or forcing anyone to join in or step into the spotlight on their own. Participants could opt out of the games or the discussions at any time. Alice commented in her final narrative entry, 'I do feel that maybe I could have participated more fully in some of the activities but there is a part of me that just won't let go and allow me to do it – I'm not sure that part of me will ever change.' The balance of giving the participants the freedom to withdraw or not participate fully may have meant that they did not benefit fully from the experience. However, as it was recognised that it would have been unethical to force the participants to join in or indeed, take them so far out of their comfort zone, it could have caused a negative lived experience, it is impossible to determine whether this outcome could have been different and in the end, no participant withdrew.

Claire, who was the only member of the group to have become more self-conscious after the training wrote:

I was really taken out of my comfort zone with these sessions. I didn't enjoy the activities that made me self-conscious - which was most of them. I did bear with it though. Organising my class assembly has got me thinking that I am very confident about how to organise and give direction to the children but if it was me on the stage I would feel extremely self-conscious.

Indeed, the organisation of the drama sessions and the focus group reflection phases did mean that some of the participants who were usually confident in speaking to groups, felt more reluctant to do so due to the participants feeling as though they 'had' to contribute; this made some of the staff withdraw further from the conversation. Once again, this could align with the ideas of the participants feeling competitive or avoiding this situation, even though all appropriate measure were taken to prevent this feeling within the training and focus groups. Participants may have had the feeling of having to say something and this could have resulted in a dishonest or untruthful response, considering elements of human nature, peer pressure, pride or the need to conform. Fortunately, the narrative diaries were able to record these experiences and any observations made by the group. As Jessica wrote in response to the initial focus group:

I felt this session pushed me out of my comfort zone. I've always felt quite a confident person at work, happy to talk and speak my mind. However, tonight, with so many people in the room, I felt under pressure to speak. This was harder than I thought as there were others that had a lot to say and actually said what I felt. I enjoyed the activities, however, my awareness of others in the room that might be watching me made me feel quite self-conscious. During an informal group discussion one lunchtime, I felt more confident to discuss the different activities we carried out. There wasn't any competition to have a say here, it was more relaxed, therefore I enjoyed this as it gave me the opportunity to really reflect with my colleagues.

Potentially the opportunity to reflect on the sessions may have been more successful if they had been organised informally within staff groups and not as a whole-group discussion. However, these opportunities still occurred (as Jessica stated above) and therefore could have formed part of the reflective diary thoughts as the participants

could still contribute to these at any time during the process of the CPD sessions and for a few weeks after the research. Having the extended time to think and then reflect back was beneficial for the staff. As a conclusion to the BEING experience, Jessica reported:

Reading back at my shield and personal/professional sheets, I do not think anything has changed. The sessions have been enjoyable and perhaps it has brought us closer as a group as it has been a shared experience. I am not sure how well these sessions would work with a group of strangers- although perhaps it would mean personally you could gain more from it. Strangers do not have any preconceptions about you.

Therefore, it could be considered here that the shaping of the study would be considerably different if participants were not known to each other and the impact that this would have on their contribution and reflections could have been considerable. Based on the responses, some would have preferred this, whereas others felt more comfortable with colleagues and would have been more reluctant to take part with strangers. For Laura, she found the process of sharing and discussing with colleagues an experience which helped to develop her sympathy and empathy with her peers:

It makes you realise how different everyone within the staff is and you go about your daily routine and everybody is so busy that you don't really stop and think that everyone is feeling differently, everyone else has got their own baggage. And it's made me think, that everyone is really different... we should just try and breathe more occasionally... and I think everybody needs to do that... and remember, that everybody's different.

### ***Curriculum Issues – Timetable Pressures, Staff Concerns and the Position of Drama***

As noted previously in this chapter, the staff identified many positive contributions of drama matching the theorists. However, many other issues such as timetable pressure, a lack of 'produced work' and personal feelings such as negative past experiences and poor training, contributed to the reasons why staff felt reluctant to teach drama unless grounded within a cross-curricular topic and used as a teaching tool rather than as a discrete subject.

The data from the focus groups appears to conflict just as the literature does. Teachers and theorists can discuss and highlight the importance and values of drama, yet when faced with the challenge of teaching it, particularly without a cross-curricular or topic-based theme, other issues appear to conflict with the benefits and cause a much more complex scenario. This was reflected in the opinions raised by the participants. Several appeared to be pulled in opposite directions: recognising the value and importance of drama - yet their own issues (lack of subject knowledge or training) and personal insecurities with the subject and the lack of 'work' to show at the end of a lesson caused issues for the staff. The study highlighted that timetable pressures and an already packed curriculum made it challenging for teachers to include drama skills in their teaching, as recommended by Arts Council England (2003), Neelands (2008) and Howell and Heap (2010). In her diary, Laura shared her significant concerns about teaching drama and identified the reasons why she was reluctant to teach it:

I do worry about not recording drama lessons (e.g. not having any evidence in their books). Although I do generally ask them to do a quick reflection and write-up about any longer drama lessons. Warm up activities are really good. I feel that I am starting to build a small repertoire (having attended the staff meeting) and having helped a BA student teacher to plan and deliver a lesson or two. However, I do still worry about 'getting it wrong' and I feel that the timetable is so packed that planning drama activities is often (wrongly?) not a priority.

There was contradiction and disagreement in terms of drama's place in the curriculum. Some participants felt it would be of greatest benefit if taught discretely as a blocked topic, and the earlier it was introduced to the children, the better. However, it was also mentioned that younger children needed grounding in literacy and numeracy skills before having drama lessons, which brings us back to the discussions concerning the hierarchy of subjects as presented in Chapter One, page 25). There appeared to be some correlation between those less confident in drama and those not wanting it to be taught discretely, whilst those who had observed 'experts' seemed more willing to use drama.

As Howell and Heap (2010) identified, drama can be viewed as playful and not necessarily as a 'serious' subject. Therefore, the value and importance of drama in

education could be under-estimated and under-appreciated (Fleming, 2003). The very title of *Drama: The Subject that Dare Not Speak Its Name* by Neelands (2008) highlighted the difficulty that drama faces, that it is viewed as unimportant and undervalued in the curriculum. Drama is not even recognised as part of English in the National Curriculum. It was previously positioned as part of the Speaking and Listening Strategy (DfES, 2003) and may only be used as a teaching tool as suggested by the most recent Primary National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). This somewhat conflicts with the fact that it is included as a discrete subject for Key Stages Three and Four. This was also a feature in the data as the focus group discussed their concerns of teaching drama when other 'more serious' subjects needed to be covered. However, the participants all agreed that drama does hold an important position in primary education in terms of pupil development, as discussed in the previous research question 1 in this chapter.



### **Research Question 3**

***Can CPD training (through reflection and drama games) change teachers' use of drama in the classroom?***

The data from the tasks based on the BEING training, both focus groups and the narrative diaries, clearly identified the key benefits of drama within the primary curriculum in line with the concepts of drama theorists such as Fleming (2003), Baldwin (2003, 2009) and the DfES (2003). These included recognising aspects of social, emotional, intellectual, creative and spiritual development, in addition to the more conventional drama techniques such as character development, use of voice and performance skills (Cockett, 1999 and Baldwin, 2003).

However, to gain a fuller understanding of the longer-term impact of the CPD training, in order to fully ascertain the success of the project with the aim of assessing whether CPD training (through reflection and drama games) could change teachers' use of drama in the classroom, I decided to return to the participants a year after the BEING training and subsequent reflection had been completed, to see if the extended CPD had had any lasting impact on the participants and if there had been any changes in their lived experience in their thoughts about drama, either personally or professionally.

#### **One Year On...**

The initial data presented in the study found that the in-service training (provided by this research) provided colleagues with the opportunity to develop their dramatic knowledge and to make positive use of this throughout the curriculum. A particularly notable and somewhat unexpected theme which emerged from the participants was the ability to engage with colleagues in a different way which helped to strengthen and/or develop relationships as well as help colleagues to communicate in ways that they had never considered before. Since the completion of the study, some staff have made notable changes between their former and new uses of drama in the curriculum and many comments have been made about the benefits of the CPD for the staff; this has included anecdotal discussions in the staff room as well as being mentioned formally

in staff meetings and being used and recorded as part of staff CPD. Jessica, a member of the SLT stated, 'During my line management discussions, some of the staff have said how they have enjoyed the drama research sessions as part of their CPD. A very positive experience!'

In the academic year that followed since I completed the CPD training with the staff at the school, the CPD BEING training still remained a talking point amongst the staff. Even after a long summer break, the CPD BEING training has featured in staff discussions at staff meetings (not initiated or prompted by myself), where some of the BEING training has been connected to conversation regarding other curriculum areas or activities, which were used in the BEING sessions have been suggested between colleagues. There have been considerable changes in the attitudes towards drama of several members of staff (such as Tom's performance in the staff pantomime, see reflection, page 92). In addition, the BEING training was mentioned in the start of term INSET for staff, highlighting the training itself and the importance of using drama in teaching as a general reminder to all staff. The whole school support (Dickenson *et al*, 2006 and Baldwin, 2009) has been a large contributing factor in ensuring the profile of drama has been maintained throughout the school. The ethos towards drama changed and staff are now more willing to be involved. This has been very pleasing to observe as the conversations have been genuine, not mentioned just because of my discussion of the study and this is still featuring over a year on from the original CPD.

Considering the body of data as a whole, certain individuals made more of an impact on the study in terms of the information, verbal contributions and the amount of narrative data provided through the diaries and focus groups. This is undoubtedly due to the living theory lens adopted by the study. There were some key commonalities amongst the participants and they all shared the same experience of the BEING training. However, the impact and outcomes of the BEING training would obviously have been unique and very personal for each individual participant and therefore their contributions and varying levels of data differed accordingly.

Every single participant contributed to the study, some more so through the focus groups and some through their reflective diaries. However, although all members contributed, the amount of data from each participant varied dramatically. The contributions varied according to each individual's journey. For some, their lived experience was not very dramatic in terms of change. Their lived experience did not so much change their identity (which was not the intention of the study) but rather reacquainted them with their identity, both personal and professional. For some participants where their changes were not as significant, the study perhaps served to reignite an existing relationship with drama. The most anxious participants had the biggest change in thinking and therefore contributed most to their reflective diaries.

In particular, Tom and Amie were clearly considerable contributors to the study because their shift in lived experience was so evident compared to others. Tom said he had never been asked to explore these areas before. It was the process of drama games, reflection and the opportunity to consider his lived experience which asked him to do this, so that he reflected and realised his relationship with drama was not what he originally thought.

The longitudinal aspect of the CPD and the opportunity for critical reflection allowed the change in perception of drama. The impact of the study twelve months on and beyond has provided extra detail for my implications and conclusions (Chapter Five, page 125). This serves to illustrate that the CPD has had a lasting influence and was not received and then forgotten about and/or not used. Therefore, in answer to research question 3: *Can CPD training (through reflection and drama games) change teachers' use of drama in the classroom*; the longer term evidence from the study would suggest, in this case study, for these participants, that it can.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The concluding chapter of this thesis draws together my thinking and reflections on the research process and outcomes, summarises my key findings and also delineates the original contributions made by the study to the fields of drama teaching and CPD, as well as acknowledging the limitations of the study and implication for future research.

The study aimed to ascertain whether practising teachers' lived experiences and perceptions of drama could be changed using extended in-service CPD, using drama games and reflection as a mechanism. Returning to research question 1: *Can teacher perceptions and lived experiences be influenced as a result of in-service CPD training?* the data suggests that teacher perceptions and lived experience *can* be influenced. It would have been unrealistic to suggest that the BEING training would have been 'life-changing' for the participants (although for some it could have been) and that is why the research design changed from the direction of focusing on identity and instead focused on lived experiences. The data suggests that the BEING training directly influenced the participants; generating new thinking, a shift in some participants' attitudes towards drama; how they viewed the word, both personally and professionally and in turn, how they used drama in their teaching. This included the realisation that staff were in fact, already using a lot of the drama techniques highlighted in the drama games in their everyday teaching, including changing their voice, being aware of their non-verbal expressions and body movement to appear 'in role', as the teacher, in front of the children. In addition, the opportunity to share these reflections with colleagues provided opportunities for the empathetic sharing of thoughts and feelings.

The participants all recognised some form of change in their lived experience of drama as a result of the process they had gone through. These were all generally considered to be positive, with only one participant recognising that the activities and reflections had in fact made her become more self-conscious. However, within these comments was an acceptance of her own personal and professional identity. She therefore acknowledged that although the experiences of the BEING training and the subsequent reflections, both personally and with her colleagues, had been uncomfortable for her,

the process had enabled her to accept her own position concerning drama and recognise her confidence levels. Thus the process had helped to develop her own self-awareness and therefore could be considered as a positive outcome. This outcome was perhaps unforeseen, as she viewed herself as a performer and therefore her unexpected, partially negative feelings towards drama influenced or modified her previous, pre-existing lived experience. This potentially would not have been possible without giving her the opportunity afforded by the extended CPD training regarding time to reflect on how it had influenced her living theory of drama.

Having the extended time to evaluate and consider both their personal and professional identities, as well as having the opportunities not only to reflect on their own practice but to also consider how children would feel being placed out of their 'comfort zones' (not just in the case of drama but during other learning opportunities), proved to be a key discussion point for the participants. A key outcome was the way the participants were enabled to empathise with the experiences and feelings of pupils. Being placed back in the position of the learner (feeling nervous, unsure and concerned about the possible activities to be used in the sessions) reminded the participants of how anxious a child may feel when learning or experiencing something unfamiliar in any area of learning. The teachers appreciated the opportunity of being reminded of this experience, despite how uncomfortable it made them feel at times. It was agreed by the participants that although the feeling was unpleasant, this was necessary for both themselves and for their pupils in order to gain a richer learning experience. However, it was also agreed that, although this feeling was necessary, it must be handled sensitively and appropriately, recognising the needs of those involved and not pushing anyone so far out of their comfort zone that they then entered a 'panic zone'.

In considering research question 2: *What advantages and disadvantages can be identified by using drama games and reflection for in-service CPD?* the data provided evidence from the participants to suggest that the BEING training, using drama games, provided colleagues with the opportunities for building and developing peer relationships far beyond the classroom environment. It could serve well as a

teambuilding activity and participants recognised improved 'team spirit' and improved relationships and humour as key positive factors. Drama was also identified as a means of developing skills for life; not such performance based skills such as speaking clearly in front of an audience, but elements such as communication skills, voice, posture, emotional awareness, sympathy and empathy. The participants also identified the opportunities of the training to allow an understanding and a reflection on one's self and for considering elements of their own personality that they had never been asked to consider in their previous experiences.

Using living theory as a methodology and a lens through which to view the data meant that the experiences or changes felt by the participants were organic. Having looked at models for CPD, as defined by Kennedy (2005), a transformative model was identified to be the most appropriate in order to allow for the lived experience of the participants to be fully valued. The original contribution of this thesis lies within development of Özmen's model (2011), for working with trained teachers, over a longer time span, using an original transformative CPD model.

The study did not intend to 'train' the participants in drama techniques, serve as an award, plug a deficit or transfer knowledge with a pre-conceived agenda. The study sought to acquire a new body of knowledge to ascertain whether drama games and reflection time could serve a purpose to change teachers' pre-existing perceptions of drama. The outcome of the study was not pre-determined and the impact of the training was not specifically intended to follow a precise route. It was designed as a fluid and changing process, thus giving me the opportunity to learn and change as the CPD progressed.

Living theory requires reflection time in order for the experience to be fully understood and processed. The extended CPD, over a period of several weeks, provided colleagues with the opportunity to process and reflect on the BEING training in order to allow the participants the time and space to develop their own form of thinking towards the subject and not necessarily use existing theory or knowledge that they believed to be

true without personal existential evidence. In addition, as a researcher, I also had the opportunity to reflect and learn, which is a key aspect of a professional doctorate (Lee, 2009). I would suggest that my own living theory has been challenged and developed throughout this study, and that my own passion for drama, my awareness of educational research and my level of critical thinking has developed tremendously as a result of this process and is continuous and ever-changing.

The participants recognised the use of drama in therapy and could relate to the reasons why it could be used for treatment in certain schools, prisons and hospitals. The opportunity to explore different emotions was also considered to be of vital importance to help children to become more sympathetic and empathetic. The recognised benefits of drama to children (and also in fact to the staff), were identified. These benefits included: aiding relaxation, showing humour, developing creativity, and social and emotional skills, as well as the practical drama skills which are more associated with acting (use of voice, characterisation, body movement and verbal and non-verbal communications).

Potential barriers to explain the lack of drama's use in the participants' practice were discussed. The study identified several barriers to the use of drama in participants' practice. The teachers acknowledged that perhaps drama was under-used as a resource. Staff also acknowledged that a lack of time within the school day, no produced work, timetable pressures involving the compulsory inclusion of named curriculum subjects, lack of teacher knowledge, confidence or expertise were all contributing factors which explained their rationale for drama's limited use in their practice. In addition, having drama 'experts' within the school, where children had the opportunities to use drama in performance skills across the school, in extra-curricular events and end of term performances, provided the safety net for the staff to be content that the children were taking part in drama experiences, even if they were not providing them themselves. However, as discussed in Chapters One and Two, performance drama and process drama can have differing objectives and outcomes.

Finally, considering research question 3: *Can CPD training (through reflection and drama games) change teachers' use of drama in the classroom?* The opportunity for staff to engage in this process provided new learning and insights and has changed the way in which the teachers use and perceive drama in their teaching (in this necessarily limited study and specific setting). The structured CPD programme (which had only previously been used with pre-service teachers) has been adapted and made relevant for 'trained' and experienced teachers (i.e. those teaching children and no longer involved in ITE). The shift in attitude showed how the perceptions of drama, based on previous lived experience can be changed through in-service CPD and can have a positive impact on the staff taking part, particularly those who are the most reluctant and nervous about engaging with drama techniques.

The study found that the in-service training provided colleagues with the opportunity to develop their dramatic knowledge. They were able to change their use and recognise the potential benefits of drama throughout the curriculum and were willing, as a result of the BEING training, to make changes accordingly.

In addition, a particularly notable and somewhat unexpected theme which emerged from the participants was the ability to engage with colleagues in a different way which helped to strengthen and/or develop collegial relationships as well as help colleagues to communicate in ways that they had never considered before.

Having been fully engaged with this study and body of literature, it is clear that the issues uncovered are far more complex than they first appeared. The participant responses from the study suggested that there are recognised practical/logistical difficulties that teachers face when planning their teaching and managing their time for the curriculum (including planning, timetable pressures, perceived lack of produced work). However, the literature and the data provided from this study also suggest that the issues related to drama teaching in school are strongly related to teacher perceptions, previous lived experiences, training and their understanding and perception of drama. How individual teachers perceive drama and how they view their



own confidence in the discipline has a direct influence on their use of it. Despite recognising the value of drama, some staff are reluctant to use it in teaching except as a cross-curricular teaching tool to enhance subject knowledge on a particular topic. This aligns with suggestions made by Özmen (2011) and Green *et al* (1998) that some teachers might benefit from basic acting skills and the opportunity to observe drama 'experts' as part of their training, to help them to develop their confidence and improve their perception of the subject and understand its opportunities for wider use. Practical, 'hands-on' training in the study allowed the participants to experiment with the drama games and activities and in turn during the I-phase, identify how the activities could be used in their teaching. Potential solutions suggested by the focus group would be to 'block' drama lessons within a specific time-frame of the school timetable, in order to relieve timetable pressures and give teachers a focus to work towards in order to assist with the planning and progression of the subject (Fleming, 2003 and Woolland, 1993). If primary teachers continue to lack subject knowledge in drama and the ITE provision for trainee teachers remains irregular and insufficient, there will continue to be a lack of role models in school who can help to break down the drama barrier.

In terms of ontology and epistemology, many of the participants noted that they were, in fact, using the conventions of drama every day, in their role as teachers and this was a process of realisation for many of the participants. This returns to Özmen's work (2011) of developing an awareness of teacher identity/ teacher self. Drama turns out not to be the big scary word that they had previously considered it to be.

A further outcome of the research was that the participants realised that they were actually using drama far more than they initially recognised and this could have implications and recommendations as to how drama is defined, approached and developed within ITE and CPD more broadly. There is an on-going risk of teachers not recognising and valuing drama if they only view it as a suite of conventional 'acting' techniques and of being another character, rather than identifying that they are in fact using drama every single day when they are standing in front of a class and 'acting' in their role as the class teacher. If teachers came to accept this change in perception or

mind-set as using drama, they may be more willing to access and use drama in other elements of their teaching and not associate drama with perhaps historically negative personal events link to their previous and existing lived experience.

### ***Limitations of the Data***

Although the research provided interesting perceptions and ideas about drama in the curriculum, the limitations of the study and the data provided must be recognised. The small scale nature of the study means that further investigation and repetition of the study with other groups and schools would be required to allow for more general claims to be made (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). However, the study would be difficult to replicate considering my personal connection with the participants and acting as the leader for the CPD, as well as the researcher.

However, although the study could not be exactly repeated, it could be replicated by myself or someone else in another school, by providing initial training/ideas/activities, then developing a relationship with the staff by returning for the ongoing training or, using other elements of CPD models (Kennedy, 2005). In addition, there could be opportunities to disseminate the CPD by training up or cascading a colleague in another school in a similar manner and thus circulating and widening the system. It could also be replicated by drama specialists in other schools undertaking similar CPD with colleagues. The study could also be developed or changed through working with people who were not colleagues, in which case the implication of this change in relationship would need to be acknowledged.

Another potential limitation of the research could be the fact that my colleagues knew me and in addition, knew how important the study was to me. It is impossible to know whether people said or did things which might suggest this, although the more negative comments suggest a healthy level of honesty. Another potential drawback/limitation could be the power dynamics inherent in having SLT and other staff in the same group and this would need to be carefully considered for future research.

More formal and quantifiable data could have been collected, both prior to the study commencing (as a baseline), or after the study was completed (in a formal manner). In addition, the semi-structured nature of the focus groups may have meant that the unfruitful direction may have been followed in the discussion and therefore researcher bias or participant dominance may have affected the data collected (Gillham 2000; Litosseliti, 2003 and Yin, 2003). However, despite the limitations of the research, this case-study has provided a number of points for discussion and further investigation.

### ***Recommendations and Further Work***

To extend this work further, there are several opportunities for further study and research as well as for the dissemination of its findings. As a result of the CPD in my particular setting, staff have been encouraged to increase their use of drama in their teaching and this has mainly been incorporated cross-curricularly. However, PSHE has been a subject where drama has been incorporated as a regular teaching tool, especially as colleagues made such strong connections between drama and their personal awareness and development. Class teachers are in the best position to understand the SMSC needs of their children and therefore are best placed to judge 'comfort zones' and facilitate emotional needs which can developed through drama activities.

A more longitudinal analysis of the impact of the CPD would be interesting to determine whether the changed lived experiences from the BEING training continued to develop in a positive way or if other factors could contribute to a further change in teachers' perception of drama and, in addition, to further judge whether the CPD from this study continued to meet its original objective.

The participants identified that increased teacher confidence in their ability to deliver drama games was important, right from ITE all the way through to CPD. Inconsistent training and experiences have contributed to practitioners having varying experiences of drama; if this was more consistent, then potentially so would be drama's use in the curriculum. Therefore, more opportunity for short-burst, yet extended CPD gave the opportunity for staff to have the time to reflect and discuss teaching practice and future

areas for development. This could be of benefit, not just for drama, but for other CPD areas. Considering the CPD models explored, extended CPD was highly valued by the participants in this study, particularly the opportunities for open, semi-structured professional discussion and the chance to share good practice with colleagues.

A crucial aspect of the CPD was the recognition of the staff being placed back in the position of a learner and removed from their comfort zone. This was a powerful experience and reminded them of how the children in their class may feel in day to day learning situations where they may feel anxious or unsure about their confidence or knowledge. This could be the case, not just in drama, but in other curriculum areas.

Although the conclusions and recommendations for this study relate specifically to drama, throughout this project it has become clear that many of the issues and characteristics raised in the study can be shared with other disciplines; the fear associated with a subject, the association of an emotion/feeling with a word. Therefore, although drama has been the vehicle for the research, some of the findings including colleague relationships, trust, subject knowledge and comfort zones, could be explored or compared and mirrored in other areas within the curriculum.

Adaptations or next steps for the project were suggested by the participants. These included the opportunity to follow up the project by having the opportunity to observe some of the drama games in action with pupils so that the staff could have a context with which to apply their personal experience to their practice. In addition, the participants would have welcomed the opportunity to 'do more'; to have participated in further CPD, for longer sessions, over a longer a period of time. However, this may have been difficult to manage and, in reality, knowing the anxieties before the project started, I doubt my colleagues would have been willing to participate in a longer, more extended project while they were also trying to balance all the other aspects of their teaching role (although some said they would which is a contradiction).

Other areas of research for me personally could include exploring the current position of drama in ITE and how this influences trainee teachers. A further area of research would involve working directly with children to formally assess the impact of drama in the classroom.

### ***A Final Thought...***

This study set out to raise the profile of primary drama by investigating teachers' perceptions of the discipline to ascertain whether extended in-service CPD, using drama games and reflections as a mechanism, could change teachers' existing lived experience of drama, in order to change their approach and use of drama in the classroom. As a researcher, I sought to undertake research in the hope that teachers would gain first-hand experience of recognising why drama was so important for children to experience and for teachers to recognise its place within the primary curriculum.

Being placed back in the position of a learner in a group and having to participate in activities which were unknown, evoked feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, whilst helping to transport the teachers back to their previous lived experience and therefore alter the way in which they could view some of their learners in the classroom. All of this was achieved through the use of drama, once again highlighting the power of the subject as a learning experience, not just for children but for teachers too!

A somewhat unexpected outcome of this research has been that drama itself has, in fact, been the tool which helped staff explore their own personal and professional identities, reflect on their own practice and in turn assess the types of CPD that would benefit their own teaching, not just concerning drama, but in other subject areas too. Finally, the research helped to remind the teachers again what it felt like to be a learner and be taken out of their 'comfort zones'; a concept that many of them had not experienced for a considerable time. For Mezirow (1991) this is an essential part of transformative learning and making meaning and sense of experiences. They had been working within their 'comfort zone', in role as their teacher-self, and were often

comfortable with this. This would also be true for myself as the practitioner and researcher.

This study has pushed me beyond what I had thought were my own limits. It has truly taken me out of my comfort zone (and possibly into my panic zone, at times!). However, the learning experiences provided have made me approach both my teaching and my research in new and interesting ways. It has changed my thinking and therefore my own lived experience of the power of drama in learning. As a professional, I am now, more than ever, aware of when I am using drama with my own practice. I feel I have become more aware of my colleagues and their varying levels of confidence in different areas and their perceptions of others. The importance and value of team spirit and community time as a staff to develop both professional and personal relationships, as well as having the extended time for professional conversation have all been valuable outcomes of this research for myself, as a teacher, colleague, researcher and most importantly, a learner.

## **Appendix 1**

### **ETHICAL APPROVAL - PARTICIPANT CONSENT**

#### **RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET**

##### **Outline of the research**

The research aims to establish the impact of a drama-based CPD programme on primary teachers.

##### **Who is the researcher?**

Name: Sara Evans-Bolger

Institution: Bishop Grosseteste University

Contact details: [REDACTED]

##### **What will my participation in the research involve?**

Participation will involve taking part in five sessions of drama training (using drama games and activities) as part of a small training group. Participants will be required to keep a reflective diary about their experiences of the training and use these as a basis for discussion in two focus groups, one before the training sessions begin and one at the end of the training sessions.

##### **Will there be any benefits in taking part?**

The participants will hopefully have the opportunity to gain new knowledge of drama in primary education and the opportunity to discuss the impact of this in a professional discussion with colleagues.

##### **Will there be any risks in taking part?**

Some of the drama games will involve some physical activity. However, these will be clearly explained, and participant will have the option to opt out of the activities.

##### **What happens if I decide I don't want to take part during the actual research study, or decide I don't want the information I've given to be used?**

You have the option to opt out of the research at any stage and your responses will be destroyed and subsequently not used in the final writing up of the project.

### **How will you ensure that my contribution is anonymous?**

All names will be changed in the transcripts of the data, files will be encrypted and password protected and any identifiable comments will be omitted from data (unless personal permission is granted for them to remain in the study).

Please note that your confidentiality and anonymity cannot be assured if, during the research, it comes to light you are involved in illegal or harmful behaviours, which I may disclose to the appropriate authorities.

### **RESEARCH CONSENT FORM**

Title of research project: An evaluative case study investigating the impact of a CPD programme on teacher identity.

Name of researcher: Sara Evans-Bolger

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. I agree to take part in this research project and for the data to be used as the researcher sees fit, including publication.

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant:

Signature:

Date:



## **Appendix 2**

### **Email conversation between Sara Evans Bolger & Kemal Sinan Özmen**

From: B0402930@bishopg.ac.uk

To: [sinanozmen@hotmail.com](mailto:sinanozmen@hotmail.com)

My name is Sara Evans-Bolger.

I am currently in my second year of my EdD at Bishop Grosseteste University in Lincoln in the UK. My particular area of interest is Drama in Primary Education and I am currently writing a proposal for the pilot study of my thesis.

I would like to use your BEING model as a guide and model for my own study. I will be working with experienced teachers. Would it be possible to give me a little more information about the model, including where your first study took place and more specifically where you sourced the acting training and activities you used with the pre-service teachers?

I was fascinated by your article and it was a source of real inspiration for me in order to develop my own project - I am hoping to pilot some drama games/ activities with experienced teachers to see if this can alter their perception of their 'drama identity' and their use of drama in the classroom.

I would be very grateful if you could provide me with any extra information about your study. Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

Sara Evans-Bolger

Bishop Grosseteste University

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**From:** Kemal Sinan Özmen [sinanozmen@hotmail.com]

**Sent:** 17 February 2014 20:46

**To:** Sara Danielle Evans

**Subject:** RE: The BEING Model

Dear Sara (If I may),

I am glad to have received your email. Of course I can provide more information about the BEING model.

The study was first carried out at Gazi University, English Language Teaching program (BA level) in Turkey in 2009-2010 academic year, in a pure qualitative study. I am currently planning another research study, a quantitative one in which I will use 'structural equation modelling' to statistically find out the possible relations between each component of the Being model.

The theory behind acting was based on Stanislavski's theories, and specifically one of his contemporary followers, Eric Morris, who I adore as an actor trainer. As for the teacher training approach, it is based on Reflective Model (please see Schön's studies). I can send you all of the acting tasks so that you can have an idea about my study. The text attached includes 24 acting activities, most of them must be familiar with you, also I developed some by integrating acting and teacher education. You will also find a drama activity (as a language teaching task, not an acting task) that was given to the student teachers as a sample so that they can develop theirs. The tasks are part of my PhD

dissertation: In addition to a research study, I developed a drama course for student teachers of English language teaching.

Your research looks amazing: I believe more scholar will soon get involved in studies that focus on the relationship between strong teacher identities and drama/acting.

I will be happy to answer your further questions and assist you in your studies.

Best wishes,

Kemal Sinan Özmen, PhD

Associate Professor of English Language Teaching

Editor-in-chief, *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning* ([www.jltl.org](http://www.jltl.org))

Gazi University, Faculty of Education

English Language Teaching Program,

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From: B0402930@bishopg.ac.uk

To: [sinanozmen@hotmail.com](mailto:sinanozmen@hotmail.com)

Date: Wed, 19 Feb 2014 15:58:48 +0000

Subject: RE: The BEING Model

Hello,

Thank you so much for your email and the swift reply. I really appreciate you taking the time to answer my questions and provide the additional information on your project. I am just in the process of completing my pilot proposal and handing in my ethics application. Would you be happy for me to contact you again in the near future once my project has been confirmed? Your work is so close to my area of interest that I would really value your thoughts and opinions on my research.

Thank you again,

Sara

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**From:** Kemal Sinan Özmen [[sinanozmen@hotmail.com](mailto:sinanozmen@hotmail.com)]

**Sent:** 20 February 2014 09:37

**To:** Sara Danielle Evans

**Subject:** RE: The BEING Model

Hello,

You are welcome. I will be happy to contribute to your studies, and wish you best of luck in your project.

Kemal Sinan Özmen, PhD

Associate Professor of English Language Teaching

Editor-in-chief, *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning* ([www.jltl.org](http://www.jltl.org))

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<http://websitem.gazi.edu.tr/site/sozmen>

**Where your talent and the needs of the world cross, there lies your vocation (Aristotle).**

### **Appendix 3**

#### **B-Phase Session Activity 1: Shield of Personal Acquisitions (Özmen, 2011)**

Designed to lead teachers to identify their personal resources, strengths and motivations so as to create a picture of their professional selves in order to prompt discussion in future training sessions. The teachers work individually on the task-sheet (see below).

#### **Shield of Personal Acquisitions to demonstrate the personal resources and experiences used for the effective teacher identity or role that you perform**

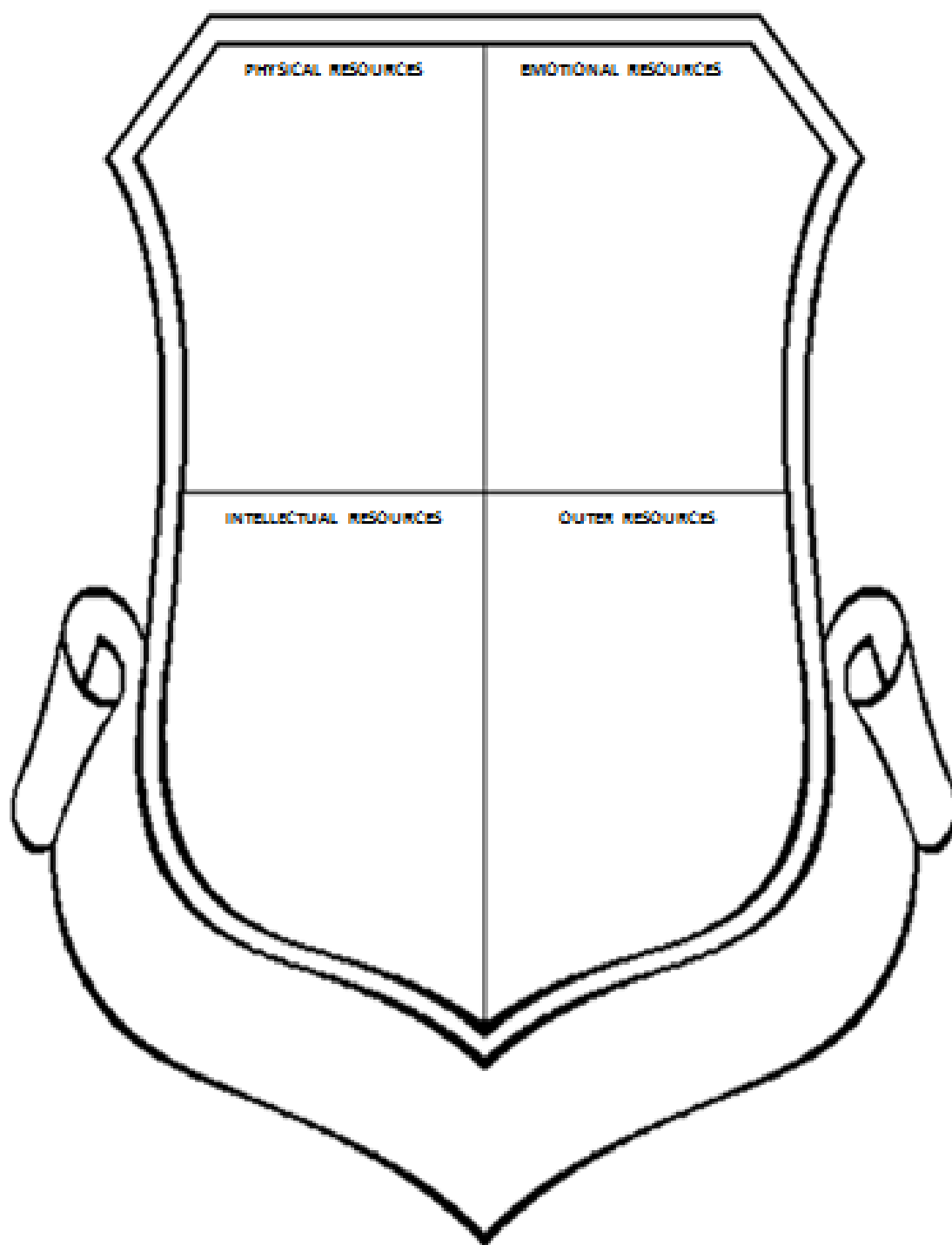
**Physical resources:** body language, voice, appearance, unique gestures and postures you have invented, or any other accessories teaching materials that assist you to perform your role.

**Emotional resources:** What is your source of motivation for being a teacher and/or using your ideal teacher identity/role? Think about your reasons.

**Intellectual resources:** What intellectual resources do you have apart from your field knowledge? Think about the books, poems or anything relevant that have an impact on constructing your teacher role/identity.

**Outer resources:** What opportunities can you take in your department, or in your school in the future that may contribute your teacher role/identity? Think about your education on teaching, professional development opportunities in the future and so on.

## SHIELD OF PERSONAL ACQUISITIONS



### **Appendix 3**

#### **B Session Activity 2: Personal and Professional Identity/Experiences**

The teachers completed the following tables and then explained their answers in a more extended format on the following page. The activity was designed to allow the teacher to explore the professional 'self', very much in the way that an actor would explore their character using Stanislavski's 'Method'.

Please read the questions below and try to fill in this chart in terms of your professional and personal identities/experiences.

<b>N</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Personal Identity/Experiences</b>	<b>Professional Identity/Experiences</b>
<b>1</b>	Similarities		
<b>2</b>	Differences		
<b>3</b>	Admirable aspects		
<b>4</b>	Strengths		
<b>5</b>	Some aspects needing practice		
<b>6</b>	Communication and interaction skills		
<b>7</b>	Strategies for problem solving		
<b>8</b>	Define yourself		
<b>9</b>	Your students' definition of you		
<b>10</b>	Your colleagues' definition of you		

**Please write longer answers that define and explain your reasons clearly.**

1. What are the similarities between your professional and personal selves?

2. What are the differences?

3. Which aspects of your teacher identity/role are admirable?

4. Which aspects of your teacher identity/role need some practice to make it better?

5. What kind of practices do you need to shape your teacher identity/ role more effectively?

6. What strengths do you have to perform your teacher role more effectively?

7. In what ways does your teacher-self communicate and interact with the students skilfully?

8. In what ways does your teacher-self resolve conflicts and solve unexpected situations in the classroom?

9. How would your students define you?

10. How would your colleagues define you?

## **Appendix 4**

### **BEING Training Games and Activities**

#### **B-Phase – Believe** (See Appendix 3, page 140)

Observing Personal and Profession Identity and Shield of Personal Acquisitions

#### **E-Phase - Experiment**

*Light in the Blindness* – raises awareness of other's people existence, move around the space with eyes closed, feel connections & atmosphere.

*Arm Raising Activity* - (connection and feeling the space) participants have their eyes closed and try to raise their arm as the same moment as their colleagues, rehearse feeling the space and making connections.

*Silence of the Mirrors* – observe and reflect the movement of others, non-verbally, mirror and controller and mimic. Non-verbal activity with gross and fine motor skills.

*Talk to Your Other Self* – finding their own space within the room, participants talk to themselves and explore the non-verbal messages they convey.

(Original task designed by Özmen, 2011)

*Vocal health* – talk about the importance of vocal health and experiment with humming, laryngeal massage, placement of voice, use of voice (throwing voice, pitch etc.)

*Reading – Preparing a Reading* - Using an extract from a well-known text, read with character, stress and intonation and experiment by using unexpected voices and explore the impact of this on understanding.

#### **I-Phase - Invention (based on the E-Phase)**

Using the games and activities from the E-phase, revisit and explore how these activities could be used within the class. Experiment and invent new thinking.

### **N-Phase – Navigate**

*Breaking the Same Old Mask* (Three Chairs) – warm up activity to create atmosphere. Three chairs are placed in front of the group. Each chair represents an emotion. One participant stands behind each chair and has to convey that emotion to the person who sits in the chair. The aim of the activity is to explore quickly changing emotions and the impact of this.

*Work Your Fingers* – the aim of the activity is to observe body language and synchronise movements (similar to Silence of the Mirrors). Partners work together and one has to guess the movements of the other, they are only allowed to communicate and coordinate their movement by fingertip contact.

*Slow Motion Life* – in order to raise awareness and observational skills, participants rehearse body language and use voice skills to act out a classroom scenario (these can be given by the group leader or devised by the group). Participants repeat the scenario getting slower and slower, becoming aware of their body movements and making them more and more exaggerated each time.

*Say What You Mean/Act Out the Worst Teacher* – by observing personal body language and using acting skills, the participants act in role as the teacher however, they must break all their usual habits of how they would appropriately communicate verbally and non-verbally to a class (reminder of acceptable language and behaviour, if necessary). (Original task designed by Özmen, 2011)

### **G-Phase - Generate**

Draw together the process from the B, E, I and N phases – reviewing any activities, if necessary and discussing the journey of the CPD. Give time to reflect on narrative journey and tasks completed during the B-phases. Discuss next steps and implications of training.



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